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February 12, 2007

Senator Ron Calderon  
State Capitol  
Room 4016  
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Senator Calderon:

The Foundation for Taxpayer and Consumer Rights (FTCR) is strongly opposed to your SB 113, which will force Californians to go to the polls three times in a single year and comes with an estimated \$90 million price tag. It appears that the real reason this bill is being rushed into law is to open the door for some lawmakers and the governor to run for third terms. FTCR would drop our opposition if the February primary included legislative primaries as well.

Proponents of the bill argue that moving California's primary to the front of the pack in February will give Californians a say in presidential primaries. We believe it is unlikely to produce the advertised result.

Eleven other states are proposing to move their presidential primaries to February 5. A twelfth, Florida, would move ahead of that date (and share a Democratic primary with South Carolina), and the Iowa, New Hampshire, and Nevada dates (for Democrats) are a week or more ahead. If California moves its primary, we will be jumping on the bandwagon that's rushing to the front of the line. The scheme will backfire by frontloading the entire nomination process and taxpayers will waste \$90 million on no change.

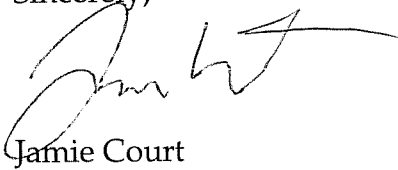
Faced with 14 states voting within a week, candidates will focus on those races where they can have the most impact. A one-week statewide ad buy in California can easily cost \$2 million, while a statewide buy in most of the other states planning a move is a fraction of that cost. No candidate will spend the same amount of money to win one state when they can win multiple, especially when those states combined bring two to four times as many delegates, three times as many electoral votes, and several of the states can also boast California's diversity. Moving the presidential primary forward does not make sense for California.

News reports have focused on what appears to be SB 113's real agenda. With the presidential primary in February and the statewide primary in June, an initiative extending term limits could be placed on the February 2008 ballot, giving termed out politicians a chance to run in June primaries and keep their jobs in November.

A June statewide primary is likely to give incumbents an even greater advantage, given the low turnout likely at an election separated from the presidential race.

Term limits may well need to be reconsidered, but the Legislature should consider the issue in a separate debate, not by using the empty promise of national prominence in the presidential race. If a February presidential primary is really needed to preserve California's political ego, then legislative primaries should be on the same ballot. But the voters have already rendered this verdict: no more Trojan horses, no more extra elections.

Sincerely,



Jamie Court  
President



Carmen Balber  
Consumer Advocate

cc Senate Rules Committee, Office of Senate Floor Analyses