



## **GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING BALLOT ARGUMENTS AND REBUTTAL ARGUMENTS FOR COUNTYWIDE MEASURES**

**THESE GUIDELINES HAVE BEEN PREPARED BY THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY REGISTRAR OF VOTERS OFFICE TO PROVIDE GUIDANCE AND ASSISTANCE TO THOSE WISHING TO SUBMIT A BALLOT ARGUMENT OR REBUTTAL TO A BALLOT ARGUMENT FOR A COUNTYWIDE MEASURE.**

**THESE GUIDELINES ARE INTENDED TO PROVIDE GENERAL INFORMATION AND DOES NOT HAVE THE FORCE AND EFFECT OF LAW. IT IS DISTRIBUTED WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE REGISTRAR OF VOTERS OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO IS NOT RENDERING LEGAL ADVICE AND, THEREFORE, THE GUIDELINES ARE NOT TO BE A SUBSTITUTE FOR LEGAL COUNSEL FOR THE INDIVIDUAL OR ORGANIZATION USING IT.**

**PEOPLE WISHING TO SUBMIT BALLOT ARGUMENTS OR REBUTTALS TO BALLOT ARGUMENTS FOR COUNTYWIDE MEASURES MUST BEAR FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR CONFORMING TO THE LAWS REGARDING SUCH ARGUMENTS AND REBUTTALS.**

**ALL REFERENCES CONTAINED IN THESE GUIDELINES ARE TO THE CALIFORNIA ELECTIONS CODE UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED.**

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## **What is a County Measure?**

- A “county measure” includes an ordinance, question, issue or charter amendment submitted to the voters at an election. **§ 312**

## **Whom do I Contact Concerning a Countywide Measure Direct and Rebuttal Arguments?**

- Direct Arguments and Rebuttal Arguments for countywide measures are filed with the Registrar of Voters (ROV) office.

## **What is a State Proposition?**

- A “state proposition,” sometimes referred to as an “initiative” or “referendum” is a measure affecting the State Constitution or laws of the state. **§ 9000**

## **Whom do I Contact Concerning State Propositions?**

- For information on state propositions, contact the California Secretary of State’s office, Elections Division, at 916-657-2166.

## Whom do I Contact Concerning City Measures?

Direct Arguments and Rebuttal Arguments for San Diego County city measures are filed with the City Clerk of the city involved. Specific information regarding requirements and deadlines should be obtained from the city office involved.

Contact information for each City Clerk can be found at [sdvote.com](http://sdvote.com).

<b>Carlsbad</b> <a href="https://www.carlsbadca.gov/city-hall">https://www.carlsbadca.gov/city-hall</a>	<b>Lemon Grove</b> <a href="https://www.lemongrove.ca.gov/our-government/office-of-the-city-clerk/">https://www.lemongrove.ca.gov/our-government/office-of-the-city-clerk/</a>
<b>Chula Vista</b> <a href="https://www.chulavistaca.gov/departments/city-clerk">https://www.chulavistaca.gov/departments/city-clerk</a>	<b>National City</b> <a href="https://www.nationalcityca.gov/government/city-clerk">https://www.nationalcityca.gov/government/city-clerk</a>
<b>Coronado</b> <a href="https://www.coronado.ca.us/199/City-Clerks-Office">https://www.coronado.ca.us/199/City-Clerks-Office</a>	<b>Oceanside</b> <a href="https://www.ci.oceanside.ca.us/government/city-clerk">https://www.ci.oceanside.ca.us/government/city-clerk</a>
<b>Del Mar</b> <a href="https://www.delmar.ca.us/">https://www.delmar.ca.us/</a>	<b>Poway</b> <a href="https://poway.org/132/City-Clerks-Office">https://poway.org/132/City-Clerks-Office</a>
<b>El Cajon</b> <a href="https://www.elcajon.gov/your-government/departments/city-clerk/">https://www.elcajon.gov/your-government/departments/city-clerk/</a>	<b>San Diego</b> <a href="https://www.sandiego.gov/city-clerk">https://www.sandiego.gov/city-clerk</a>
<b>Encinitas</b> <a href="https://www.encinitasca.gov/government/departments/city-clerk">https://www.encinitasca.gov/government/departments/city-clerk</a>	<b>San Marcos</b> <a href="https://www.san-marcos.net/your-government/city-clerk">https://www.san-marcos.net/your-government/city-clerk</a>
<b>Escondido</b> <a href="https://www.escondido.gov/179/City-Clerk">https://www.escondido.gov/179/City-Clerk</a>	<b>Santee</b> <a href="https://www.cityofsantee.ca.gov/departments/city-clerk">https://www.cityofsantee.ca.gov/departments/city-clerk</a>
<b>Imperial Beach</b> <a href="https://www.imperialbeachca.gov/196/City-Clerk">https://www.imperialbeachca.gov/196/City-Clerk</a>	<b>Solana Beach</b> <a href="https://www.cityofsolanabeach.org/en/government/departments/city-clerk">https://www.cityofsolanabeach.org/en/government/departments/city-clerk</a>
<b>La Mesa</b> <a href="https://lamesaparks.org/274/City-Clerk">https://lamesaparks.org/274/City-Clerk</a>	<b>Vista</b> <a href="https://www.vista.gov/city-hall/city-clerk">https://www.vista.gov/city-hall/city-clerk</a>

## What is Included in these Guidelines?

- Information provided in these Guidelines is applicable to the filing of Direct Arguments and Rebuttal Arguments concerning county measures in San Diego County only.
- Whenever any county measure qualifies for placement on the ballot, a written Direct Argument in favor and a written Direct Argument against the measure may be filed. If both a Direct Argument in favor and against a measure are filed, then Rebuttal Arguments may also be filed.
- This guidance document has been prepared to assist in the preparation and submission of Direct Arguments and Rebuttal Arguments. Sample forms for filing such arguments are also included in this guidance document.

