OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

AUG 01 2011

To the Members of the California State Senate:

I am returning Senate Bill 168 without my signature.

This bill makes it a crime for a person to pay or receive money (or any other thing of value) based—directly or indirectly--on the number of signatures obtained on a state or local initiative, referendum, or recall petition.

While I understand the potential abuses of the current per-signature payment system, I believe this bill is flawed for two reasons.

First, this bill would effectively prohibit organizations from even setting targets or quotas for those they hire to gather signatures. It doesn't seem very practical to me to create a system that makes productivity goals a crime.

Second, per-signature payment is often the most cost-effective method for collecting the hundreds of thousands of signatures needed to qualify a ballot measure. Eliminating this option will drive up the cost of circulating ballot measures, thereby further favoring the wealthiest interests.

This is a dramatic change to a long established democratic process in California. After reviewing the materials submitted in support of this bill, I am not persuaded that the unintended consequences won't be worse than the abuses the bill aims to prevent.

Sincerely,

Edmund G. Brown Jr.

GOVERNOR EDMUND G. BROWN JR. • SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814 • (916) 445-2841