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\* non-voting member

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Sacramento County

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# CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF CLERKS AND ELECTION OFFICIALS

**CATHY DARLING ALLEN, PRESIDENT**

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April 8, 2014

The Honorable Brian Jones, Author  
Member of the Assembly  
State Capitol, Room 3141  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**AB 1836 (Jones)**

Dear Assembly Member Jones:

The California Association of Clerks and Elections Officials (CACEO) Elections Legislative Committee has reviewed **AB 1836** which would require a log to be kept of voters depositing ballots for persons for whom they are authorized under existing code. Further, the bill requires that the person dropping off a ballot provide an address and proof of the validity of the address.

We have strong concerns related to the implementation of this bill. Requiring the type of record keeping envisioned in this bill would require at least one additional election worker to handle the volume of vote-by-mail ballots dropped at polling places every election. Even with the additional worker, it would cause congestion in the poll place increasing the likelihood of voters experiencing longer wait times.

Additionally, the bill requires that should the voter's designee be unable to provide the required proof of identity and residency, the poll worker or the election official must contact the voter to verify the validity of the authorization. This requirement would further tax the resources available for voters voting at the polls and likely result in the need for the election official to execute the verification during the canvass process. Many voter registration records do not contain phone or email contact information, necessitating that a letter be sent to some voters requesting confirmation of the authorization. Verification of vote-by-mail ballots must occur prior to processing any provisional ballots. The delay created by requesting and waiting to receive verification from a voter would jeopardize election officials' ability to complete the canvass by the statutory deadline.

In addition to the efficiency concerns outlined, there are fiscal concerns related to increased costs for additional poll workers, staff time spent obtaining confirmation of authorizations and potentially increased overtime due to time constraints created by the delay in canvass processes.

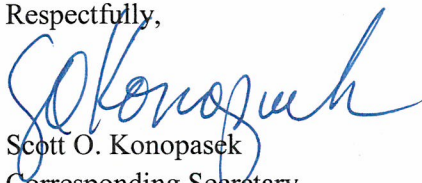
Current law provides that if a ballot is received in a timely manner and the signature matches the signature on file for the voter whose name appears on the ballot, then the ballot is to be tallied. This is true for ballots returned by mail or personal delivery by

the voter or an authorized third party. This bill would place an additional burden upon those voters unable to personally mail or return their voted ballot who must, in order to cast their votes, rely upon their ability to secure a third party to return it in their stead. Our concern is that this could lead to a decrease in participation among these voters.

CACEO has taken an **Oppose** position on this bill. While we share the Assembly Member's concern for the security and integrity of elections, we do not believe this bill would improve the effectiveness of existing controls and security measures. If passed, this bill would result in voters being treated unequally and has the potential to disenfranchise eligible voters and decrease voter participation. It would increase costs and cause congestion at the poll place, negatively impacting voting at the polls.

Should you have questions regarding our position, please contact me at the Contra Costa County Election Division at [scott.konopasek@vote.cccounty.us](mailto:scott.konopasek@vote.cccounty.us) or (925) 335-7808.

Respectfully,



Scott O. Konopasek  
Corresponding Secretary

California Association of Clerks and Election Officials

Cc: Assembly Member Paul Fong, Chair, Assembly Committee on Elections and Redistricting  
Senator Norma Torres, Chair, Senate Committee on Elections and Constitutional Amendments,  
Attention Darren Chesin, Chief Consultant  
Ethan Jones, Chief Consultant, Assembly Committee on Elections and Redistricting  
Barry Brokaw, Sacramento Advocates, Inc.  
Jill LaVine, Co-Chair, CACEO Election Legislative Committee  
Karen Rhea, Co-Chair, CACEO Election Legislative Committee