## Definitions of Terms Used in this Guidance Document

- A **DIRECT ARGUMENT** is a statement of 300 words or less in favor or against a measure.
- A **REBUTTAL ARGUMENT** is a statement of 250 words or less, which refutes a Direct Argument in favor or against a measure.
- A **PROPONENT** of a measure is a person(s) who initiates the countywide initiative petition process and has control of the circulation and signature collection for the petition. The proponent can also be the San Diego County Board of Supervisors for a countywide measure in our county. A proponent of a measure can author a Direct Argument in favor of their sponsored measure.
- An **AUTHOR** of an argument is a proponent of a measure, an individual voter, a bona fide association of citizens, or any combination of bona fide associations and individual voters who write the text of the Direct Argument in favor or against a measure.
- The **FILER** of an argument may be the author of the argument or any person the author authorizes to file the argument.
- The **SIGNER OF A DIRECT ARGUMENT** is the author of the argument or any person whom the author **authorizes in writing** to sign the argument.
- The **SIGNER OF A REBUTTAL ARGUMENT** is the signer of the Direct Argument unless the signer of the Direct Argument **authorizes in writing** another person to sign the Rebuttal Argument.
- **AUTHORIZATION FOR SIGNERS** is a form which needs to be completed by the authors and filed with the Registrar of Voters if they wish to allow others to sign the Direct Argument on their behalf. For Rebuttal Arguments, the signers of the Direct Argument may authorize others to sign. A Letter of Authorization may also be used for this purpose.
- The **SIGNATURE STATEMENT** is a form which must be submitted with each original Direct Argument and Rebuttal Argument to the Registrar of Voters. It includes information on each signer of the argument.

## **Definitions of Terms Used in this Guidance Document (cont.)**

- A **BONA FIDE ASSOCIATION OF CITIZENS** is an organization or association that is organized by articles of incorporation, articles of organization, statement of organization, articles of association, partnership documents, bylaws, or any similar document.
- The **ELECTIONS OFFICIAL** is the Registrar of Voters for countywide measures, including Direct Arguments and Rebuttal Arguments.
- The **ELECTORAL JURISDICTION** is the area where the voters reside who are qualified to vote for the measure.
- **PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD** is a 10-calendar-day period of time following the deadline for filing of Direct Arguments, Rebuttal Arguments, the impartial analysis, and any fiscal impact statement and tax rate statement. This timeframe allows individuals the opportunity to read the documents, which are available for review at the Registrar of Voters' counter and online at [sdvote.com](http://sdvote.com).
- The **VOTER INFORMATION PAMPHLET (VIP)** is mailed to each registered voter prior to an election. It contains information on candidates, measures, and how to vote by mail ballot or at a vote center, in addition to including the sample ballot of contests and measures for which the individual may vote.
- A **WRIT OF MANDATE** is a written order issued by a Superior Court commanding a public official or entity or a lower court to perform or cease to perform a specific duty or action.

## **COUNTYWIDE MEASURES DIRECT ARGUMENTS**

Read the Definition of Terms Used in these Guidelines on pages 5 and 6 before continuing.

### **How Do I Know a Measure Will Appear on the Ballot, so I May File a Direct Argument?**

- Once the Board of Supervisors places a measure on the ballot, the Registrar of Voters' office prepares and publishes a legal notice indicating the specifics of the measure and requirements of the filer of a Direct Argument.

Board of Supervisors' meeting agendas are available on the County of San Diego Clerk of the Board's website: (<https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/cob/bosa.html>). This allows tracking of Board agenda items by citizens to inform them of any upcoming measure.

- The legal notice appears in a major newspaper (usually The Union Tribune). The notice is also posted on the Registrar of Voters' website at [sdvote.com](http://sdvote.com).

### **Who May Author and File Direct Arguments?**

- The Board of Supervisors or any member(s) of the Board (member of the Board does not need to be authorized by the Board);
- Individual voters who are eligible to vote on the measure;
- Bona fide associations (an organization or association that is organized by articles of incorporation, articles of organization, statement of organization, articles of association, partnership documents, bylaws, or any similar document); and
- Any combination of bona fide associations and individual voters.

**§§ 9120, 9162**

## **Who May Sign Direct Arguments?**

- A signer does not have to be the author or filer (if different) of the Direct Argument.
- A written authorization is needed whenever there are signers who are not the authors. A completed “Authorization for Signers of Direct Arguments” (see Attachment F, page 25) will suffice for any and all signers who do not meet the criteria for being an author.

