

California State Senate

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SENATOR
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PROTECTION AND ENERGY

September 26, 2025

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

Veto Request: AB 699 (Stefani) – Elections: local tax measures

Dear Governor Newsom,

I respectfully request your veto of Assembly Bill 699, which would allow proponents of local tax and bond measures to choose how specific information will appear on the ballot for certain measures that go before voters.

Voter transparency is critical in a democratic society. In many situations, the ballot title and summary are the only sources of information that a voter reads before voting on a ballot measure. AB 699 would grant proponents of tax or bond measures the power to hide critical financial information from voters, preventing voters from fully understanding the effects and costs of what exactly they are voting for or against.

AB 699 also weakens major reforms designated to promote taxpayer awareness. AB 699 rolls back recent election transparency reforms enacted by AB 809 (2015) and AB 195 (2017), which require all local tax and bond measures to disclose the resulting rate, duration, and revenue in the 75-word ballot label. Those reforms were designed to ensure voters had clear, unbiased financial information upfront. AB 699 selectively exempts certain measures from these rules, potentially paving the way for local agencies to obscure costs, especially in cases involving tiered taxes or long-term bond obligations.

For these reasons, I respectfully request your veto of AB 699. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact my office at (916) 651-4037.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Steven S. Choi".

Senator Steven Choi, Ph.D.
37th Senate District