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Jan 30, 2026

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INITIATIVE COORDINATOR
ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE

Office of the Attorney General
Initiative Coordinator
1300 I Street, 17th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Request for Title and Summary for Proposed Initiative

To the Initiative Coordinator:

Pursuant to Article II, Section 10(d) of the California Constitution, I hereby submit the attached proposed statewide initiative measure, titled the "**Yesterday's Voters Only Needed New Empowerment (YVONNE) Act**" and request that you prepare a circulating title and summary of the measure as provided by law.

Procedural Note: The Proponents intend to qualify this measure for the November 3, 2026 General Election. We respectfully request that the title and summary be prepared as expeditiously as the Elections Code permits to allow sufficient time for signature verification prior to the qualification deadline.

Mailing Instructions: Please direct all official correspondence regarding this initiative to the email address listed above or the Hawthorne mailing address when email is not an option.

I have included with this letter the required certifications pursuant to Elections Code sections 9001 and 9608, and a check in the amount of \$2,000.00.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,



Thomas Jefferson Cares

Dated: January 2, 2026

YESTERDAY'S VOTERS ONLY NEEDED NEW EMPOWERMENT, or the YVONNE ACT (pronounced ee-VON-nuh)

SECTION 1. TITLE.

This measure shall be known and may be cited as the "Yesterday's Voters Only Needed New Empowerment (YVONNE) Act."

SECTION 2. FINDINGS AND DECLARATIONS.

The People of the State of California find and declare as follows:

- (a) We stand at a crucible moment in human history. The emergence of artificial intelligence and accelerating technological change are transforming our economy, our society, and our world at a pace unprecedented in human experience. In such times, the machinery of democracy must be capable of responding with equal speed and wisdom.
- (b) The power of initiative—the right of the people to propose and enact laws directly—is among the most precious inheritances of California citizenship, enshrined in our Constitution since 1911 by reformers who understood that the people must always retain the ultimate authority to shape their own destiny.
- (c) Yet our current system permits the people to exercise this sacred right only once every two years, in November of even-numbered years. This limitation, imposed by the Legislature in 2011 without the consent of the voters, is inadequate to the demands of an era in which the world may change more in two years than it once changed in twenty.
- (d) From 1960 to 2011, Californians could place initiatives on primary, general, and special election ballots, providing more frequent opportunities for civic participation and democratic course-correction. We seek to restore and expand upon this tradition.
- (e) The challenges before us—the transformation of work by artificial intelligence, the need to reimagine education and economic security, the imperative to maintain human agency and dignity in an age of thinking machines—cannot wait for the slow cadence of biennial democracy. The people require more frequent opportunities to deliberate, to decide, and to act.
- (f) California has always been a place where the future is invented. We are home to the technologies that are reshaping human civilization. It is fitting that we should also pioneer the democratic innovations necessary to govern wisely in the age those technologies are creating.
- (g) More frequent elections for ballot measures will enable California to iterate, experiment, learn, and adapt—to become a laboratory of democracy capable of discovering solutions to problems that do not yet have names.
- (h) The public servants who administer the initiative process—the Attorney General and the Initiative Coordinator who craft the titles and summaries that inform voters, the Legislative Analyst who provides the fiscal analysis upon which citizens rely, the Secretary of State who oversees qualification, the Department of Finance, and the county elections officials who verify signatures and conduct elections—are essential guardians of direct democracy. Their work is difficult, consequential, and chronically undervalued. They deserve recognition, respect, and compensation commensurate with their vital role in our system of self-government.

(i) A democracy that cannot move at the speed of change is a democracy that will be overtaken by events. A people who can express their will only rarely are a people whose will may be rendered irrelevant by the pace of history. We refuse this fate. We choose to equip ourselves with the tools of rapid, responsive, and responsible self-governance.

(j) This measure is an act of faith in the people of California—faith that, given more frequent opportunities to participate in direct democracy, they will rise to meet the challenges of this extraordinary moment with the wisdom, courage, and determination that have always defined the California spirit.