The authorization signed by an author must be submitted with the Direct Argument. For example, if a Board of Supervisors placing a measure on the ballot (proponent) and authoring a Direct Argument in favor of the measure (author) wishes to have other individuals sign the Direct Argument, they may do so by completing the “Authorization for Signers of Direct Arguments” form.

## **Do Signers Need to be Registered Voters?**

- If an individual is signing a Direct Argument (the argument is not submitted on behalf of an association), they must be eligible to vote on the measure (a registered voter in the jurisdiction).
- If the Direct Argument is submitted on behalf of a bona fide association and the signer(s) of the argument are affiliated with the association and are authorized by the association to sign the argument, the signer(s) do not need to be registered voters in the jurisdiction (they are representing the association's position).

## **What is the Format of a Direct Argument?**

- No argument for or against a measure shall exceed 300 words in length. Words used in the title shall not be counted when determining the length of any measure. **§ 9162**
- See Attachment A, page 19, for guidelines for the counting of words.
- Arguments should be typewritten and in a block format. See Attachments B, page 20, and Attachment C, page 21, for more information.
- No argument shall contain more than 5 signatures.
- The authors or signers (if different) must inform the Registrar of Voters of the priority order for the signatures/names to appear in the signature block.



## What is the Format of a Direct Argument? (cont.)

- The following statement, as applicable, must be printed as the heading of the argument:

<b>“Argument in Favor of Measure _____”</b>
<b>“Argument Against Measure _____”</b>

- The heading and the signature(s) block are **not** included in the word count. **§ 9162**
- For every Direct Argument that is filed**, the following statement must appear after the text of the argument and must be signed by each proponent\* or by each author\*, if different, of the argument:

The undersigned proponent(s)* or author(s)* of the _____	
	(primary/rebuttal)
argument _____	
	(in favor of/against)
ballot measure _____	
	(name or number)
at the _____	
	(title of election)
election for the _____	
	(jurisdiction)
to be held on _____ hereby state that such argument is	
	(date)
true and correct to the best of _____ knowledge and belief	
	(his/her/their)
Signed: _____ Date: _____	
_____	_____

**§ 9600**

**\*In the majority of cases, the proponents or authors, if different, sign the Direct Argument. However, if the proponents or authors authorize in writing other individuals to sign the Direct Argument, it is those signers who must complete the Signature Statement. (See information on Signature Statement on page 10).**

- A Direct Argument format has been included in this guidance document to assist you. (See Attachment C, page 21).
- Direct Arguments and Rebuttal Arguments that are not in compliance will be reformatted by the Registrar of Voters. The Registrar of Voters bears no responsibility for the corrected format of Direct Arguments and Rebuttal Arguments under these circumstances.

## What is the Format of a Direct Argument? (cont.)

### It is Acceptable to Use:

- Bullets, stars, asterisks, or numbers that function as bullet points to off-set paragraphs, italics, tables, indentation, boldface type, words with all capital letters, and underlines.

## Is There Additional Information that Must be Filed with the Direct Argument?

- Yes, an additional form (**Signature Statement**) must be submitted with each original Direct Argument by the signers of the Direct Argument. Authors who sign the Direct Argument or authorized signers must complete the Signature Statement, but they may submit separate Signature Statements for the Same Direct Argument rather than all completing the same one.

A Direct Argument shall not be accepted unless accompanied by the printed name(s) and signature(s) of the person or persons who authored and signed it or those who were authorized to sign it. If a Direct Argument is authored and signed on behalf of an organization, the name of the organization and the printed name and signature of at least one of its principal officers must be included on the Signature Statement (See Attachment E, pages 23-24).

**§ 9164**

An organization or association submitting a Direct Argument must also submit with its argument a copy of one of the following:

- Its articles of incorporation, articles of association, partnership documents, bylaws, letterhead containing the name of the organization and its principal officers, or similar documents.

If the organization or association is primarily established to support or oppose the measure, it must submit with its Direct Argument its statement of organization filed pursuant to Section 84101 of the Government Code.

**§ 9166**

- This Signature Statement information is not printed in the Voter information guide. It is needed to verify eligibility and to send confirmation letters and Rebuttal Argument information to the chosen argument per Elections Code §9167(a).

## What is the Deadline for Filing Direct Arguments?

- The California Elections Code provides that the Registrar of Voters shall establish deadlines for the filing of arguments based on the time reasonably necessary to allow for the 10-day required public examination period, and to prepare, print, and mail Voter Information Pamphlets.

The due dates for Direct Arguments will be determined by the Registrar of Voters for each individual measure. All original Direct Arguments, including the original signatures of the proponents/authors or authorized signers (if different) must be filed at the Registrar of Voters' office by 5:00 p.m. on the applicable deadline.

**§ 9163**

- Check with the Registrar of Voters' office to confirm the deadline by contacting us at (858) 505-7260 or rovmail.rov@sdcounty.ca.gov.

## Can I Withdraw or Change a Direct Argument After it is Filed?

- Yes, a Direct Argument may be withdrawn or changed by its proponents or authors, if different, at any time prior to the deadline for filing the Direct Argument. **§ 9601**
- If a Direct Argument is changed, the newly signed original Direct Argument must be completed and filed by the filing deadline.
- The original signed withdrawal request must be filed by the filing deadline.

