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CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF CLERKS AND ELECTION OFFICIALS

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February 19, 2013

Senator Hanna-Beth Jackson, Author
State Capitol, Room 5080
Sacramento, CA 95814-4900

Dear Senator Jackson:

The California Association of Clerks and Election Officials Elections Legislative Committee has reviewed **SB 113** (as introduced January 15, 2013), your proposal to lower the minimum age to submit an affidavit of registration to 15 years of age. While the Committee has not taken a formal position on the bill, there have been concerns raised over implementation and ongoing administration.

We understand the desire to increase voter turnout and that studies show early involvement may lead to a lifetime of participation. However, implementing this proposal would impose an onerous task on and increase operational costs for counties. Existing law permits a person who will turn 18 by the time of the election and meets all other requirements to register to submit an affidavit of registration that shall become effective upon the registrant turning 18, *only if* the information is still current. This requirement will lower to 17 years of age, but only when the Secretary of State certifies there is a functioning statewide database. Due to a lack of technology, these affidavits are manually processed. Lowering the age to submit an affidavit will affectively increase the manual workload for election officials as well as increase risks to the ballot box.

Some of the concerns raised during the discussion of your bill were:

- ★ Lack of technology. This proposal deletes the requirement under Chapter 364 (AB 30, 209) mandating that, until the Secretary of State certifies that California has a functioning and secure statewide database that meets the provisions of HAVA, there would be no implementation of pre-registration of voters. Instead, this proposal would become operative on January 1, 2014, in less than one year. Existing voter registration systems operated at the county level have no way to administer preregistration, and ongoing issues with the validation process through CalVoter and lack of a statewide voter registration database in California must be addressed, not forgotten. Without a way to electronically manage preregistrations, counties will be at risk of erroneously qualifying an ineligible registrant to receive a ballot or sign a petition, or failing to keep the early registrants "current information" that is normally obtained via a pre-election address confirmation or USPS data. The legislature should demand the completion of a statewide registration system and improvements to the exchange of data between county-level systems to increase security of the ballot box.
- ★ Cost. Counties would incur costs to upgrade existing voter registration management systems that currently cannot successfully administer pre-registration of 15 year olds. Existing law, as well as this proposal, requires the election official to process the affidavit of the 18 year old *only if the information is still current*. Ongoing costs for the

daily management of a new and separate database of voters who will move, obtain a drivers license, reregister for any reason, or need to be removed from the file should they commit a felony or their name appear on a record from the health department are not yet realized.

- ★ Impact on NVRA Agencies. Expanding the age to preregister to vote will also increase the workload and costs incurred by county operated NVRA agencies required to track and report this new type of registrant.

If you or your staff have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at the Monterey County Elections Department, at (831) 796-1499.

Very truly yours,



Linda Tulett
Correspondence Secretary
California Association of Clerks and Election Officials

- c: Honorable Paul Fong, Chair, Assembly Committee on Elections and Redistricting
Honorable Lou Correa, Chair, Senate Committee on Elections and Constitutional Amendments
Jill Lavine, Co-Chair, CACEO Elections Legislative Committee
Karen Rhea, Co-Chair, CACEO Elections Legislative Committee
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