



**California Special  
Districts Association**  
*Districts Stronger Together*

September 11, 2023

The Honorable Anthony Portantino  
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee  
State Capitol, Room 412  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: ACA 13 (Ward) Voting thresholds.**  
**Notice of SUPPORT (09/01/2023)**

Dear Chair Portantino,

On behalf of the League of California Cities (Cal Cities), the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), and the California Special Districts Association (CSDA), we write in support of **ACA 13**, which would require any constitutional amendment proposed by initiative, that increases a voter approval threshold for future measures, be approved by the same proportion of votes cast as the measure would require. The measure would also preserve the right of cities, counties, and special districts to place advisory questions of the ballot to ask voters their opinion on issues.

Under current law, a simple majority of voters (50% plus 1 vote) may vote to require a super majority (for example, 66 and 2/3%) voter approval for future measures. This framework has given disproportionate power to a small number of voters, with a little more than 1/3 of the voters being able to prevent the enactment of laws that an overwhelming majority of voters agree upon.

In fact, at the local level this has made it unnecessarily difficult to pass revenue measures dedicated to critical services such as homelessness and housing, local hospitals, fire, public safety, and roads. For example, from 2001-2018, city, county, and special district revenue measures with a 2/3 vote requirement have enjoyed only a 48% passage rate, compared to a 70% passage rate of all local revenue measures over the same period of time. The status quo has prevented cities, counties, and special districts from providing desperately needed services.

ACA 13 addresses this issue by simply requiring any initiative that increases a voter approval threshold to pass by that same voter threshold. ACA 13 is a fair proposal that protects the principles of democracy and majority rule.

For these reasons, we are pleased to support ACA 13. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact Ben Triffo at [btriffo@calcities.org](mailto:btriffo@calcities.org), Eric Lawyer at [elawyer@counties.org](mailto:elawyer@counties.org), or Marcus Detwiler at [marcusd@cstda.net](mailto:marcusd@cstda.net).



**California Special  
Districts Association**  
*Districts Stronger Together*

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ben Triffo".

Ben Triffo  
Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist  
League of California Cities

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Marcus Detwiler".

Marcus Detwiler  
Legislative Representative  
California Special Districts Association

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Eric Lawyer".

Eric Lawyer  
Legislative Advocate  
California State Association of Counties

cc: The Honorable Chris Ward, Member of the California Assembly  
Members of the Senate Appropriations Committee  
Mark McKenzie, Staff Director, Senate Appropriations Committee  
Cory Botts, Senate Republican Caucus