## How is a Direct Argument Selected?

- One Direct Argument in favor of and one Direct Argument against any measure will be printed in the Voter Information Pamphlet. **§ 9166**
- If more than one Direct Argument in favor of or more than one Direct Argument against any measure is filed with the Registrar of Voters by the filing deadline, the Registrar of Voters shall select one of the Direct Arguments in favor and one of the Direct Arguments against the measure for printing and distribution to the voters. In selecting the Direct Argument, **the ROV shall give preference and priority in the following order:**
  1. The Board of Supervisors or member(s) of the Board (member of the Board does not need to be authorized by the Board);
  2. The individual voter, or bona fide association of citizens, or combination of voters and associations, **who are the bona fide sponsors or proponents of the measure;**
  3. Bona fide associations of citizens; and
  4. Individual voters who are eligible to vote on the measure.**§ 9166**
- The authors of a Direct Argument may be asked to provide additional information to the Registrar of Voters to assist in the selection of an argument for the Voter Information Pamphlet.
- If a selection cannot be made based on the priority scheme due to two or more Direct Arguments having equal preference, the Registrar of Voters will ask the Direct Arguments' authors to mutually agree which of the Direct Arguments shall be printed in the Voter Information Pamphlet. If there is an opportunity to file a Rebuttal Argument, the author of the selected Direct Argument can also file the Rebuttal Argument.

## **Is There a Public Review Period for Direct Arguments For and Against a Measure?**

- Yes, the public review period for Direct Arguments for and against countywide measures starts the day after the deadline for filing the Direct Arguments with the Registrar of Voters' office. The usual timeframe for the public review period is 81 days prior to Election Day through 70 days, 5:00 p.m., prior to Election Day.

The Direct Arguments will be available at the Registrar of Voters' office from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and will be posted on the Registrar of Voters' website. Contact the Registrar of Voters' office at (858) 505-7260 or [rovmail.rov@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:rovmail.rov@sdcounty.ca.gov) to be advised about the exact public review timeframe for your Direct Argument.

**§§ 9163, 9190**

### **-- REMEMBER -- REMEMBER -- REMEMBER -- REMEMBER --**

- Direct Arguments in favor or against a measure shall not exceed 300 words.
- It is acceptable to use: bullets, stars, asterisks, or numbers that function as bullet points to off-set paragraphs; italics, tables, indentation, boldface type, words with all capital letters, and underlines.
- At least one but no more than five signatures shall appear with any Direct Argument.
- Signers of a Direct Argument (the authors or authorized signers) must submit a Signature Statement with the Direct Argument.
- Signers of a Direct Argument (the authors or authorized signers) may complete separate Signature Statements for the same Direct Argument.
- Direct Arguments are due at the Registrar of Voters' office by the deadline set by the Registrar of Voters, typically the 88th day prior to Election Day at 5:00 p.m. Check with the Registrar of Voters' office to confirm deadline at (858) 505-7260 or [rovmail.rov@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:rovmail.rov@sdcounty.ca.gov).

### **A Note Related to Supporters and Opponents:**

As permitted by State law, the County of San Diego Board of Supervisors has opted not to include a list of supporters and opponents under the ballot label for each local measure. Such a list, with additional information related to proponents and opponents of ballot measures, is already included in the Voter Information Pamphlet.

**§ 9170**

## COUNTYWIDE MEASURES REBUTTAL ARGUMENTS

- When **both** a Direct Argument in favor and a Direct Argument against a measure have been selected for publication in the Voter Information Pamphlet, the Registrar of Voters shall send copies of the Direct Argument in favor of the measure to the contact person for the Direct Argument against the measure and copies of the Direct Argument against the measure to the contact person for the Direct Argument in favor of the measure. § 9167(a)

Rebuttal Arguments must be signed by the same individuals who signed the Direct Arguments unless they authorize in writing other person(s) to sign the Rebuttal Argument. § 9167(a)

- Written authorization must include the name of the substitute signer. The authorization, the “Authorization for Signers of Rebuttal Arguments” (see Attachment G, page 26), must be signed by the original signer who **will not** be signing the Rebuttal Argument. It is not necessary for **all** original signers to authorize the new signer.
- The number of signers of the Rebuttal Argument cannot exceed the number of signers of the Direct Argument. For instance, if there were 4 signers of the Direct Argument in Favor of a measure, there could only be 4 signers of the Rebuttal Argument Against the measure – not the maximum of 5.
- There can be less signers of the Rebuttal Argument than signers of the Direct Argument.

### Do Signers Need to be Registered Voters?

- If an individual is signing a Rebuttal Argument (the argument is **not** submitted on behalf of an association), they must be eligible to vote on the measure (a registered voter in the jurisdiction).
- If the Rebuttal Argument is submitted on behalf of a bona fide association and the signer(s) of the argument are **affiliated with the association and are authorized by the association to sign the argument**, the signer(s) do not need to be registered voters in the jurisdiction (they are representing the association’s position).

### What is the Format for Rebuttal Arguments?

- The authors may prepare and file the Rebuttal Argument, not exceeding 250 words. Words used in the title shall not be counted when determining the length of any measure. § 9167(a)(b)
- Arguments should be typewritten and in a block format. See Attachment B, page 20, and Attachment D, page 22. Rebuttal Arguments shall be printed in the same manner as the Direct Arguments.
- Each Rebuttal Argument shall immediately follow the Direct Argument that it seeks to rebut.

