BALLOT MEASURES DEFINED

LEGISLATIVE BOND MEASURE

Any bill that calls for the issuance of general obligation bonds must be adopted in each house of the Legislature by a two-thirds vote, signed by the Governor, and approved by a simple majority of the public's vote to be enacted. Whenever a bond measure is on a statewide ballot, an overview of California's bond debt is included in the ballot pamphlet.

LEGISLATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

Whenever the Legislature proposes an amendment to the California Constitution, it is known as a legislative constitutional amendment. It must be adopted in the Senate and the Assembly by a two-thirds vote before it can be placed on the ballot. A legislative constitutional amendment does not require the Governor's signature. This type of amendment requires a simple majority of the public's vote to be enacted.

LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVE AMENDMENT

Whenever the Legislature proposes to amend a law that was previously enacted through the initiative process, the Legislature is required to present the amendment to the voters for passage. The Legislature may amend the previously-adopted initiative measure if the measure permits legislative amendment or repeal without voter approval. This type of amendment requires a simple majority of the public's vote to be enacted.

INITIATIVES

Often referred to as "direct democracy," the initiative process is the power of the people to place measures on the ballot. These measures can either create or change statutes (including general obligation bonds) and amend the California Constitution. If the initiative proposes to amend California statute, signatures of registered voters gathered must equal in number to 5% of the votes cast for all candidates for Governor in the previous gubernatorial election. If the initiative proposes to amend the California Constitution, signatures of registered voters gathered must equal in number to 8% of the votes cast for all candidates for Governor in the previous gubernatorial election. An initiative requires a simple majority of the public's vote to be enacted.

REFERENDUM

Referendum is the power of the people to approve or reject statutes adopted by the Legislature. However, referenda can not be used to approve or reject urgency measures or statutes that call for elections or provide for tax levies or appropriations for current expenses of the state. Voters wishing to block implementation of a legislatively-adopted statute must gather signatures of registered voters equal in number to 5% of the votes cast for all candidates for Governor in the previous gubernatorial election within 90 days of enactment of the bill. Once on the ballot, the law is defeated if voters cast more NO votes than YES votes on the referendum question.

SUBJECT TO COURT ORDERED CHANGES

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