

# DEBRA BOWEN

## CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE NEWS RELEASE

DB09:079

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
December 1, 2009

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### **Criminal-Liability Initiative Enters Circulation**

***Criminalizes False Statements About Legislative Acts, Elections, or Government Employees. Initiative Constitutional Amendment.***

**SACRAMENTO** – Secretary of State Debra Bowen today announced that the proponent of a new initiative may begin collecting petition signatures for his measure.

The Attorney General prepares the legal title and summary that is required to appear on initiative petitions. When the official language is complete, the Attorney General forwards it to the proponent and to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State then provides calendar deadlines to the proponent and to county elections officials, and the initiative may be circulated for signatures. The Attorney General's official title and summary for the measure is as follows:

**CRIMINALIZES FALSE STATEMENTS ABOUT LEGISLATIVE ACTS, ELECTIONS, OR GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES. INITIATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT.** Amends constitution to hold candidates for public office, government officials and employees, and members of the media criminally liable for intentionally making a false statement of "material fact" about legislative acts, elections for public office, or the employment or dismissal of government employees. Imposes on violators a 2 to 10 year prison term, a \$10,000 to \$500,000 fine, or both, and a lifetime ban on serving as a government official or employee, or member of the media. Permits private citizens to criminally prosecute suspected violators. Summary of estimate by Legislative Analyst and Director of Finance of fiscal impact on state and local government: Unknown increase in state criminal justice costs offset partially or entirely by fines levied against persons convicted under the measure. (09-0049.)

The Secretary of State's tracking number for this measure is 1399 and the Attorney General's tracking number is 09-0049.

The proponent for this measure, Glen C. Simmons, must collect signatures of 694,354 registered voters – the number equal to 8% of the total votes cast for governor in the 2006 gubernatorial election – in order to qualify it for the ballot. The proponent has 150 days to circulate petitions for this measure, meaning the signatures must be collected by April 29, 2010.

The initiative proponent can be reached at [glencsimmons@univ.us.com](mailto:glencsimmons@univ.us.com). No phone number was provided.

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