§ 9167(b)

## What is the Format for Rebuttal Arguments? (cont.)

- The following statement, as applicable, must be printed as the heading of the Rebuttal Argument:

**“Rebuttal to Argument in Favor of Measure \_\_\_\_\_”**  
**“Rebuttal to Argument Against Measure \_\_\_\_\_”**

§ 9167(b)

- For every Rebuttal Argument that is filed, the following statement must appear after the text of the argument and be signed by each proponent\* or by each author\*, if different, of the argument:

The undersigned proponent(s)\* or author(s)\* of the \_\_\_\_\_  
(primary/rebuttal)  
argument \_\_\_\_\_  
(in favor of/against)  
ballot measure \_\_\_\_\_  
(name or number)  
at the \_\_\_\_\_  
(title of election)  
election for the \_\_\_\_\_  
(jurisdiction)  
to be held on \_\_\_\_\_ hereby state that such argument is  
(date)  
true and correct to the best of \_\_\_\_\_ knowledge and belief  
(his/her/their)  
Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

§ 9600

**\*In the majority of cases, the proponents or authors sign the Direct Argument and then the Rebuttal Argument. However, if the proponents or authors authorize in writing other individuals to sign the Direct Argument, it is those authorized signers who must complete the Signature Statement for the Rebuttal Argument unless they have authorized others to sign the Rebuttal Argument.**

- Direct Arguments and Rebuttal Arguments that are not in compliance will be reformatted by the Registrar of Voters. The Registrar of Voters bears no responsibility for the corrected format of Direct Arguments and Rebuttal Arguments under these circumstances.

## **Is There Additional Information that Must be Filed with the Rebuttal Argument?**

- Yes, an additional form (**Signature Statement**) must be submitted with each original Rebuttal Argument by the signers of the Rebuttal Argument. Signers of the Direct Argument or those authorized to sign the Rebuttal Argument by the Direct Argument signers must complete the Signature Statement but they may submit separate Signature Statements for the same Rebuttal Argument rather than all completing the same one.

A Rebuttal Argument shall not be accepted unless accompanied by the printed name(s) and signature(s) of the person or persons signing it (those who also signed the Direct Argument or those authorized by the Direct Argument signers to sign the Rebuttal Argument). If a Rebuttal Argument is authored and signed on behalf of an organization, the name of the organization and the printed name and signature of at least one of its principal officers must be included on the Signature Statement. See Attachment E, pages 23-24. **§§ 9164, 9167(b)**

- This Signature Statement information is not printed in the Voter Information Pamphlet. It is needed to verify eligibility and to send confirmation letters and Rebuttal Argument information if an argument is chosen.

## **What is the Deadline for Filing a Rebuttal Argument?**

- The deadline for filing a Rebuttal Argument with the Registrar of Voters' office is 5:00 p.m. by the fifth day after Direct Arguments are due, which is typically 77 days prior to Election Day.

## **Can I Withdraw or Change a Rebuttal Argument After it is Filed?**

- Yes, Rebuttal Arguments may be withdrawn or changed by the proponents or authors (if different) at any time prior to the last day, 5:00 p.m., for filing Rebuttal Arguments. **§ 9601**
- If a Rebuttal Argument is changed, the newly signed original Rebuttal Argument must be completed and filed by the last day, 5:00 p.m., for filing Rebuttal Arguments. **§ 9601**
- The original signed withdrawal request must be filed by the last day, 5:00 p.m., for filing Rebuttal Arguments.

## **Is There a Public Review Period for Rebuttal Arguments?**

- Yes, the 10-day public review period for Rebuttal Arguments begins the day after the deadline for submission of Rebuttal Arguments. The timeframe is usually 76 days prior to Election Day through 67 days, 5:00 p.m., prior to Election Day. **§§ 9163, 9190**
- The Rebuttal Arguments will be available at the Registrar of Voters' office for review from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. In addition, the Rebuttal Arguments will be posted on the Registrar of Voters' website. **§§ 9163, 9190**

### **-- REMEMBER -- REMEMBER -- REMEMBER -- REMEMBER --**

- Both a Direct Argument in favor and a Direct Argument against a measure must be submitted for Rebuttal Arguments to be submitted.
- Rebuttal Arguments shall not exceed 250 words.
- It is acceptable to use: bullets, stars, asterisks, or numbers that function as bullet points to off-set paragraphs; italics, tables, indentation, boldface type, words with all capital letters, and underlines.
- A Rebuttal Arguments must be signed by the same individuals who signed the Direct Argument unless they authorize in writing any other person(s) to sign.
- A Signature Statement needs to be filed with the Rebuttal Argument.
- Deadline for filing Rebuttal Arguments is 5:00 p.m. on the 77<sup>th</sup> day prior to Election Day.