SECTION 3. PURPOSE AND INTENT.

The People of the State of California hereby declare their purpose and intent in enacting this measure to be as follows:

(a) To create new opportunities for direct democracy by establishing April elections in odd-numbered years for state and local propositions.

(b) To restore June elections in even-numbered years for state and local propositions.

(c) To modestly reduce signature requirements to facilitate citizen participation in the initiative process.

(d) To fairly compensate the public servants who administer the initiative and election process.

(e) To fund these purposes through a modest surcharge on very high incomes.

SECTION 4. INITIATIVE ELECTIONS.

Section 1.5 is added to Article II of the California Constitution, to read:

SEC. 1.5. (a) In addition to any other elections provided by this Constitution or by statute, a statewide election for the purpose of voting on initiative and referendum measures, and legislative bond measures and constitutional amendments referred to the voters, shall be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in April of each odd-numbered year, beginning in April 2027.

(b) Notwithstanding any statute to the contrary, initiative and referendum measures may be submitted to the voters at the statewide primary election held in June of each even-numbered year.

(c) Local governments, including but not limited to counties, cities, school districts, and special districts, may place local initiative measures, referenda, bond measures, and other ballot questions on any statewide election established by this section or by subdivision (b).

(d) The Legislature shall appropriate funds necessary to conduct elections required by this section.

SECTION 5. SIGNATURE REQUIREMENTS AND COLLECTION PERIOD.

Section 8 of Article II of the California Constitution is amended to read:

SEC. 8. (a) The initiative is the power of the electors to propose statutes and amendments to the Constitution and to adopt or reject them.

(b) An initiative measure may be proposed by presenting to the Secretary of State a petition that sets forth the text of the proposed statute or amendment to the Constitution and is certified to have been signed by electors equal in number to **three and one-half percent (3.5%)** in the case of a statute, and **six percent (6%)** in the case of an amendment to the Constitution, of the votes for all candidates for Governor at the last gubernatorial election.

(c) Proponents of an initiative measure shall have three hundred sixty-five (365) days from the date the Attorney General provides the circulating title and summary to collect and submit the required signatures.

(d) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no public review or comment period shall be required prior to the Attorney General's preparation of the circulating title and summary. The Attorney General shall prepare and issue the circulating title and summary within fifteen (15) days of receiving a request therefor.

(e) The Secretary of State shall then submit the measure at the next general election held at least 131 days after it qualifies or at any statewide election held pursuant to Section 1.5 of this Article at least 131 days after it qualifies, or at a special statewide election held at least 131 days after it qualifies and called by the Governor for that purpose.

(f) An initiative measure embracing more than one subject may not be submitted to the electors or have any effect.

SECTION 6. [RESERVED]

SECTION 7. INITIATIVE PROCESS SURCHARGE.

Section 19.5 is added to Article XIII of the California Constitution, to read:

SEC. 19.5. (a) In addition to any other taxes imposed by this article or by statute, there is hereby imposed an annual surcharge on that portion of a taxpayer's taxable income that exceeds ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) at the rate of five percent (5%).

(b) Revenues from the surcharge imposed by this section shall be deposited in the Initiative Process Fund, which is hereby created in the State Treasury.

(c) Moneys in the Initiative Process Fund shall be appropriated in the following order of priority:

(1) Forty million dollars (\$40,000,000) annually shall be transferred to the General Fund;

(2) The costs of conducting elections required by Section 1.5 of Article II;

(3) Supplemental compensation as provided in Section 8 of this measure.

(d) Any revenues in excess of the amounts required for the purposes specified in paragraphs (1) through (3) of subdivision (c) shall be allocated as supplemental compensation to personnel in the offices of the Attorney General, Legislative Analyst, Secretary of State, Department of Finance, and county elections officials responsible for initiative processing and election administration, distributed proportionally to each employee's base compensation.

