

Date of Hearing: April 27, 2016

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON ELECTIONS AND REDISTRICTING

Shirley Weber, Chair

AB 2911 (Committee on Elections and Redistricting) – As Introduced March 15, 2016

SUBJECT: Voting: voter information guides.

SUMMARY: Standardizes terms in the Elections Code used to refer to the county and state voter information guides. Specifically, **this bill** deletes the terms "sample ballot," "ballot pamphlet," "voter's pamphlet," "voter pamphlet," "state ballot pamphlet," and "statewide voter pamphlet," and replaces them with "state voter information guide" or "county voter information guide," as appropriate.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Requires the Secretary of State (SOS) to mail to all households in which voters are registered a state voter information guide, as specified
- 2) Requires the guide to contain information including, but not limited to, a complete copy of each state measure, arguments and rebuttals for and against each state measure, and an analysis of each state measure.
- 3) Requires county elections officials to mail a county voter information guide to each voter in the jurisdiction, as specified.
- 4) Requires the county voter information guide to contain, among other things, a copy of the official ballot (sample ballot), a notice of the polling place, a complete copy of each local measure, and an analysis of each measure

FISCAL EFFECT: None. Keyed non-fiscal by the Legislative Counsel.

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Purpose of the Bill:** This is one of the Assembly Elections & Redistricting Committee's bills to clean up the Elections Code and standardize terms that are used to refer to the county voter information guide and the state voter information guide, as specified. These provisions were requested by the California Association of Clerks and Election Officials (CACEO).
- 2) **County and State Voter Information Guides:** Elections Code Section 9094 requires the SOS to mail to all households in which voters are registered a state voter information guide, as specified. Existing law requires the guide to contain information including, but not limited to, a complete copy of each state measure, arguments and rebuttals for and against each state measure, and an analysis of each state measure. Additionally, Elections Code Sections 13300-13303 require county elections officials to mail a county voter information guide to each voter in the jurisdiction, as specified. Existing law requires the county voter information guide to contain, among other things, a copy of the official ballot (sample ballot), a notice of the polling place, a complete copy of each local measure, and an analysis of each measure.

Throughout the Elections Code, however, there are a variety of terms used to refer to state or county voter information guides. For example, various Elections Code Sections use the terms "ballot pamphlet," "state ballot pamphlet," and "statewide voter pamphlet" when describing the state voter information guide. Moreover, the terms "sample ballot" and "voter pamphlet" are used throughout the Elections Code when referring to the county voter information guide.

According to the county elections officials the use of different terms throughout the Elections Code can be confusing when trying to comply with existing law. This bill will clean-up the Elections Code and standardize these terms. Specifically, this bill deletes the terms "sample ballot," "ballot pamphlet," "voter's pamphlet," "voter pamphlet," "state ballot pamphlet," and "statewide voter pamphlet" and replaces them with "state voter information guide" or "county voter information guide," as appropriate.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**Support**

California Association of Clerks and Election Officials

Opposition

None on file.

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