## **Can I Challenge a Direct Argument and/or Rebuttal Argument?**

- During the 10-day public review period, any voter of the jurisdiction in which the election is being held may seek a writ of mandate or an injunction requiring any or all of the materials to be amended or deleted. The writ of mandate or injunction request shall be filed no later than 10 calendar days from the beginning of the public review period. **§ 9190**
- A peremptory writ of mandate or an injunction shall be issued only upon clear and convincing proof that the material in question is false, misleading, or inconsistent with state and local elections laws, and that issuance of the writ or injunction will not substantially interfere with the printing or distribution of official election materials as provided by law. **§ 9190**
- The Registrar of Voters shall be named as respondent and the person or official who authored the material in question shall be named as real parties in interest. **§ 9190**



## **Is there a Specific Order that Direct Arguments, Rebuttal Arguments, and Other Measure Information will be Placed in the Voter Information Pamphlet?**

- Yes -- Direct Arguments, Rebuttal Arguments and other information are printed in the Voter Information Pamphlet and mailed to all registered voters in the jurisdiction eligible to vote for the particular measure. The arguments and other information appear in the following order:
  - Text of the Measure
  - Impartial Analysis, Fiscal Analysis or Tax Rate Statement
  - Direct Argument in Favor
  - Rebuttal to Argument in Favor
  - Direct Argument Against
  - Rebuttal to Argument Against

§§ 9160, 9167(b)

- **NOTE:** To have Rebuttal Arguments, both a Direct Argument in favor and a Direct Argument against the measure must be filed.

§ 9167

## **Are Forms Available to Assist in the Filing of Arguments?**

- Yes, the Registrar of Voters has included sample forms at the end of these Guidelines to assist in the filing of Direct Arguments and Rebuttal Arguments. Use of the proper format may eliminate potential problems.

## **Campaign Disclosure Requirements:**

California's Political Reform Act requires disclosure of campaign contributions and expenditures in connection with state and local elections, including ballot measure elections.

### **Disclosure is required by:**

Candidates for state and local offices,  
State and local elected officeholders, and  
Campaign committees, including:

**Candidate Controlled Committees:** State and local candidates and officeholders who receive contributions totaling \$2,000 or more in a calendar year;

**Recipient Committees:** Individuals and organizations that receive contributions (\$2,000 or more in a calendar year) to support or oppose state or local candidates, or to qualify, support or oppose state or local ballot measures, including initiative, referendum and recall measures (either primarily formed to support or oppose a single candidate or ballot measure, or more than one candidate or measure being voted on in a single election, or general purpose to support or oppose a variety of candidates and/or measures);

## **Campaign Disclosure Requirements (cont.)**

Campaign committees (cont.), including:

**Major Donor Committees**: Individuals or entities that use their own money (i.e., personal funds, corporate or business funds) to make contributions totaling \$10,000 or more in a calendar year to candidates or to committees supporting or opposing candidates or ballot measures.

**Independent Expenditure Committees**: Individuals or entities that use their own money to make "independent expenditures" totaling \$1,000 or more in a calendar year to support or oppose candidates or measures (e.g., Jane Brown uses personal funds to send a mailing to voters or to purchase an advertisement supporting a candidate, but she does so independently, not in coordination with the candidate or his or her campaign committee).

There are also restrictions on how campaign funds are used. In general, expenditures from a candidate or recipient committee's campaign funds must be reasonably related to a political, legislative, or governmental purpose. Any expenditure that confers a substantial personal benefit on an individual must be directly related to a political, legislative, or governmental purpose.

**For more information, contact:**

**Fair Political Practices Commission  
1102 Q Street, Suite 3000  
Sacramento, CA 95811  
Phone: 1-866-275-3772  
FAX: 1-916-322-0886  
[fppc.ca.gov](http://fppc.ca.gov)**

**WORD COUNT GUIDELINES**

Elec. Code §9

The following are the guidelines for computing the word count:

The heading and signature block are not included in the word count.

Punctuation marks are not included in the word count.

Symbols such as “&” and “#” (number/pound) are not considered  
punctuation..... each symbol is counted as one word

Dictionary words.....one word

The words “a”, “the”, “and”, “an” are counted as individual words.

All proper nouns including geographical names and names of persons .....one word

County of San Diego, City of San Diego, Oceanside, John Smith, Jane Smith.

Abbreviations - SDSU, U.C.S.D., PTA, P.T.A., USMC, U.S.M.C.....one word

Regularly hyphenated words appearing in any generally available standard reference  
dictionary published (including on-line) in the United States within 10 years preceding  
the election.....one word

Each part of all other hyphenated words shall be counted as a separate word.

Dates - all digits (4/8/25).....one word

Words and digits (April 8, 2025) .....one word

Whole numbers - Digits (1 or 10 or 100, etc.).....one word

Spelled out (one or ten or one hundred).....each word counts as one word

Names of things .....each word counts as one word

Fallbrook Chamber of Commerce (four words)

Numeric combinations (1973, 18 1/2, 1971-73, 5%).....one word

Combination of a number and a word (\$4 million).....two words

Monetary amounts (if the dollar sign is used with figures - \$1,000).....one word

Spelled out (one thousand dollars).....each word counts as one word

Telephone numbers/fax numbers.....one word

Internet web site address .....one word

If the argument exceeds the word limit, the author must delete or change enough words,  
or a sentence, to put the argument within the required word limit before the argument is  
filed. The author should correct any misspellings before the argument is filed.

**GUIDELINES FOR WRITING  
DIRECT ARGUMENTS AND REBUTTAL ARGUMENTS**

Be accurate. Documents will be printed as submitted. They could be challenged in court during the public review period.

