

Voters' Right to Know Initiative

Stopping Unlimited Secret Money Unleashed by Citizens United

The Voters' Right to Know Act is an amendment to the California constitution for the November 2016 ballot. We must turn in 585,407 valid signatures from registered California voters by April 26 to qualify it.

Includes California DISCLOSE Act's clear disclosure on political ads

- **Requires the three largest funders of \$50,000 or more of ballot measure ads and ads about candidates by outside groups to be shown clearly and unambiguously** so viewers see who's actually paying for it.
- **On television and video ads** the disclosures must be shown on a solid black background on the bottom 1/3 of the screen for a full five seconds. Each funder must be listed in large clear type on a separate line, without trying to make them harder to read by putting everything in all capital letters. No more fine print.
- **Applies to television ads, radio ads, print ads, mass mailers, and robocalls.** Radio ads and robocalls must say the single largest funder. Applies whether ads are paid for by corporations, unions, or millionaires.
- **Uses earmarking and tracing rules** to identify original donors so ads have to display the true funders instead of misleading names even if funders try to hide behind multiple layers of organizations.

Clear Disclosure on Bottom Third of screen for 5 seconds – Applied to Prop 26.

Paid for by Stop Hidden Taxes, No on 25/Yes on 26. This committee has major funding from
Chevron
Philip Morris USA
Anheuser-Busch Companies
Funding Details At www.fpcc.gov/topcontributors

First-In-Nation State Constitutional Right to Disclosure Will Say

"The right of the people to disclosure of money that is used to affect campaigns and money used to influence governmental decisions, along with the right to regulate the raising and spending of money to influence elections and governmental actions are state constitutional rights that are fundamental and equal to the other rights enumerated in the California State Constitution."

Other Disclosure and Anti-Corruption Reforms

- Provides funding to California Secretary of State for new state funding disclosure website.
- Requires government contract lobbyists to register.
- Bans gifts from lobbyists and their clients.
- Restricts revolving-door job offers for elected officials for two years.

Experts Agree: It's Constitutional, Reasonable, and Necessary

"This proposed California constitutional amendment goes a long way toward protecting our democracy by recognizing a fundamental right -- the right of the public to have responsive and accountable political leaders..."

— **Ann Ravel**, former Chair of the California Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC)

"This measure will send a message to the rest of the country that we will not tolerate unlimited sums of undisclosed special interest money to pollute our elections..."

— **Dan Schnur**, Director of the Jesse M. Unruh Institute of Politics at the University of Southern California



Paid for by the California Clean Money Action Fund
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Examples of Popular Ballot Measures Affected by Anonymous Spending

Prop 45 (2014). The Insurance Rate Public Justification and Accountability Act was favored by voters more than 4 to 1. It lost after \$57 million in ads by "Californians against Higher Health Care Costs". Most voters never knew the largest funders were actually giant insurers Kaiser, Wellpoint, and Blue Shield of California.

Prop 87 (2006). An oil severance tax to pay for alternative energy was favored by voters nearly 3 to 1. It lost after \$94 million in ads by "Californians against Higher Taxes". Most voters never knew the largest funders were actually Chevron, AERA Energy, and Occidental Oil and Gas.

Prop 29 (2012). Increased cigarette taxes for cancer research led in the polls by 2 to 1. It was defeated after \$66 million in ads with largest funders Philip Morris and RJ Reynolds Tobacco. But voters saw the Orwellian "Paid for by Californians Against Out of Control Taxes and Spending".

Prop 37 (2012). Mandatory labeling of genetically engineered foods led by more than 2 to 1. It was defeated after \$44 million in ads by "Coalition against the Costly Food Labeling Proposition". The largest funders were actually Monsanto, Dupont, and Pepsico.

What the Press is Saying

"Registered voters should sign the petition to put the "Voters Right to Know Act" on the November 2016 ballot. It is squarely in their interest...."

— San Jose Mercury News Editorial 9/25/2015

"... 'Dark money' is as big an impediment to clean government as it has ever been. The rhetoric of the 2016 race shows politicians and voters know it.... As this initiative moves forward, it may give voters a worthy place to channel their frustration."

— Los Angeles Daily News Editorial 10/2/2015

"At last there's an initiative for Californians who think the initiative process has been overrun with the type of monied special interests it was designed to combat."

— San Francisco Chronicle Editorial 9/18/2015

" 'Right to Know' would improve election watch... they have the money and the knowledge base for a successful campaign."

— Contra Costa Times Editorial/The Reporter 9/30/2015

Voters' Right to Know Act Timeline

- Valid signatures from registered California voters needed to qualify: 585,407
- First petitions arrived from printers and first petition signed: Dec 2, 2015.
- Deadline to turn in valid signatures: April 26, 2016.
- When voters get to vote on it if it qualifies: Tuesday, November 8, 2016

Help Our Volunteers Qualify the Voters' Right to Know Act!

www.YesFairElections.org



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