

# Measure R384

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## **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 10 minutes.

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## **BALLOT MEASURE R384**

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### **BACKGROUND**

Federal law limits the amount of money that an individual may give as a political campaign contribution to a candidate for federal elective office and to the candidate's campaign committee. California law generally does not impose any similar limits on political campaign contributions. Both federal law and the state's Political Reform Act of 1974, however, require candidates for public office to report contributions they receive and money they and their campaign committees spend.

Federal law permits individuals to designate \$1 of their federal income tax payments to be made available to candidates for President of the United States for use in their political campaigns. California law does not contain any similar provision for direct state funding of campaigns for state elective office. California law, however, does allow a state taxpayer to claim an income tax credit of up to \$50 for political contributions.

### **PROPOSAL**

In summary, this measure:

- Establishes limits on campaign contributions that can be made to all candidates for the State Assembly and the State Senate; and
- Provides state matching funds to these candidates if they agree to comply with limits on spending for their legislative campaigns.

### **Limits on Campaign Contributions**

The measure establishes separate limits for different types of contributors, and imposes other restrictions on campaign contributions.

1. **Individual Persons.** Contributions from a person to a candidate, or to the candidate's campaign committee, are limited to \$1,000 per election. There also are limitations on contributions to political parties, and to committees not controlled by the candidate. Also, no individual may contribute more than \$25,000, in total, to all legislative candidates and their campaign committees over a two-year period.

2. **Organizations.** Contributions from an organization to a candidate, or the candidate's campaign committee, are limited to \$2,500 per election. Other limitations include a \$200,000 limit on the amount that an organization can give, in total, to all legislative candidates and their campaign committees over a two-year period.

3. **Small Contributor Political Action Committees.** Contributions from these committees to a candidate, or his or her campaign committee, are limited to \$5,000 per election. There also are other limitations including a \$200,000 limit on the amount that each such committee can give, in total, to all legislative candidates and their campaign committees over a two-year period.

4. **Other Restrictions.**

- Contributions may be made to any candidate for legislative office only in those years that the candidate's name appears on the ballot.
- A candidate for the Assembly cannot accept more than \$50,000 in total, per election, from all organizations or small contributor political action committees. The similar limit for a candidate for the Senate is \$75,000.
- Political parties and legislative caucus committees cannot contribute more than \$50,000 to an Assembly candidate for a general election. Also, these groups cannot make contributions for primary or certain special elections. The similar limit for a candidate for the Senate is \$75,000.
- No transfers of funds are permitted between individual candidates or between their campaign committees.
- Legislators and legislative candidates are prohibited from accepting more than \$2,000 in gifts or honoraria from any one source during a two-year period.
- Any person who makes independent expenditures supporting or opposing a legislative candidate is prohibited from accepting any contributions in excess of \$1,000 from persons or \$2,500 from organizations.

5. **Other Provisions.** The contribution limits apply to candidates, regardless of whether they accept public matching funds. These limits, however, are not operative until the candidate has raised \$35,000. The contribution and expenditure limits, and the public matching fund provisions are adjusted each year to reflect changes in the Consumer Price Index.

## **Partial State Funding for Legislative Candidates**

1. **Source of Funds.** State income taxpayers may voluntarily decide that part of their income tax payments (up to \$3 for single tax returns, and up to \$6 for joint returns) can be used to finance state campaign matching payments.

2. **Use of These Funds.** Each candidate for the State Assembly may elect to receive up to \$75,000 in state matching funds for a primary election, and up to \$112,500 for general and other (special) elections. Each candidate for the State Senate may elect to receive up to \$125,000 for a primary election, and up to \$175,000 for general and other (special) elections.

3. **Eligibility to Receive Funds.** In order to receive state funds, a candidate must comply with campaign spending limits, collect a minimum level of private contributions, and be opposed by a candidate who has qualified for state matching funds, or who has more than \$35,000 available to finance a campaign. Further, the candidate may contribute no more than \$50,000 per transaction from personal funds to the campaign.

4. **State Matching Fund Ratios.** Cash contributions totaling \$250 or less from a registered voter in the candidate's district are matched by the state on a five-to-one basis. Other contributions totaling \$250 or less are matched on a three-to-one basis. No matching funds are available for contributions received from the candidate or the candidate's immediate family.

5. **Campaign Spending Limitations.** This measure places campaign spending limits on candidates who accept state matching funds. Assembly limits are \$150,000 for each candidate in a primary election and \$225,000 for a general election. Senate limits are \$250,000 for each candidate in a primary election and \$350,000 for a general election. The spending limits do not apply, however, if an opposing candidate who does not accept matching funds receives contributions or spends more than these amounts.

### **Administration and Enforcement**

The State Fair Political Practices Commission has the primary responsibility for administering and enforcing this measure. The Franchise Tax Board and the State Controller also are involved in administering this measure.



**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.