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CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF CLERKS AND ELECTION OFFICIALS

GAIL L. PELLERIN, PRESIDENT

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* non-voting member

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March 7, 2011

State Senator Lou Correa
State Capitol Rm. 5052
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator Correa:

The California Association of Clerks and Election Officials' (CACEO), Elections Legislative Committee has reviewed **SB 199 (as introduced February 8, 2011)**, your proposal requiring election officials to deliver out-of-county vote by mail ballots turned in at the polls to the county that issued the ballot.

Election officials are aware that a small percentage of vote by mail ballots are delivered to counties other than the counties from which the ballots were issued. We are exploring possible solutions; however, thus far, the solutions identified trigger a number of unintended consequences.

While we have had limited experience in transporting ballots between counties following an election, some of the issues identified in our discussion are as follows:

- ★ it takes days to weeks to go through all precincts' materials to retrieve out-of-county vote by mail ballots. Each precinct's materials must be methodically logged to maintain an audit trail. With the ever-growing number of vote by mail voters and the significant percentage who turn their ballots in at the polls, the time needed to retrieve out-of-county ballots from election materials is significant;
- ★ once voters learn that ballots will be forwarded to the county of origin, a significant increase in out-of-county vote by mail ballots can be expected. College and University campuses with large numbers of out-of-county students would undoubtedly generate more out-of-county ballots;
- ★ election officials in large counties or those with high percentages of vote by mail ballots are barely meeting the statutory deadline for the completion of the canvass. Receiving vote by mail ballots during the canvass process could require an extension of the official canvass;
- ★ small counties often complete the canvass shortly following the election. Would these counties be required to delay the canvass in case a ballot was forwarded from another county?

We would be happy to work with you or your staff to find a less costly solution to the problem at hand. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me in the Sonoma County Clerk-Recorder-Assessor's Office at (707) 565-1876.

Very truly yours,

Janice Atkinson
Correspondence Secretary
California Association of Clerks
and Election Officials

- c: Assembly Member Paul Fong, Chair, Assembly Committee on Elections and Redistricting
Senator Lou Correa, Chair, Senate Committee on Elections, Reapportionment and Constitutional Amendments
Deborah Seiler, Co-Chair, CACEO Elections Legislative Committee
Jill Lavine, Co-Chair, CACEO Elections Legislative Committee
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