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June 1, 2015

The Honorable Kevin Mullin  
State Capitol, Room 2163  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Assembly Bill 477 – Vote by Mail Missing Signatures - SUPPORT**

Dear Assembly Member Mullin,

On behalf of California Common Cause and our members, I am writing with a letter of support for Assembly Bill 477, which allows a voter who failed to sign his or her vote by mail (VBM) identification envelope to sign a statement up to 10 days after the election in order to have his or her ballot counted.

Californians are increasingly opting to vote by mail due to the convenience of this voting format. In the June 2014 Primary, nearly 70 percent of voters cast VBM ballots – the highest use recorded to date. However, voters who vote by mail risk not having their ballot counted if they do not sign the outside of the VBM envelope, as required by law. A survey by the UC Davis California Civic Engagement Project (CCEP) found that there was generally a one to three percent error rate on VBM ballots. In around 15 percent of cases, this error was due to there being no signature on the VBM identification envelope. In another 25 percent of cases, this was due to a mismatched signature.

AB 477 helps safeguard the right to vote by giving voters the chance to correct the simple mistake of forgetting to sign their VBM envelope, rather than entirely disqualifying their vote. The protection this bill provides is well worth its modest cost, estimated at less than \$30,000 by the Assembly Appropriations committee. We encourage you to add a provision that would allow voters the same opportunity to correct the problem of a mismatched signature.

For all of these reasons, California Common Cause strongly supports AB 477 and we look forward to working with your office. We hope that you will look to our organization if you need further assistance.

Please contact me at [nheidorn@commoncause.org](mailto:nheidorn@commoncause.org) or (916) 520-4070 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Nicolas Heidorn  
Policy and Legislative Counsel  
California Common Cause