

June 10, 2015

Hon. Kamala D. Harris
Attorney General
1300 I Street, 17th Floor
Sacramento, California 95814

Attention: Ms. Ashley Johansson
Initiative Coordinator

Dear Attorney General Harris:

Pursuant to Elections Code Section 9005, we have reviewed the proposed statutory initiative regarding religious organizations and criminal law (A.G. File No. 15-0023).

Uncertainties Concerning Fiscal Impacts. Among other provisions, this measure would remove the “tax status” of a religious organization if any “party” within such an organization directs, influences, or persuades someone “either by duress or agreement” to “provide false testimony during a legal judicial court proceeding with the intent to conceal facts of any kind.” Because some provisions of the measure are unclear and/or would likely be challenged in the courts, there is considerable uncertainty concerning the fiscal effects of the measure on state and local governments. Assuming that provisions of the measure can be implemented, there may be some revenue gains for state and local governments due to the removal of tax-exempt status if any religious organizations are found to violate the measure’s provisions. There may also be some additional state or local government costs to investigate claims arising under this measure.

Fiscal Effects

The measure could have the following fiscal effects:

- If implemented, possible minor increase in state or local government revenues if any entities are found to violate the measure’s provisions and a possible minor increase in state or local government costs to investigate claims arising under the measure.

Sincerely,

Mac Taylor
Legislative Analyst

Michael Cohen
Director of Finance