September 18, 2017

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr.
Governor, State of California
State Capitol, First Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Senate Bill 568 (Lara) – REQUEST FOR VETO

Dear Governor Brown:

The Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) respectfully requests your veto of Senate Bill 568. SB 568, authored by Senator Ricardo Lara, would permanently place the Presidential Primary Election and the Gubernatorial Primary Election on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in March. RCRC is an association of thirty-five rural California counties, and the RCRC Board of Directors is comprised of elected supervisors from each of those member counties.

SB 568 proposes that both the presidential and gubernatorial primary election date be moved from its current first Tuesday after the first Monday in June to early March. In addition, the March date would also serve as the Direct Primary for the House of Representatives, members of the Legislature, and County Supervisors, as well as for the consideration of statewide ballot measures that were placed on the ballot by the Legislature (initiative measures are deemed for the General Election ballot). With the enactment of SB 568, RCRC member counties believe this will translate to an extremely long campaign season (almost a full year between filing for office and the election certification). Furthermore, for those county office incumbents who experienced defeat (not receiving 50 percent plus one) in March, they would have nearly a year in office where they would serve as a lame-duck.

Last year the Legislature enacted Senate Bill 450 (Allen and Hertzberg), which authorizes counties to conduct any and all elections as an all-mail ballot election. Specifically, SB 450 permitted at the discretion of the Board of Supervisors the following RCRC-member counties after January 1, 2018 to conduct any election as an all-mailed ballot election: Calaveras, Inyo, Madera, Napa, Nevada, San Luis Obispo, Shasta, Sutter and Tuolumne. In 2020, all other counties could utilize this option, with the exception of Los Angeles County. To be eligible to utilize this all-mail voting option, counties must meet prescribed conditions. With the enactment of SB 450, counties are
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undergoing dramatic changes in the way elections are administered. RCRC believes it would be prudent to witness the effect of these significant changes before altering the calendar of when elections are slated.

For these reasons, RCRC respectfully requests your veto on SB 568.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

PAUL A. SMITH
Vice President Governmental Affairs

cc: The Honorable Ricardo Lara, Member of the State Senate
    The Honorable Kevin Mullin, Member of the State Assembly