



*Helping achieve an open and accountable government*

September 26, 2023

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
Governor, State of California  
1021 O Street, Suite 9000  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Cc: The Honorable Ben Allen

**RE: SB 681 (Allen) – REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE**

Dear Governor Newsom:

The California Clean Money Campaign is pleased to sponsor and support SB 681. We are a non-partisan, non-profit organization that has been working on the problems of money in politics in California since 2001, with more than 150,000 supporters across the state who care deeply about making elections fairer for all Californian voters.

When California voters passed the Political Reform Act of 1974 (PRA) following the Watergate scandals, it gave California the most sweeping political reforms in the country. To allow the PRA to evolve as political challenges evolve, the PRA specified that the legislature may make amendments that further its purposes with two-thirds votes in both houses, as long as the public is given enough time to review and weigh in on final amendments. Currently PRA bills must be in final form 12 days before their final vote, compared to 3 days for most bills.

Since 1974, the Legislature has enacted a number of significant PRA amendments to improve government accountability and election transparency. These improvements include expanded financial contribution restrictions to more public officials; implementation of a one-year “revolving door” ban on lobbying by former elected officials; and increased transparency in lobbying and political advertising.

Unfortunately, due to how close fiscal committee deadlines are to the end of the legislative session, the requirement that bills amending the act be in print for 12 days often makes it difficult and sometimes impossible to make important amendments before the legislative session ends.

SB 681 rectifies this problem by shortening the number of days PRA bills must be in final form from 12 days down to 8 days, unless the previous form of the bill did not amend the PRA. To ensure that interested members of the press and public are informed of any new PRA amendments, it also requires Legislative Counsel to make available to the public the option to sign up to receive email alerts any time a bill to amend the PRA is introduced, amended, or otherwise subject to actions triggering specified notifications similar to other bills.

With the speed and ease of electronic communications that were not available when the act was passed in 1974, SB 681’s shortening of the the period that PRA bills are required to publicly be in their final form will strike a better balance between providing the news media and the public with enough notice of amendments before final votes and allowing sufficient time to make needed amendments after fiscal committee deadlines.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that you sign SB 681.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Trent Lange".

Trent Lange  
President, California Clean Money Campaign