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April 23, 2014

The Honorable Sebastian Ridley-Thomas  
Chair, Assembly Elections and Redistricting Committee  
State Capitol, Room 5135  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 700 (Gomez and Levine) – Support**

Dear Assemblymember Ridley-Thomas,

We are pleased to support AB 700, the *California DISCLOSE Act*. If its intent is implemented, it will significantly strengthen disclosure requirements for ballot measure ads.

Campaign spending on ballot measures has reached unprecedented levels. More than \$640 million was spent in California on ballot measures in 2012 and 2014, almost all of it by donors obscured by misleading names and buried in fine print. Although it is essential for individuals and organizations to be able to communicate effectively with voters, it's equally important that voters have accurate and accessible information about who pays for political advertisements.

AB 700 currently makes technical changes relative to disclosure under the Political Reform Act, but also provides the following:

*It is the intent of the Legislature to enact legislation that would implement a California Disclose Act to ensure that advertisements that seek to persuade voters to cast a vote in favor or against ballot measures do not mislead voters as to who is funding the campaign that paid for the advertisement.*

Achieving this goal is essential to provide greater transparency of information for the voter. When voters have better information they can participate more fully in the democratic process.

According to a 2013 Public Policy Institute of California Statewide Survey, 84 percent of Californians favor increasing public disclosure of funding sources for signature gathering and initiative campaigns.

Voters deserve to know who gives to initiative campaigns in order to properly inform their choices at the ballot box. For this reason, California Common Cause strongly supports AB 700 and we look forward to working with your office.

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

Sincerely,

Leila Pedersen  
State Program Manager

Cc: The Honorable Jimmy Gomez and Marc Levine and Members of the Assembly Elections and Redistricting Committee