

California State Senate

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SENATOR
STEVEN S. CHOI, PH.D.
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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: SB 512 (Perez) – District Elections: Initiatives

Dear Governor Newsom,

I respectfully request your veto of Senate Bill 512, which would allow special interest groups in certain transportation districts to circumvent Proposition 13's two-thirds vote requirement, and allow these districts to impose a transactions and use tax through a local initiative measure that receives a simple majority vote.

Since Proposition 13 (1978), California's Constitution has required a two-thirds vote to approve local special taxes for specific purposes. This constitutional safeguard was further affirmed by Proposition 218 (1996), which extended the two-thirds vote requirement to all local governments, and clarified that any new or increased local tax requires voters' approval. These constitutional amendments were designed to promote affordability and to ensure a broad public consensus among the electorate before imposing new taxes upon Californians.

Earlier this year, the California State Legislature specifically prioritized tackling California's high cost of living, and the Assembly went as far as to establish four select committees to address the state's affordability. SB 512 will only reduce public confidence that California lawmakers are working to make their lives more affordable, weaken faith in the democratic process, and raise costs for already-struggling California residents.

SB 512 undermines the will of the voters and erodes constitutional safeguards. If signed, this bill will invite interest groups to manipulate the initiative process and make it easier to levy or increase taxes that would otherwise be rejected by voters under the constitutionally-mandated two-thirds vote requirement. Ultimately, this bill will increase costs on everyday Californians.

For these reasons, I respectfully request your veto of SB 512. 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 Choi".

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