November 23, 2009 09-0093

VIA PERSONAL DELIVERY

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INITIATIVE COORDINATOR
ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr.
Attorney General
1300 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Attention: Krystal Paris, Initiative Coordinator

Re: Request for Title and Summary- Initiative Constitutional Amendment

Dear Mr. Brown:

Pursuant to Article II, Section 10(d) of the California Constitution and Section 9002 of the Elections Code, I hereby request that a title and summary be prepared for the attached initiative constitutional amendment. Enclosed is a check for $200.00. My residence address is attached.

All inquires or correspondence relative to this initiative should be directed to Nielsen, Merksamer, Parrinello, Mueller & Naylor, LLP, 1415 L Street, Suite 1200, Sacramento, CA 95814, (916) 446-6752, Attention: Steve Lucas (telephone: 415/389-6800).

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Allan Zaremberg, Proponent

Enclosure: Proposed Initiative

SECTION 1 - **FINDINGS AND DECLARATIONS OF PURPOSE.**

The People of the State of California find and declare that:

(a) Since the people overwhelmingly approved Proposition 13 in 1978, the Constitution of the State of California has required that increases in state taxes be adopted by not less than two-thirds of the members elected to each house of the Legislature.

(b) Since the enactment of Proposition 218 in 1996, the Constitution of the State of California has required that increases in local taxes be approved by the voters.

(c) Despite these limitations, California taxes have continued to escalate. Rates for state personal income taxes, state and local sales and use taxes, and a myriad of state and local business taxes are at all-time highs. Californians are taxed at one of the highest levels of any state in the nation.

(d) Recently, the Legislature added another $12 billion in new taxes to be paid by drivers, shoppers, and anyone who earns an income.

(e) This escalation in taxation does not account for the recent phenomenon whereby the Legislature and local governments have disguised new taxes as "fees" in order to extract even more revenue from California taxpayers without having to abide by these constitutional voting requirements. Fees couched as "regulatory" but which exceed the reasonable costs of actual regulation or are simply imposed to raise revenue for a new program and are not part of any licensing or permitting program are actually taxes and should be subject to the limitations applicable to the imposition of taxes.

(f) In order to ensure the effectiveness of these constitutional limitations, this measure also defines a "tax" for state and local purposes so that neither the Legislature nor local governments can circumvent these restrictions on increasing taxes by simply defining new or expanded taxes as "fees."

SECTION 2 - **SECTION 3 OF ARTICLE XIII A OF THE CALIFORNIA CONSTITUTION IS AMENDED TO READ:**

SEC. 3. *(a)* ~~From and after the effective date of this article, any changes in state taxes enacted for the purpose of increasing revenues collected pursuant thereto~~ *Any change in state statute which results in any taxpayer paying a higher tax* ~~whether by increased rates or changes in methods of computation~~ must be imposed by an Act passed by not less than two-thirds of all members elected to each of the two houses of the Legislature, except that no new ad valorem taxes on real property, or sales or transaction taxes on the sales of real property may be imposed.

(b) As used in this section, "tax" means any levy, charge, or exaction of any kind imposed by the State, except the following:

(1) A charge imposed for a specific benefit conferred or privilege granted directly to the payor that is not provided to those not charged, and which does not exceed the reasonable costs to the State of conferring the benefit or granting the privilege to the payor.

(2) A charge imposed for a specific government service or product provided directly to the payor that is not provided to those not charged, and which does not exceed the reasonable costs to the State of providing the service or product to the payor.

(3) A charge imposed for the reasonable regulatory costs to the State incident to issuing licenses and permits, performing investigations, inspections, and audits, enforcing agricultural marketing orders, and the administrative enforcement and adjudication thereof.

(4) A charge imposed for entrance to or use of state property, or the purchase, rental, or lease of state property, except charges governed by Section 15 of Article XI.

(5) A fine, penalty, or other monetary charge imposed by the judicial branch of government or the State, as a result of a violation of law.

(c) Any tax adopted after January 1, 2010, but prior to the effective date of this Act, that was not adopted in compliance with the requirements of this section is void 12 months after the effective date of this Act unless the tax is reenacted by the Legislature and signed into law by the Governor in compliance with the requirements of this section.

(d) The State bears the burden of proving by a preponderance of the evidence that a levy, charge, or other exaction is not a tax, that the amount is no more than necessary to cover the reasonable costs of the governmental activity, and that the manner in which those costs are allocated to a payor bear a fair or reasonable relationship to the payor's burdens on, or benefits received from, the governmental activity.

SECTION 3 - **SECTION 1 OF ARTICLE XIII C OF THE CALIFORNIA CONSTITUTION IS AMENDED TO READ:**

SECTION 1. Definitions. As used in this article:

(a) "General tax" means any tax imposed for general governmental purposes.

(b) "Local government" means any county, city, city and county, including a charter city or county, any special district, or any other local or regional governmental entity.

(c) "Special district" means an agency of the State, formed pursuant to general law or a special act, for the local performance of governmental or proprietary functions with

limited geographic boundaries including, but not limited to, school districts and redevelopment agencies.

(d) "Special tax" means any tax imposed for specific purposes, including a tax imposed for specific purposes, which is placed into a general fund.

(e) As used in this article, "tax" means any levy, charge, or exaction of any kind imposed by a local government, except the following:

(1) A charge imposed for a specific benefit conferred or privilege granted directly to the payor that is not provided to those not charged, and which does not exceed the reasonable costs to the local government of conferring the benefit or granting the privilege.

(2) A charge imposed for a specific government service or product provided directly to the payor that is not provided to those not charged, and which does not exceed the reasonable costs to the local government of providing the service or product.

(3) A charge imposed for the reasonable regulatory costs to a local government for issuing licenses and permits, performing investigations, inspections, and audits, enforcing agricultural marketing orders, and the administrative enforcement and adjudication thereof.

(4) A charge imposed for entrance to or use of local government property, or the purchase, rental, or lease of local government property.

(5) A fine, penalty, or other monetary charge imposed by the judicial branch of government or a local government, as a result of a violation of law.

(6) A charge imposed as a condition of property development.

(7) Assessments and property-related fees imposed in accordance with the provisions of Article XIII D.

The local government bears the burden of proving by a preponderance of the evidence that a levy, charge, or other exaction is not a tax, that the amount is no more than necessary to cover the reasonable costs of the governmental activity, and that the manner in which those costs are allocated to a payor bear a fair or reasonable relationship to the payor's burdens on, or benefits received from, the governmental activity.

SECTION 4 - **CONFLICTING MEASURES.**

In the event that this measure and another measure or measures relating to the legislative or local votes required to enact taxes or fees shall appear on the same statewide election ballot, the provisions of the other measure or measures shall be deemed to be in conflict with this measure. In the event that this measure shall receive a greater number of affirmative votes, the provisions of this measure shall prevail in their entirety, and the

provisions of the other measure or measures relating to the legislative or local votes required to enact taxes or fees shall be null and void.

SECTION 5 - **SEVERABILITY.**

If any provision of this Act, or any part thereof, is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions shall not be affected, but shall remain in full force and effect, and to this end the provisions of this Act are severable.