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Proposition 67

Proposition 67 is a referendum which is a vote that allows the people to approve or disapprove a law that has already been passed by the legislature. This would pass or disapprove Senate Bill 270 which created a ban on single use, plastic carryout bags. The law, SB 270, is passed but it will not be enforced unless Prop 67 is passed by a majority of voters. The prop creator, Kevin de Leon, claimed, "As we further develop our green economy, SB 270 will be a model for balancing the health of the planet with the preservation of people's livelihoods." A yes vote on Prop 67 puts the bag ban listed in SB 270 into effect.

The California Senate Bill 270 talks about how the bag ban would be implemented. A ban would be enacted on grocery that would not allow stores to give out free plastic bags at checkout. Paper bags could be bought at a minimum of ten cents at checkout. Many opposers of this bill say that less fortunate people can not afford it, but the bill offers free bags for people who qualify for food stamps.

The ten cents that stores would receive for supplying a bag could only be put towards three funds: the costs associated with complying with the law, providing the bags, and education about reusable bags. This is different than prop 65, which would force the proceeds of these bag charges towards a statewide environmental protection fund, which would provide grants for predetermined environmental services.

There are many arguments that supporters make for the "yes" vote. This proposition would reduce litter and it would protect wildlife and reduce cleanup costs because plastic bags would be removed from circulation. Even though plastic bags can be recycled, less than 5% are

actually recycled. Also this is not out of the norm, about half of the state has already banned plastic bags, so this proposition would not change anything in many counties.

There are also valid arguments for the “no” vote. Opposers argue that the proposition would cost consumers more money, about \$400 million statewide than before after one year after proposition would be enacted, this is caused by the ten cent charge. The most valid argument that is listed is perhaps the fact that no money would go towards the environment and instead would go into the pockets of grocers. However, this is addressed with proposition 65, but only if there is a statewide bag ban in effect.

Supporters of this prop have only raised about half of what the opposition has raised, 3.66 million. The opposition to this bill, led by The American Progressive Bag Alliance, have raised 6.14 million dollars to oppose this bill. This alliance is a coalition of plastic bag manufacturers that would lose business because of this ban, since stores would stop selling bags and these manufacturers would lose business. Even though this ban would affect this sector of the economy, the state has set aside two million dollars to help plastic bag manufacturers to transition from disposable plastic bags to making thicker, recyclable plastic bags. This would allow these plastic bag manufacturers to retain jobs, and stay in business. However, I personally am unsure that this two million dollars will help much. In the grand scheme of manufacturing, two million dollars is actually not that much money. The largest bag manufacturer in California, Durabag Co. Inc, would most likely receive these funds. Durabag is the only major plastic bag manufacturer in California, and strongly does not support this proposition. These funds would single handedly go to Durabag.

There is interesting statues between prop 65 and 67, the two propositions both have to do with the ten cent charge on reusable bags after the ban of plastic bags. Prop 65 states that the ten cents collected by the sale of a paper bag would go into The California Wildlife Fund. However, this proposition cannot be enacted unless there is a ban on plastic bags that mandates the tax on bags at checkout. So in reality, this 67 must pass for 65 to be acted into

effect. Both of these propositions must be passed for the ten cents collected from bag sales to go towards the environment.

I think this proposition will pass, it has very low upkeep costs, and removes plastic bags from our landfills and streams. The State would see a minor increase in budget of less than a million dollars, however this may be justified by the amount of money saved by the savings from government agencies not having to pick up plastic bags. Also, some of the costs of this proposition would be covered by small administration fees paid by businesses that would now have to sell paper bags. So of the profits made by this increase of price could help pay for the administrative cost.

Living in Sonoma County, proposition 67 does not change to the way we live. All Sonoma County stores are prohibited from selling plastic bags, and they charge ten cents to purchase a paper bag. I encourage a "yes" vote on this proposition. This is mainly because I have visited many foreign countries that are plagued by pollution and littered squares, sidewalks, and rivers due to plastic bags. While proposition 67 may alleviate some pollution, the funds raised will most likely be used to educate the public about the idea that litter and pollution is bad and that littering is irreversible damage to our earth. The problem with the third world countries that I've visited, like Cuba, Mexico, Honduras, and Columbia is that there is no to little education on the preservation of wildlife, especially littering. The ten cents the stores would receive is supposed to go towards education about environment, and if it is implemented as proposed, this education, in the form of flyers and banners, would be targeted towards children. This would try to ensure that the next generation understood the issues that come with preservation of our precious earth.

A yes votes means:

- It prohibits stores from providing single-use plastic or paper carryout bags to customers.
- Permits sale of recycled paper bags and reusable bags to customers, at a minimum price of 10 cents per bag

A no vote means:

- Stores can continue to provide single-use plastic bags

Odd things:

- Provide \$2 million to state plastic bag manufacturers for the purpose of them holding jobs and transition to making other types of bags.
- Opposers to this bill are