INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM
QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR 2007, 2008, 2009, AND 2010
(Based on the number of votes cast for the office of Governor at the 2006 General Election)

Initiative

The initiative process is the power of the people to place statutes and constitutional amendments on the ballot. These measures can either create or change statutes (including general obligation bonds) or amend the California Constitution. If the initiative proposes to amend California statutes, the proponents must gather petition signatures of registered voters equal to 5% of the total votes cast for Governor in the last gubernatorial election. If the initiative proposes to amend the California Constitution, the signature requirement is 8% of the total votes cast for Governor at the last gubernatorial election. A qualified initiative is placed on the ballot at a regularly scheduled statewide election that occurs at least 131 days after the measure qualifies or at a special election called by the Governor.

An initiative requires a simple majority of the public's vote to be enacted. A "yes" vote approves and a "no" vote rejects a proposed statute or constitutional amendment placed on the ballot through the initiative process.

Number of Signatures Required for an Initiative Statutory Measure: 433,971
[5% of 8,679,416 per California Constitution, Article II, Section 8(b)]

Number of Signatures Required for an Initiative Constitutional Amendment: 694,354
[8% of 8,679,416 per California Constitution, Article II, Section 8(b)]

Referendum

Referendum is the power of the people to approve or reject statutes already adopted by the Legislature. However, this does not apply to statutes that have urgency clauses, call for elections, or provide for tax levies or appropriations for current expenses of the state. Voters wishing to prevent a legislatively adopted statute from taking effect must – within 90 days of enactment of the bill – gather signatures of registered voters equal to 5% of the total votes cast for Governor in the last gubernatorial election. A qualified referendum is placed on the ballot at a regularly scheduled statewide election that occurs at least 31 days after the measure qualifies or at a special election called by the Governor.

A "yes" vote approves a statute previously adopted by the Legislature and allows it to take effect. A "no" vote rejects the statute previously adopted by the Legislature and prevents it from taking effect.

Number of Signatures Required for a Referendum Measure: 433,971
[5% of 8,679,416 per California Constitution, Article II, Section 9(b)]