



August 23, 2013

To: Governor Jerry Brown
Members, California State Senate
Members, California State Assembly

Re: Opposition to Senate Bill 594 (Hill): A Last Minute Gut-and-Amend that Would Shut Police Chiefs, County Sheriffs, School Boards, Cities, Counties, Community Colleges and Other Nonprofits Out of the State and Local Ballot Initiative Process



Our organizations represent California’s police chiefs, county sheriffs, school boards, school districts, community colleges, cities, counties, special districts, district attorneys, the business community and others. **We are writing to express our strong opposition to Senate Bill 594 (Hill), despite the August 21, 2013 amendments.** The recent amendments do not change the fundamental problems with the bill.

- Nonprofit organizations like ours will be shut out of the state and local ballot initiative process – silencing the voices of trusted organizations on matters of critical importance to our constituents and the residents of California.
- SB 594 contains broad language that would stop our organizations from participating in state and local ballot campaigns that have a direct impact on our members and the services they provide to the public. This effectively eliminates our political voice on ballot measures that involve many of California’s most important issues.
- This last minute gut-and-amend is promoted by a few special interests wishing to increase their influence by silencing important and engaged organizations that may not always agree with their political positions. SB 594 was gutted and amended on August 7. Not only does this disrespect the legislative process and preclude legislators and the public from fully digesting the measure and its far-reaching implications, but it also directly contradicts the proponents’ main argument – that the bill is intended to increase transparency in the political process.
- SB 594 is a solution in search of a problem. Our organizations never use public funds for political purposes. California already has strong laws on the books that prohibit the use of public funds in political campaigns. Violations of the Political Reform Act are subject to steep fines and criminal prosecution. Our organizations take great care to ensure we are not expending public resources on campaigns.
- Lastly, SB 594 creates vast new responsibilities for the Attorney General to conduct biennial audits of thousands of nonprofit organizations that receive more than 20 percent of their annual revenues from one or more local agencies. This would create a new and costly bureaucracy at the Attorney General’s office, as well as time-consuming and costly audits for nonprofit organizations.

We hope you will join us in opposing this egregious, last-minute gut-and-amend that would have grave consequences for our members, the citizens we serve, and the political process in California.

(more)



LOS ANGELES AREA
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
125th anniversary

Sincerely,

Chief Kim J. Raney
President
California Police Chiefs Association

Gregory J. Ahern
President
California State Sheriffs' Association

Vernon M. Billy
Executive Director
California School Boards Association

Mack Jenkins
President
Chief Probation Officers of California

Carol Leveroni
Executive Director
California Peace Officers' Association

Catherine Smith
Executive Director
Fire Districts Association of California

Wes Smith
Executive Director
Association of California School Administrators

Ron Alves
President
California Emergency Services Association

Cory Salzillo
Director of Legislation
California District Attorneys Association

Scott Lay
President/CEO
Community College League of California

Peter Birdsall
Executive Director
California County Superintendents
Educational Services Association

Patricia Ryan
Executive Director
California Mental Health Directors
Association

Jeffrey A. Vaca
Deputy Executive Director of Governmental Relations
California Association of School Business Officials

Paul Smith
Senior Legislative Advocate
Rural County Representatives of California

Frank J. Mecca
Executive Director
County Welfare Directors Association of California

Darla Guenzler, Ph.D.
Executive Director
California Council of Land Trusts

Rico Mastrodonato
Senior Government Relations Manager
Trust for Public Land

Edward Thompson Jr.
California Director
American Farmland Trust

Matthew Cate
Executive Director
California State Association of Counties

Chris McKenzie
Executive Director
League of California Cities

Rosario Garza
Executive Director
California Library Association

Amber Wiley
Senior Legislative Advocate
Association of California Healthcare Districts

Gary Toebben
President & CEO
Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce

Jim Lazarus
Senior Vice President of Public Policy
San Francisco Chamber of Commerce

Jim Wunderman
President & Chief Executive Officer
Bay Area Council

Randy Gordon
President & CEO
Long Beach Chamber of Commerce



(more)



Sincerely,

Steve Van Dorn
President & CEO
Santa Clara Chamber of Commerce

Neil McCormick
Executive Director
California Special Districts Association

Mario Guerra
Mayor of Downey and President Elect
Independent Cities Association

Jolena Voorhis
Executive Director
Urban Counties Caucus

Roseanne Foust
President & CEO
San Mateo County Economic Development
Association

Steve Tye
President
California Contract Cities Association

Carol Griese
Executive Director
California Association of Public Cemeteries

Robert Doyle
General Manager
East Bay Regional Park District

Jamison Watts
Executive Director
Marin Agricultural Land Trust

Jill Bays
Director
Transition Habitat Conservancy

Nita Vail
Chief Executive Officer
California Rangeland Trust

Walter T. Moore
President
Peninsula Open Space Trust

Jeff Darlington
Executive Director
Placer Land Trust

Thomas Maloney
Executive Director
Tejon Ranch Conservancy

Roberta Larson
Executive Director
California Association of Sanitation Districts

Janet Selby
Secretary
California Association of Joint Powers
Authorities (CAJPA)

James F. Anderson, CAE
President & CEO
California Society of Association Executives

Susan Bray
Executive Director
Association of California Community
College Administrators

Oscar Garcia
President & CEO
Mountain View Chamber of Commerce