(e) The surcharge imposed by this section shall not be offset by any credit, deduction, or other reduction, and shall be collected and administered by the Franchise Tax Board in the same manner as the personal income tax.

(f) No appropriation from the General Fund shall be made for any purpose described in this section or in Section 8 of this measure. This measure shall be entirely self-funding from the surcharge imposed by subdivision (a).

SECTION 8. SUPPLEMENTAL COMPENSATION FOR INITIATIVE ADMINISTRATION.

Section 19.6 is added to Article XIII of the California Constitution, to read:

SEC. 19.6. (a) Personnel in the following offices who perform duties related to the initiative, referendum, or ballot measure process shall receive supplemental compensation from the Initiative Process Fund:

- (1) The Office of the Attorney General, including the Initiative Coordinator and all personnel involved in the preparation of titles and summaries;
- (2) The Legislative Analyst's Office, including all personnel involved in the preparation of fiscal analyses of ballot measures;
- (3) The Department of Finance, including all personnel involved in the preparation of fiscal estimates of initiative measures;
- (4) The Office of the Secretary of State, including all personnel involved in the qualification, certification, and administration of initiative and referendum measures;
- (5) County elections officials and their staff involved in signature verification and election administration for ballot measures.

(b) The supplemental compensation provided under this section shall be:

- (1) For personnel in state offices listed in paragraphs (1) through (4) of subdivision (a): an annual bonus equal to fifty percent (50%) of the employee's base salary, prorated for employees who perform initiative-related duties for only a portion of their work time.
- (2) For county elections personnel listed in paragraph (5) of subdivision (a): an annual allocation to each county equal to twenty dollars (\$20) per signature page verified, to be distributed as supplemental compensation to personnel involved in verification.
- (3) In recognition of their singular importance to the integrity and efficiency of the initiative process, the following officials shall receive additional supplemental compensation equal to one hundred percent (100%) of their base salary, in addition to any other supplemental compensation provided by this section:

(A) The Attorney General;

(B) The Legislative Analyst;

(C) The Initiative Coordinator in the Office of the Attorney General.

(c) The supplemental compensation provided by this section is in addition to any other compensation provided by law.

SECTION 9. IMPLEMENTATION.

(a) The Secretary of State, Attorney General, Legislative Analyst, Department of Finance, and Controller shall take all actions necessary to implement this measure.

- (b) The Legislature may enact legislation to further the purposes of this measure, provided that such legislation is consistent with and does not limit or restrict the provisions of this measure.
- (c) The surcharge imposed by Section 7 of this measure shall apply to taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2027.
- (d) The first election conducted pursuant to Section 1.5 of Article II shall be held in April 2027.

SECTION 10. SEVERABILITY.

- (a) The provisions of this measure are severable. If any portion, section, subdivision, paragraph, clause, sentence, phrase, word, or application of this measure is for any reason held to be invalid by a decision of any court of competent jurisdiction, that decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this measure.
- (b) The People of the State of California hereby declare that they would have adopted this measure and each and every portion, section, subdivision, paragraph, clause, sentence, phrase, and word thereof not declared invalid or unconstitutional without regard to whether any portion of this measure or application thereof would be subsequently declared invalid.

SECTION 11. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This measure shall take effect on the fifth day after the Secretary of State certifies the results of the election at which it is approved by the voters.

SECTION 12. CONFLICTING MEASURES.

- (a) In the event that this measure and another measure or measures relating to elections or the initiative process appear on the same statewide ballot, the provisions of the other measure or measures shall be deemed to conflict with this measure.
- (b) In the event that this measure receives a greater number of affirmative votes than a measure deemed to be in conflict with it, the provisions of this measure shall prevail in their entirety, and the other measure or measures shall be null and void.

SECTION 13. LIBERAL CONSTRUCTION.

This measure shall be liberally construed to effectuate its purposes of expanding opportunities for direct democracy, encouraging civic participation, and fairly compensating those who administer the initiative process.