

## RESOLUTION

### **Citizen Statements on Ballot Propositions**

**WHEREAS** California voters in recent decades have been asked to weigh in on an increasing number of complex, highly technical ballot initiatives, which are accompanied by a flood of partisan advertising that, while purporting to educate voters, in many cases misinforms the electorate and obfuscates the issues, becoming a source of frustration, confusion, and bad decision making, such that a recent poll conducted by the Public Policy Institute of California showed that 90% of Californians believe that the initiative process is controlled at least in part by special interests; and

**WHEREAS** 10 years ago, civic reformers in Oregon pioneered a process to counter partisan misinformation whereby panels of voters chosen by lot learn how to assess and deliberate proposals, scrutinize selected statewide ballot measures, hear from and question experts and pro and con partisans, and produce a short statement in plain language that is published in the state voter pamphlet sent to every voter that honestly and objectively lists the key facts, their implications, and pros and cons for each initiative; and

**WHEREAS** the effects of the panel statements have been studied over time and been shown over all demographics to increase voter confidence and understanding of ballot proposals; moreover, voters spent twice as much time reading citizens' statements than partisan statements, learned more from them, trusted them more, and were more likely to vote as a result;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, the San Diego County Democratic Party, to address problems of misinformation and confusion that attend ballot propositions, supports including in the official state voter pamphlet brief, plain language ballot-proposition statements developed by a body of voter peers that provide balanced, objective information to voters; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the San Diego County Democratic Party recognizes that inclusion of peer statements in the voter pamphlet will increase voter engagement and thoughtful participation in the voting process, producing better decision making, better policymaking, and more voter confidence in the democratic process.

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Sponsored by: CDP Region 18, CDP Region 16, CDP Region 14, West LA Democratic Club, Pacific Palisades Democratic Club, Culver City Dem Club, Stonewall Democratic Club

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