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September 1st, 2023

The Honorable Jim Wood
California State Capitol, P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: ACA 13 (Ward) Voting Thresholds
Notice of SUPPORT (As Amended 8/17/2023)

Dear Assemblymember Wood:

The City of Arcata supports ACA 13 (Ward), which would require any constitutional amendment proposed by an initiative that increases a vote requirement for future measures to be approved by the same proportion of voters. The measure would also preserve the right of cities to place advisory questions asking voters their opinions on the ballot.


Under current law, a simple majority of voters (50% + 1 vote) may vote to require a supermajority (for example, 66%) voter approval for future action. This framework has given disproportionate power to a small number of voters: Little more than one-third of voters can prevent the enactment of laws that a majority of voters agree upon.

At the local level, this has made it unnecessarily difficult to pass revenue measures dedicated to critical services, such as homelessness and housing, fire, public safety, and roads. For example, from 2001-2018, city revenue measures with a two-thirds vote requirement have enjoyed only a 51% passage rate, compared to a 70% passage rate of all local revenue measures over the same period. The status quo has prevented cities from providing desperately needed services.

ACA 13 addresses this issue by simply requiring any initiative that enhances a voter requirement to pass by that same voter requirement. ACA 13 is a fair, good government proposal that protects the principles of democracy and majority rule.

For these reasons, the City of Arcata supports ACA 13.

Sincerely,


Sarah Schaefer, Mayor
City of Arcata

Cc. Senator Mike McGuire, Senator.McGuire@senate.ca.gov
Congressman Jared Huffman, John.Driscoll@mail.house.gov, Ciara.Emery@mail.house.gov
Assembly Member Jim Wood, Ruth.Valenzuela@asm.ca.gov
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