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AB-1504 Elections: all-mailed ballot elections: pilot project. (2015-2016)

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Assembly Bill No. 1504

CHAPTER 730

An act to amend Section 4001 of the Elections Code, relating to elections.

[Approved by Governor October 10, 2015. Filed with Secretary of State October 10, 2015.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1504, Alejo. Elections: all-mailed ballot elections: pilot project.

Until December 31, 2017, existing law, as a pilot program, authorizes elections in San Mateo County and Yolo County, other than statewide primary or general elections, or special elections to fill a vacancy in a state office, the Legislature, or Congress, to be conducted wholly by mail if specified conditions are satisfied. If San Mateo County or Yolo County conducts an all-mailed ballot election, existing law requires the county to report to the Legislature and the Secretary of State, as specified.

This bill would extend this pilot program until January 1, 2018. This bill would also authorize Monterey and Sacramento Counties to conduct all-mailed ballot elections as part of this program, subject to a requirement to provide additional polling places. The bill would also make technical, nonsubstantive changes.

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

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

SECTION 1. Section 4001 of the Elections Code is amended to read:

4001. (a) Notwithstanding Section 4000 or any other law, as a pilot program, elections in San Mateo County, Yolo County, Sacramento County, and Monterey County may be conducted wholly by mail if all of the following conditions are satisfied:

- (1) The governing body of the city, county, or district, by resolution, authorizes the all-mailed ballot election and notifies the Secretary of State of its intent to conduct an all-mailed ballot election at least 88 days before the date of the election.
- (2) The election does not occur on the same date as a statewide primary or general election or any other election conducted in an overlapping jurisdiction that is not consolidated and conducted wholly by mail pursuant to this section.
- (3) The election is not a special election to fill a vacancy in a state office, the Legislature, or Congress.
- (4) (A) At least one ballot drop-off location is provided per city or the ballot drop-off locations are fixed in a manner so that the number of residents for each ballot drop-off location does not exceed 100,000 on the 88th day before the day of election, whichever results in more drop-off locations. A ballot drop-off location shall be open during business hours to receive voted ballots beginning 28 days before the date of the election and until 8 p.m. on the day of the election.

(B) (i) For San Mateo County and Yolo County, at least one polling place is provided per city.

(ii) For Monterey County and Sacramento County, at least one polling place is provided for every 50,000 registered voters, with a minimum of one polling place per city, in a manner so that the number of registered voters for each polling place does not exceed 50,000 on the 88th day before the day of election, whichever results in more polling places.

(iii) A polling place provided pursuant to this subparagraph shall allow voters to request a ballot between 7 a.m. and 8 p.m. on the day of the election if they have not received their ballots in the mail or if they need replacement ballots for any other reason.

(C) Upon the request of the city, county, or district, the elections official, at his or her discretion, may provide additional ballot drop-off locations and polling places.

(5) The elections official delivers to each voter all supplies necessary for the use and return of the mail ballot, including an envelope for the return of the voted mail ballot with postage prepaid.

(6) The elections official delivers to each voter, with either the sample ballot sent pursuant to Section 13303 or with the voter's ballot, a list of the ballot drop-off locations and polling places provided pursuant to paragraph (4), and also posts that list on the Internet Web site of the county elections office.

(7) The return of voted mail ballots is subject to Section 3017.

(8) (A) The polling places provided under this section are at an accessible location and are equipped with voting units or systems that are accessible to individuals with disabilities and that provide the same opportunity for access and participation, including the ability to vote privately and independently.

(B) A ballot drop-off location provided for under this section shall consist of a locked ballot box located in a secure public building that meets the accessibility requirements for a polling place.

(9) Elections in the county conducted pursuant to this section may be held on no more than three different dates.

(b) (1) If the county conducts an all-mailed ballot election pursuant to this section, on or before December 31, 2017, the county shall report to the Legislature and to the Secretary of State regarding the success of the election, including, but not limited to, any statistics on the cost to conduct the election; the turnout of different populations, including, but not limited to, to the extent possible, the population categories of race, ethnicity, age, gender, disability, permanent vote by mail status, and political party affiliation; the number of ballots not counted and the reasons they were rejected; voter fraud; and, any other problems that become known to the county during the election or canvass.

(2) Whenever possible, using the criteria set forth in paragraph (1), the report of the county shall compare the success of the all-mailed ballot election to similar elections not conducted wholly by mail in the same jurisdiction or comparable jurisdictions.

(3) The report of the county shall be submitted to the Legislature pursuant to Section 9795 of the Government Code within six months after the date of the all-mailed ballot election or before the date of any other all-mailed ballot election subject to this section to be conducted in the county, whichever is sooner.

(c) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2018, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2018, deletes or extends that date.