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AB-432 Civil procedure: electronic signatures. (2015-2016)

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Assembly Bill No. 432

CHAPTER 32

An act to amend Section 17 of, and to add Section 34 to, the Code of Civil Procedure, relating to civil procedure.

[Approved by Governor June 30, 2015. Filed with Secretary of State June 30, 2015.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 432, Chang. Civil procedure: electronic signatures.

Existing law provides definitions for particular terms used within the Code of Civil Procedure, including the terms "signature" or "subscription," which are defined to include a mark of a person, when the person cannot write, with his or her name being written near it by a person who writes his or her own name as a witness, as specified.

This bill would include "electronic signature" to the list of defined terms, and would define it to mean an electronic sound, symbol, or process attached to or logically associated with an electronic record and executed or adopted by a person with the intent to sign the electronic record. The bill would also provide that an electronic signature by a court or judicial officer would be as effective as an original signature.

The bill also would include technical changes to these provisions.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: no Local Program: no

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 17 of the Code of Civil Procedure is amended to read:

17. (a) Words used in this code in the present tense include the future as well as the present. Words used in the masculine gender include the feminine and neuter. The singular number includes the plural and the plural number includes the singular.

(b) As used in this code, the following words have the following meanings, unless otherwise apparent from the context:

(1) "Affinity" signifies the connection existing in consequence of marriage, between each of the married persons and the blood relatives of the other when applied to the marriage relation.

(2) "County" includes "city and county."

(3) "Electronic signature" means an electronic sound, symbol, or process attached to or logically associated with an electronic record and executed or adopted by a person with the intent to sign the electronic record.

(4) "Month" means a calendar month, unless otherwise expressed.

(5) "Oath" includes an affirmation or declaration.

(A) "Depose" includes any written statement made under oath or affirmation.

(B) "Testify" includes any mode of oral statement made under oath or affirmation.

(6) "Person" includes a corporation as well as a natural person.

(7) "Process" signifies a writ or summons issued in the course of a judicial proceeding.

(8) "Property" includes both personal and real property.

(A) "Personal property" includes money, goods, chattels, things in action, and evidences of debt.

(B) "Real property" is coextensive with lands, tenements, and hereditaments.

(9) "Section" refers to a section of this code, unless some other code or statute is expressly mentioned.

(10) "Sheriff" includes marshal.

(11) "Signature" or "subscription" includes a mark of a person's name, if the person cannot write, with his or her name being written near it by a person who writes his or her own name as a witness. In order that a mark may be acknowledged or serve as the signature to any sworn statement, it shall be witnessed by two persons who shall subscribe their own names as witnesses thereto.

(12) "State" includes the District of Columbia and the territories when applied to the different parts of the United States, and the words "United States" may include the district and territories.

(13) "Will" includes codicil.

(14) "Writ" means an order or precept in writing, issued in the name of the people, or of a court or judicial officer.

(15) "Writing" includes printing and typewriting.

SEC. 2. Section 34 is added to the Code of Civil Procedure, to read:

34. An electronic signature, as defined in Section 17, by a court or judicial officer shall be as effective as an original signature.