

April 30, 2009

The Honorable Mike Feuer, Chair
Assembly Judiciary Committee
State Capitol, Room

Re: Assembly Bill 1143 (Ma); Related to Marriage Licenses
California Association of Clerks and Election Officials...SPONSOR

Dear Assemblymember Feuer:

The California Association of Clerks and Election Officials is the sponsor of Assembly Bill 1143 (Ma) which is scheduled to be heard in your Assembly Judiciary Committee on Tuesday, May 12, 2009.

AB 1143 was introduced as a cleanup measure to Assembly Bill 102 (Ma, Chapter 567, '07). Assemblymember Fiona Ma has agreed to carry this CACEO sponsored legislation to correct several unintended consequences.

This bill will provide recourse to constituents in the event of a typographical or clerical error in the "name field" on the new marriage license. Current law leaves applicants with no choice but to engage in the costly and laborious legal name change process. Currently, if an error occurs in the "new name" field, your new legal identity will contain the error. AB 1143 allows for the filing of an amendment in the rare case of an error. This language will provide for a quick and cost-free method to correct occasional mistakes that will undoubtedly occur.

AB 1143 also clarifies the use of the "middle name" segment on the new form, which has been a source of confusion since the launch of the program in January. Specifically, language was included in AB 1143 to allow applicants to add their former—or maiden—last name to the middle name field while retaining their current middle name. This will allow constituents to continue to possess their original middle and last names without hyphenating or combining them into their new last name. This popular request has been echoed statewide by applicants. AB 1143 would allow applicants to achieve this goal.

The technical changes contained in AB 1143 will greatly improve the services offered by county clerks to Californians. CACEO respectfully requests your support for this good government measure.

Sincerely,

Matt Siverling
Legislative Advocate
CACEO