A Direct Argument or Rebuttal Argument must be written to address a single measure on the ballot. A document combining arguments pertaining to more than one measure will not be accepted.

The submitted argument must be typed and formatted in block paragraph style. The document must be filed by 5:00 p.m. on the deadline date.

**IT IS ACCEPTABLE TO USE THE FOLLOWING:**

Bullets, stars, asterisks, or numbers that function as bullet points to off-set paragraphs, italics, tables, indentation, boldface type, words with all capital letters, and underlines.

All Direct Arguments and Rebuttal Arguments must be accompanied by a Signature Statement. See pages 3 through 6. **§ 9600**

No more than five signatures may appear with any argument. If more than five are submitted, the first five will be printed. **§ 9164**

Be certain to inform the Registrar of Voters in what order you want the signatures to appear.

Direct Arguments and Rebuttal Arguments, including the names and titles of the signers, must be typed to ensure quality and accuracy.

Do not use profanity or other objectionable language.

The heading is standardized. Subheadings and deviations from the standardized heading will not be accepted. **§ 9162**

Direct Arguments and Rebuttal Arguments **may be withdrawn, or changed**, until the expiration of the filing deadline. **§ 9601**

Direct Arguments and Rebuttal Arguments are printed in the Voter Information Pamphlet.

**You will be asked to email (rovmail.rov@sdcounty.ca.gov) an electronic copy (Word format) of the document at the time of filing the direct argument and/or rebuttal argument.** This is a requirement of the Registrar of Voters office.

**DIRECT ARGUMENT FORMAT**

Use one of the following titles:

Argument in Favor of Measure (if the letter has not been assigned yet, use the name)

**OR**

Argument Against Measure (if the letter has not been assigned yet, use the name)

The body of the Direct Argument is inserted next. The argument **shall not exceed 300 words.** The count needs to be done prior to filing. If there are too many words, changes will need to be made. (Once the Direct Argument is filed, if changes need to be made or the argument withdrawn, all of the authors will need to sign a copy noting such.)

**The statement below will follow the text of the argument:**

“The undersigned proponent(s)\* or author(s)\* of the Direct Argument in favor of or against *(choose one and insert)* ballot measure *(insert name or letter)* at the *(insert title of election)* election for the *(insert the jurisdiction)* to be held on *(insert the date of the election)* hereby state that such argument is true and correct to the best of *(insert his, her or their)* knowledge and belief.”

Signed (Provide Signature Here) Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(type name here exactly as signed)

Signed (Provide Signature Here) Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(type name here exactly as signed)

Signed (Provide Signature Here) Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(type name here exactly as signed)

Signed (Provide Signature Here) Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(type name here exactly as signed)

Signed (Provide Signature Here) Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(type name here exactly as signed)

**Examples of signature blocks above:**

Signed Jane R. Smith Date 8/10/24  
Jane R. Smith, Chairwoman  
Clean Water Committee

Signed Jack Smith Date 8/10/24  
Jack Smith  
Concerned Citizen

## REBUTTAL ARGUMENT FORMAT

Use one of the following titles:

Rebuttal to Argument in Favor of Measure (Assigned Letter)

OR

Rebuttal to Argument Against Measure (Assigned Letter)

The body of the Rebuttal Argument is inserted next. The argument **shall not exceed 250 words**. The count needs to be done prior to filing. If there are too many words, changes will need to be made. (Once the Rebuttal Argument is filed, if changes need to be made or the argument withdrawn, all of the authors will need to sign a copy noting such.)

### **The statement below will follow the text of the argument:**

“The undersigned proponent(s)\* or author(s)\* of the rebuttal argument in favor of or against (*choose one and insert*) ballot measure (*insert name or letter*) at the (*insert title of election*) election for the (*insert the jurisdiction*) to be held on (*insert the date of the election*) hereby state that such argument is true and correct to the best of (*insert his, her or their*) knowledge and belief.”

Signed (Provide Signature Here) Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(type name here exactly as signed)

Signed (Provide Signature Here) Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(type name here exactly as signed)

Signed (Provide Signature Here) Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(type name here exactly as signed)

Signed (Provide Signature Here) Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(type name here exactly as signed)

Signed (Provide Signature Here) Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(type name here exactly as signed)

### **Examples of signature blocks above:**

Signed Jane R. Smith Date 8/10/24  
Jane R. Smith, Chairwoman  
Clean Water Committee

Signed Jack Smith Date 8/10/24  
Jack Smith  
Concerned Citizen

\*In the majority of cases, the proponents or authors of the Direct Argument also sign the Rebuttal. However, if the proponents or authors authorized in writing other individuals to sign the Direct Argument, it is **those authorized signers** who must complete the Signature Statement for the Rebuttal Argument unless **those signers of the Direct Argument** have authorized in writing others to sign the Rebuttal Argument.

## ATTACHMENT E – FRONT SIDE

### DIRECT ARGUMENT/REBUTTALS SIGNATURE STATEMENT

(The following statement is required by California Elections Code Section 9600.)

