



April 17, 2017

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The Honorable Evan Low
Chair, Assembly Elections and Redistricting Committee
1020 N Street, Room 365
Sacramento, California 95814

**Re: Assembly Bill 668 (Gonzalez Fletcher). Voting Modernization Bond Act of 2018.
Support – As amended April 6, 2017
Hearing Date – April 26, 2017: Assembly Elections and Redistricting Committee**

Dear Assembly Member Low:

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), I am pleased to write in support of Assembly Bill 668 (Gonzalez Fletcher), the Voting Modernization Bond Act of 2018, which would seek voter approval to appropriate \$450 million to replace aging voting systems in all of California's 58 counties. Many county voting systems are nearing the end of their useful shelf-life and an investment now in those systems is necessary to ensure equipment is fully functioning for next decade of voting.

Elections administration is a basic and important duty assigned to counties on behalf of the state for candidate contests and policy decisions at all levels of government, from the smallest school district to the national stage. While counties can recover direct costs for conducting elections from local agencies this does not contribute to their overall voting system needs. The last major investment in voting systems was in 2002, following the Help America Vote Act that appropriated \$252 million to California for the replacement of county voting systems. During the same period California voters passed Proposition 41, the Voting Modernization Bond Act of 2002, which provided \$200 million in state funds. Most California counties used their funding to purchase new voting equipment prior to the 2006 election cycle. However, most systems were based on technology of the 1990's and still today rely on rapidly aging equipment and out-of-date technology.

Earlier this year, a report by the Legislative Analyst's Office examined voting administration and offered that the state has a clear interest in secure, timely, and uniform elections. They noted that while the state reaps regular benefits from county elections administration, it only sporadically provides funding to counties for election activities. We have every confidence that counties will continue to faithfully and expertly administer elections on behalf of the state to the best of their ability. However, we strongly believe a one-time investment now is critical to ensuring successful outcomes for all who are involved, including elections officials, state and local agencies, and the voters of California. For these reasons, CSAC supports AB 668. If you have any questions regarding our position please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 650-8133.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Dorothy Johnson'.

Dorothy Johnson
Legislative Representative

cc: The Honorable Lorena Gonzalez Fletcher, California State Assembly
The Honorable Alex Padilla, California Secretary of State
Honorable Members, Assembly Elections and Redistricting Committee
Ethan Jones, Chief consultant, Assembly Elections and Redistricting Committee
Daryl Thomas, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus