

IMPARTIAL ANALYSIS OF COUNTY MEASURE C

County ordinances are commonly enacted by the board of supervisors. However, California law permits the citizens to directly enact an ordinance by means of a petition for an initiative.

This measure has been noticed for election by the board of supervisors pursuant to a properly circulated and certified petition for initiative filed by the citizens.

This measure does not adopt a specific funding ordinance, but rather asks whether the board of supervisors should be required to provide priority funding for certain identified departments and libraries in an ordinance to be adopted. If adopted, the measure will have the effect of advising the board of supervisors of general voter opinion regarding priority funding for certain departments and libraries.

/s/ DONALD F. STANTON
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IMPARTIAL FISCAL ANALYSIS COUNTY MEASURE C PRIORITY FUNDING CERTAIN DEPARTMENTS AND LIBRARIES

The fiscal impact on the County is difficult to address in that the text of the measure is vague, subject to different interpretations and does not provide facts or budgetary information with which to base an analysis on.

The proposed initiative requires a minimum level of funding to be maintained for the Sheriff's Department, the District Attorney, the Probation Department and the Libraries. It also indicated that the minimum level should be based on the last fully funded fiscal year and further, that increases are required. The initiative does not specify the level of the required increases nor does it specify which year to use for the base to determine the minimum level of funding. A comparison of the 1993-94 budget with the 1992-93 actual expenditures indicates that these departments have been treated differently and in fact, while the Library received a 37.6% reduction and the District Attorney received a 1.6% reduction the Sheriff's Department actually received an 11% increase while the Probation Department received a 12.4% increase.

If agreement could be reached on the interpretation of this initiative and an ordinance adopted the fiscal impact would be hardest felt on those programs within the County that are not required by Federal or State mandates or are not required to provide services to those mandated programs.

The County basically has three different and intermingled types of Departments, different and intermingled in that most departments are not one or the other, but rather are a combination. The first type are the mandated programs; this class is made up of both funded and unfunded mandates. As these departments are mandated the County has no option but to continue their operations.

The second class of programs/departments are those that are considered optional, but are now funded from some outside source, either local fees, or by Federal or State funds. The programs could be eliminated or reduced, but in most cases the funding would also be reduced.

The final class of programs/departments are those funded with local discretionary funds. These are mainly funded with local property taxes and directly compete with the Departments named in this initiative for those dollars. On the most part these programs/departments provide services to the other departments and cannot be totally eliminated as most are constitutional offices. The few remaining programs that are funded locally and are totally optional to local government are the ones that would be hardest hit by this initiative.

Those Departments include, but are not limited to the Agricultural Extension, County Archives, County Collector, Safety Committee, Senior Citizens Council, Social Welfare-Emergency Room Subvention, County Trapper, Veterans Buildings and Veterans Service Officer.

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