



August 25, 2013

1100 K Street
Suite 101
Sacramento
California
95814

Telephone
916.327.7500
Facsimile
916.441.5507

The Honorable Mike Gatto, Chair
Assembly Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 2114
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: **SB 594 (Hill) – Use of public resources
As amended August 21, 2013 – OPPOSE
Set for hearing August 30, 2013 – Assembly Appropriations Committee**

Dear Assembly Member Gatto:

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), I write to express our opposition to SB 594, Senator Jerry Hill's measure that would place significant new restrictions on nonprofit organizations that receive public funds and participate in campaign activities. CSAC has in the past utilized our non-public funds to participate financially in ballot measure campaigns and SB 594 would significantly restrict those activities in the future, as well as other activities associated with ballot measures. CSAC has consistently taken a measured approach when considering participation in only those measures that have a direct impact on our counties and the people we serve and we are concerned by this last minute attempt to effectively silence the voice of California's counties on matters of statewide importance.

CSAC does not object to disclosure or oversight by appropriate government entities over campaign spending. We faithfully operate under the same laws that govern all campaign contributors, as we are subject to scrutiny by the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC), the Franchise Tax Board, and the Internal Revenue Service. *Contrary to proponents' assertions, there is no evidence that CSAC has inappropriately utilized public resources from any source for campaign purposes.* In fact, in 2009, the FPPC investigated complaints against CSAC and other local agency associations about our use of funds in campaigns and found no evidence that CSAC and those associations had violated the Political Reform Act. What is clear is that SB 594 is not about disclosure and transparency, but about fundamental changes to the definition of "public resources", what constitutes a "contribution" and "expenditure", and compliance audits with the goal of silencing organizations like ours.

SB 594 is a solution in search of a problem. CSAC is prepared to spend the time necessary to educate legislators about our process for engaging in statewide ballot measures, our finances, and our relationships with other local agencies to help you understand our advocacy efforts on behalf of California's 58 counties. But we reject any assertion that we have evaded the law when it comes to CSAC's participation in California's initiative process. We are strongly opposed to any efforts to effectively eliminate our voice in matters of statewide importance, particularly those proposed at the last days of the legislative session.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jean Kinney Hurst', is written over a blue line. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Jean Kinney Hurst
Senior Legislative Representative

cc: The Honorable Jerry Hill, California State Senate
Members and Consultants, Assembly Appropriations Committee