

February 10, 2005

Hon. Bill Lockyer  
Attorney General  
1300 I Street, 17<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Sacramento, California 95814

Attention: Ms. Tricia Knight  
Initiative Coordinator

Dear Attorney General Lockyer:

Pursuant to Elections Code Section 9005, we have reviewed the proposed initiative constitutional amendment related to redistricting (File No. SA2005RF0006).

### **Background**

The California Constitution requires the Legislature to adjust the boundary lines of the state Legislature (Assembly and Senate), Board of Equalization (BOE), and the U.S. House of Representatives districts every ten years, following the federal census. This process is known as “redistricting.” The primary purpose of redistricting is to establish districts which are “reasonably equal” in population.

Typically, redistricting plans are included in legislation and become law after passage of the bill by the Legislature and signature by the Governor. In the past, when the Legislature and Governor have been unable to agree on redistricting plans, the California Supreme Court performed the redistricting.

### **Major Provisions**

This measure adds new requirements to the way boundaries of districts for the state Legislature, BOE, and the U.S. House of Representatives from California are determined.

*Advisory Commission.* Under the measure, the Legislature would be required to appoint a bipartisan advisory commission composed of nonlegislators to produce redistricting plans for legislative consideration. As under current law, the approval of a redistricting plan would require the passage of a bill by the Legislature and signature by the Governor.

***Requirements of District Boundaries.*** For future redistricting plans, the measure adds new requirements regarding the drawing of district boundaries. Among these requirements are: (1) for state offices, population differences among districts cannot exceed 2 percent; (2) the plan must not dilute the voting strength of minorities; and (3) the plan must minimize the splitting of counties and cities into multiple districts.

**Fiscal Effect**

Under the measure, the advisory commission would be responsible for developing proposals regarding redistricting. The costs of the commission would likely be similar to the Legislature's costs for past redistricting efforts. The measure, therefore, would likely have no significant fiscal impact.

***Summary.*** The measure would likely have no significant fiscal impact.

Sincerely,

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Elizabeth G. Hill  
Legislative Analyst

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Tom Campbell  
Director of Finance