

**The Ballot Initiative Transparency Act:
Examining its Impact on Legislative Compromise in California**

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Abstract

In 2014, California passed the Ballot Initiative Transparency Act (SB 1253, or BITA) which provided some of the biggest changes to California's ballot initiative process in recent decades. BITA went into effect for the first time during the 2016 election cycle and was designed to provide more opportunities for legislative compromise and to allow for more public involvement in the ballot initiative process. Our study examines BITA and its impact on the ballot initiative process. Specifically, we sought to understand the extent of BITA's impact on influencing the state legislature and the initiative proponents to seek legislative compromise. Furthermore, we examine the implementation of the new mechanisms BITA put in place and offer suggestions for how to potentially improve their effectiveness for future elections.

Introduction

The 2014 Ballot Initiative Transparency Act (SB 1253, or BITA) introduced some of the most important changes to California's ballot initiative process in recent decades. Authored by former California Senate President pro Tempore Darrell Steinberg, the bill sought to meet three main goals: make the ballot initiative process more transparent, render it more participatory for the public and accessible for small campaigns, and provide initiative proponents and the state legislature time to craft effective compromise legislation that could lead to fewer initiatives on the ballot.

To help achieve these goals, BITA created a 30-day online public comment period, which established an online platform for the public to use to provide feedback and suggestions to initiative proponents on their proposed measures. This period also served as an 'amendment window.' This window was built into the initiative process for proponents to make changes to improve their initiatives, thus allowing proponents more time to help ensure the best version of each measure is what would appear on the ballot. In addition, BITA also changed the timing of the joint legislative public hearings. Under BITA, once initiative proponents receive 25 percent of the signatures required to qualify their measure for the ballot, joint legislative public hearings are triggered, and should be held no later than 131 days before the election. This change allows hearings to be held earlier in the initiative process, potentially providing initiative proponents an earlier chance to work out legislative compromises with state lawmakers.

This paper examines the extent of BITA’s impact on legislative compromise during the 2016 ballot initiative process, while providing recommendations to improve BITA’s effectiveness in future elections. These recommendations derive from the research findings of the California Civic Engagement Project (CCEP) at UC Davis. During the 2016 election—the first election cycle in which BITA was implemented—the CCEP conducted a multimethod research study of the ballot initiative process. This paper is the second in a series of articles examining research questions regarding BITA’s implementation and impact. While each of these papers offer insights into BITA’s initial impact on the ballot initiative process, more research will be needed on future elections to gain a better understanding of BITA’s impact in the long term.

A History of the Ballot Initiative Process in California

Historically, political reforms reflect changes in the political and economic climate. The introduction of the ballot initiative process in the late 19th century is a case in point. During the Industrial Revolution of the late 1800s, the United States saw rapid urban growth, industrial expansion, railroad construction, and political corruption sweep across the nation. Soon, these changes led to calls for social and political reform. Two reform ideas that gained influence at the time were the introduction of the initiative and the referendum. According to Moss and Grodzins’ study of early 20th-century reform in Massachusetts, each of these was intended to serve a clear purpose:

The initiative would empower private citizens to write both laws and constitutional amendments, and pass them, even over the opposition of a majority of the state legislature. The referendum would allow voters to rescind laws that the legislature had passed. (Moss and Grodzins 2016)

Today, this body of reforms is commonly referred to as I&R. From the start, the goal of these reforms was to allow citizens to propose and enact new laws through a citizen petition process, thus providing an alternative means of passing laws without going through the legislature (Schmidt 1989, 5). Scholars have characterized these as forms of direct democracy, which promoted government “by the people” both within states, and nationwide (Gunn 1981).

Initial support for the I&R movement in the early 1890s came from the Socialist Labor Party, the Populist Party, and the American Federation of Labor (AFL). Founded in 1886, the AFL was one of the leading representatives of unionized workers at the time; its leaders believed in the potential for I&R to achieve the goals of unionized workers. However, it was not until the late 1890s, when support for I&R spread across the American Midwest, that the movement achieved its first victories (Schmidt 1989, 7). The first I&R victory happened in 1897, when Nebraska became the first state to allow I&R in municipalities. Then in 1898, the I&R movement scored another victory, this time in South Dakota, where the state passed a state constitutional amendment establishing an I&R process (Ballotpedia, a).

