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April 23, 2015

The Honorable Luis Alejo
State Capitol, Room 2117
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Assembly Bill 182 –California Voting Rights Act - SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Alejo,

On behalf of California Common Cause and our members, I am writing with a letter of support for Assembly Bill 182, which would strengthen the California Voting Rights Act protections by allowing a single member district-based election jurisdiction with gerrymandered districts to be challenged.

The California Voting Rights Act of 2001 (CVRA), address the harm of vote dilution cause by racial polarization in at-large voting systems throughout California. The CVRA has been successful at challenging racial polarization in at-large elections. Since 2003, more than 118 school districts and community districts in California have either sought waivers from the California Department of Education, or have converted voluntarily from at-large to district-based election.

Assembly bill 182 will expand upon the success of the CVRA by allowing challenges to election districts that limit the voting power of minority communities. This change will protect the right of every eligible Californian to have an equal opportunity to elect a candidate of their choice.

Voting is a fundamental citizen right that must be protected. Strengthening the California Voting Rights Act will stop unlawful vote discrimination. An expanded California Voting Rights Act will hold local governments accountable and end institutionalized discrimination.

For all of these reasons, California Common Cause strongly supports AB 182 and we look forward to working with your office. We hope that you will look to our organization if you need any further assistance.

Please contact me at lpedersen@commoncause.org or (213) 623-1216 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Leila Pedersen
State Program Manager