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CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF CLERKS AND ELECTION OFFICIALS

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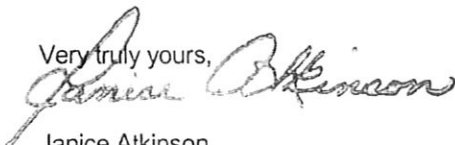
Dear Senator Corbett:

The California Association of Clerks and Election Officials, Elections Legislative Committee has reviewed **SB 970** (as amended March 11, 2010), your proposal establishing a pilot program to establish pre-election day polling locations on four college campuses for five days prior to a general election. While we share your goal of increasing turnout amongst college students, we would like to share with you our serious concerns in regard to the proposal, and why it is apt to lead to confusion, frustration and disenfranchisement as opposed to its intended goal.

- A significant number of students who attend college are registered at their out-of-county home, considering their college address to be a temporary situation. These students should be voting a vote by mail ballot from their home county, in order for their votes to count. The appearance of a pre-election day polling place will give these students the mis-impression they may vote on campus, or return their out-of county vote by mail ballots at the polling location, effectively disenfranchising them. At the November, 2006, General Election, over 200 voters cast Provisional Ballots at the polling location in the dormitory at Sonoma State University. Of these, roughly 10 were able to be counted, as most were either registered out of county, or were not registered at all.
- The proposal requires that the pre-election polling places serve as the polling place for any precinct in the county's jurisdiction. Each General Election there are hundreds of variations of ballots in each county. This bill would require that the pollworkers have all variations of the ballot available at each of the pre-election voting sites – and have the ability to determine the voter's correct version of the ballot, locate and issue it to the voter. Because counties are not allowed to provide all touchscreen voting at the polls, this would require voluminous amounts of paper ballots. Most polling locations do not have sufficient room to have this many versions of the ballot organized and available.
- Because ballots are required to be counted with like ballots, by voting precinct, these ballots would somehow have to be segregated by precinct as many counties do not print precinct numbers on the ballots. Requiring counties to print precinct numbers on the ballot would not only be costly, but would increase the numbers of ballots required to be kept on hand at the polling location manifold. Los Angeles County alone has approximately 5,000 voting precincts.
- Keeping voted and unvoted ballots, rosters, lists of voters and other materials secure over a five day period would present numerous issues, and at best would be costly, at worst could jeopardize the outcome of the election.
- Tracking voters from out of the immediate precinct would require automated equipment that counties currently do not have. Further, there would be no way to update the indices at the polls on election day to ensure that voters who cast ballots during the pre-election period did not return to their regular polling place on election day to vote.
- Of all of the polling locations in counties, college campuses are notorious for having the worst parking situations. There is a charge for parking, and even at that there is often no parking available.

In short, the proposal would be costly, unwieldy, confusing and could lead to the disenfranchisement of the very voters we hope to assist. We would be happy to meet with you or your staff to discuss our concerns in further detail. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me at 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 Loni Hancock, 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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