All Direct Arguments/Rebuttal Arguments concerning county measures shall be accompanied by this form to be signed by each author or authorized individual. **Names and titles listed will be printed in the Voter Information Pamphlet in the order provided below and will appear as indicated below.**

The undersigned author(s) or authorized signer(s) of the (select one of the following):

☐ **ARGUMENT IN FAVOR**

☐ **REBUTTAL TO ARGUMENT IN FAVOR**

☐ **ARGUMENT AGAINST**

☐ **REBUTTAL TO ARGUMENT AGAINST**

ballot measure \_\_\_\_ at the \_\_\_\_\_ election for \_\_\_\_\_ being held on \_\_\_\_\_  
(Letter) (Election Name) (Jurisdiction) (Date of Election)

hereby state that such argument is true and correct to the best of his/her/their knowledge and belief.

If argument is filed by the governing body of a district, fill in the name of the district governing body on the line below. **The governing body members sign as authors of the argument and must complete both sides of this form.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of District Governing Body

If argument is filed by a bona fide association of citizens, fill in the name of the association below. **The Association members sign as authors of the argument and must complete both sides of this form.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Association

1.	_____ Print Name	_____ Residence Address	_____ Date
	_____ Title	_____ Signature	_____ Phone Number
2.	_____ Print Name	_____ Residence Address	_____ Date
	_____ Title	_____ Signature	_____ Phone Number
3.	_____ Print Name	_____ Residence Address	_____ Date
	_____ Title	_____ Signature	_____ Phone Number
4.	_____ Print Name	_____ Residence Address	_____ Date
	_____ Title	_____ Signature	_____ Phone Number
5.	_____ Print Name	_____ Residence Address	_____ Date
	_____ Title	_____ Signature	_____ Phone Number

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## ATTACHMENT E – BACK SIDE

### DIRECT ARGUMENT/REBUTTALS SIGNATURE STATEMENT

**To be completed for arguments filed by a governing body of a district,  
a bona fide association of citizens, and individual signers.**

#### **ARGUMENT/REBUTTAL FILED BY (Check Any of the Following that Apply):**

**A.**

☐ **Board of Supervisors**

Contact Person's Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**B. The following information is submitted by the author(s) to establish that the organization or group is a Bona Fide Association of Citizens.**

☐ **1. Bona Fide Association of Citizens (Group or organization has not been formed to support or oppose the measure)**

Name of Association: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal Officer's Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal Officer's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ **2. Bona Fide Association of Citizens (Group or organization has been formed to support or oppose the measure)**

Name of Association: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal Officer's Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal Officer's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

A form 410 Statement of Organization – establishing the group or organization as a Primarily Formed Ballot Measure Committee to support or oppose Measure \_\_\_\_\_ was filed on \_\_\_\_\_ Committee I.D. # \_\_\_\_\_.  
(The form 410 must be filed within 10 days of the date of the date the committee receives \$2,000 in contributions)

**C. Other information that would support the claim that the group or organization is a Bona fide Association, rather than a group of individuals who support or oppose Measure \_\_\_\_.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



## Authorization for Signers of Direct Arguments

**To be completed by the author(s) of the Direct Argument**

The undersigned author(s) of the argument    ☐ In Favor    ☐ Against

Measure \_\_\_\_\_ at the \_\_\_\_\_ election to be held on \_\_\_\_\_

Letter Name of Election

\_\_\_\_\_ authorize(s) the following individual(s) to sign the Direct  
Date of Election

Argument in his/her/their place:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ to sign instead of \_\_\_\_\_  
 Print name of Direct Argument signer Signature of Direct Argument Author Date

2. \_\_\_\_\_ to sign instead of \_\_\_\_\_  
 Print name of Direct Argument signer Signature of Direct Argument Author Date

3. \_\_\_\_\_ to sign instead of \_\_\_\_\_  
 Print name of Direct Argument signer Signature of Direct Argument Author Date

4. \_\_\_\_\_ to sign instead of \_\_\_\_\_  
 Print name of Direct Argument signer Signature of Direct Argument Author Date

5. \_\_\_\_\_ to sign instead of \_\_\_\_\_  
 Print name of Direct Argument signer Signature of Direct Argument Author Date

## Authorization for Signers of Rebuttal Arguments

**To be completed by the signer(s) of the Direct Argument**

The undersigned signer(s) of the Direct Argument      ☐ In Favor      ☐ Against

Measure \_\_\_\_\_ at the \_\_\_\_\_ election to be held on \_\_\_\_\_

Letter Name of Election

\_\_\_\_\_ authorize(s) the following individual(s) to sign the Rebuttal  
Date of Election

Argument in his/her/their place:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ to sign instead of \_\_\_\_\_  
 Print name of Rebuttal Argument signer Signature of Direct Argument signer Date

2. \_\_\_\_\_ to sign instead of \_\_\_\_\_  
 Print name of Rebuttal Argument signer Signature of Direct Argument signer Date

3. \_\_\_\_\_ to sign instead of \_\_\_\_\_  
 Print name of Rebuttal Argument signer Signature of Direct Argument signer Date

4. \_\_\_\_\_ to sign instead of \_\_\_\_\_  
 Print name of Rebuttal Argument signer Signature of Direct Argument signer Date

5. \_\_\_\_\_ to sign instead of \_\_\_\_\_  
 Print name of Rebuttal Argument signer Signature of Direct Argument signer Date