

Measure D289

INSTRUCTIONS:

Please carefully read the following description of a ballot measure that was written by a disinterested expert. Feel free to take notes or outline passages as you read.

This should take approximately 5 minutes.

BALLOT MEASURE D289

BACKGROUND

Every ten years, the federal census counts the number of people living in California. The California Constitution requires the Legislature after each census to adjust the boundaries of the districts used to elect public officials. This process is called "redistricting" (or sometimes "reapportionment"). The primary purpose of redistricting is to establish districts which are "reasonably equal" in population. Redistricting affects districts for the state Legislature (Assembly and Senate), Board of Equalization (BOE), and the U.S. House of Representatives.

Typically, redistricting plans are included in legislation and become law after passage of the bill by the Legislature and signature by the Governor. In the past, when the Legislature and Governor have been unable to agree on redistricting plans, the California Supreme Court oversaw the redistricting.

PROPOSAL

This measure amends the California Constitution to change the redistricting process for the state Legislature, BOE, and California members of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Panel of Retired Judges. This measure requires that a three-member panel of retired federal and/or state judges ("special masters") develop redistricting plans. The measure requires that the judges meet a number of criteria, including that they have never held partisan political office. (The nearby box provides more detail on the selection process for the special masters.)

Requirements of District Boundaries. The measure adds new requirements regarding the drawing of district boundaries. Among these requirements are:

- For the Legislature and BOE, population differences among districts cannot exceed 1 percent.
- Senate districts must be comprised of two adjacent Assembly districts, and BOE districts must be comprised of ten adjacent Senate districts.
- The plan must minimize the splitting of counties and cities into multiple districts. In addition, when drawing boundaries, the panel could not consider information related to political party affiliations and other specified matters.

Schedule. A panel would be required to develop a redistricting plan for use at the next primary and general elections following the measure's approval and then following each future federal census.

Approval Process. In developing a plan, the panel would have to hold public hearings and could receive suggested plans from the public and the Legislature. Once the panel unanimously approves a redistricting plan, the plan would be used for the next primary and general elections. The Secretary of State would place the plan on the general election ballot for the voters to consider. If the voters approve the plan, it would be used until the next redistricting is required. If the voters reject the plan, another panel would be appointed to prepare a new plan for the next primary and general elections.

Funding. The measure specifies that the Legislature must make funding available from the Legislature's budget (which is limited under the State Constitution) to support the work of the panel.

This could include employment of legal and other experts in the field of redistricting and computer technology. Funding for the panel would be limited to a maximum of one-half of the amount spent by the Legislature on redistricting in 2001 (adjusted for inflation beginning after the 2010 federal census). For the first redistricting plan under the measure (to be developed for use at the next primary and general elections following the measure's approval), the funding would be provided from the state General Fund.



STOP!

Please go to the online survey, enter the 4-character code for this ballot measure (printed at the top and bottom of this page) and answer the survey questions.