



September 3, 2024

VIA Email to the Office of the Governor and Author

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 2642 (Berman) - Elections: intimidation – REQUEST FOR GOVERNOR'S SIGNATURE

Dear Governor Newsom:

The League of Women Voters of California writes to request your signature on AB 2642 (Berman), which creates a new civil cause of action in state court against anyone who engages in intimidating, threatening, or coercive behavior towards election workers or voters. Furthermore, the bill creates a legal presumption that people who carry firearms around election activities or workers are engaged in such intimidation, threats, or coercion.

It is an unfortunate fact of our current political climate, tainted by the proliferation of violent threats against and harassment of election workers and voters, and supercharged by high rates of gun ownership and legal challenges to gun safety laws, that we must enhance our state's protections against election intimidation.¹

¹ Sean Morales-Doyle, Robyn Sanders, Allison Anderman, and Jessica Ojeda, Guns and Voting: How to Protect Elections After *Bruen*, Brennan Center for Justice and the Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, September 2023, accessed at bit.ly/GunsAndVoting.

The League of Women Voters of California has previously [supported legislation](#) to ensure that loaded and concealed weapons are not allowed in certain sensitive places like polling locations – but this law is currently being challenged in federal court. We have [pushed back](#) against the irrational passions of uninformed political actors intent on disrupting the voting process. And we have [championed](#) the need to ensure that those working at the vanguard of our democracy have their privacy protected.

We know that many people do not feel safe at their polling places and that these numbers are higher among Latino, Black and young people. And we have seen a significant national exodus of election workers.² In California, we are experiencing a significant loss of invaluable experience and institutional knowledge - in the 2024 elections 44% of election administrators will be new to the job.³

The League of Women Voters of California believes that we must meet these trying times with robust protections for the American democratic process. AB 2642 will provide important tools, giving Californians recourse to address threats and administer elections and vote without fear. **For these reasons, the League of Women Voters of California supports AB 2642 (Berman) and requests your signature. Thank you.**

² “Americans’ Fears Suppressing Participation in Democracy,” Global Project Against Hate and Extremism, August 2022, accessed at globalextrémism.org/post/fear-and-elections; Brennan Center [Local Election Officials Survey — April 2023](#).

³ “The High Cost of High Turnover,” Issue One, September 2023, accessed at issueone.org/articles/the-high-cost-of-high-turnover

Assemblymember Marc Berman

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Stephanie Doute". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end of the name.

Stephanie Doute

Executive Director