The I&R movement continued into the beginning of the twentieth century, during what came to be known as the Progressive Era. The Progressive movement was driven by young, educated, urban, middle-class Americans who believed that government could be used as a tool for social and economic change. The movement’s reformist spirit was epitomized by the era’s muckraking journalists, who worked to expose social problems and government corruption (Silva 2000). In their efforts to spur official action, and their eagerness for social reform, progressives came to see I&R as a way to put control of the political process back into the hands of the people, effectively circumventing the legislature in order to make it more responsive and responsible.

I&R's increasing popularity reached California in the early 1900s. At the time, progressives in the state worried about the influence of moneyed interests, including the Southern Pacific Railroad, over the state legislature (Silva 2000). The movement culminated in 1911, with California Governor Hiram Johnson's call for the adoption of initiative, referendum, and recall reforms (Schmidt 1989, 10). On October 10 of that year, Californians voted 76 percent in favor of Proposition 7, which introduced the initiative and referendum (Baldassare, Bonner, Petek, and Shreshtha 2013a), while also passing Proposition 8, which allowed for the recall of public officials. Both propositions were voted in as amendments to the Constitution of California, making the Golden State the tenth in the country to enact a citizens' initiative process (Baldassare, Bonner, Petek, and Shreshtha 2013b).

Since establishing the ballot initiative process just over a hundred years ago, California voters have put it to a variety of uses. In the 1960s through the 1970s, concerns about taxes and public spending spread nationwide, prompting conservative groups to sponsor tax cut initiatives, and leading California voters to pass Proposition 13 in 1978 (Schmidt 1989, 128–32). Then, in the 1980s, the Nuclear Freeze Movement swept across the country in response to the nuclear arms race between the United States and the Soviet Union. This movement sparked a rise in initiatives designed to halt the production and development of nuclear weapons (Schmidt 1989, 152–69). Moving into the 1990s, California saw a number of ballot measures involving social issues and minority rights emerge. Some of the most controversial were Proposition 187, which denied public services to undocumented citizens and Proposition 209, an amendment to the California constitution that prohibited public institutions from discriminating based on race, sex, or ethnicity (Ballotpedia, b).

In recent years, however, Californians have expressed support for the initiative process itself to be reformed. A 2013 survey by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) captured public sentiment on this issue. According to this study, the majority of Californians polled favored reforms that would increase transparency in the initiative process, increase public disclosure of funding sources, and promote greater legislative involvement in the ballot initiative process. A majority of respondents, or 78 percent, also favored providing time for both the legislature and initiative proponents to seek a legislative compromise, while 69 percent of respondents strongly supported reforms that would increase public engagement in the initiative process (Baldassare, Bonner, Petek, and Shreshtha 2013c).

The public sentiments revealed in this survey were also reflected in the types of legislation passed during this time. For instance, Assembly Bill 354, which was passed in 2013, sought to increase transparency in the initiative process by requiring that the impartial analysis provided to citizens voting on local ballot measures should indicate whether citizens or a city entity placed the measure on the ballot. Then in 2014, several other pieces of legislation passed that addressed issues of funding disclosure, transparency, and the ballot initiative process itself. One of these was Senate Bill 27, which required ballot measure committees and state candidate committees that raise \$1 million or more, to maintain an accurate list of their committee's top 10 contributors. On a similar note, Assembly Bill 510 required more transparency regarding payment to individuals who appeared as experts in ballot measure advertisements. These were followed by Senate Bill 1253, commonly referred to as the Ballot Initiative Transparency Act, or BITA, which provided the first major changes to California's ballot initiative process (McGreevy 2014) in the last four decades.

B. Changes Wrought by the 2014 Ballot Initiative Transparency Act (BITA)

What were the main changes introduced by BITA? To start, BITA implemented a new 30-day online public comment period and platform that the public could use to provide suggestions to initiative proponents on how to improve their measures. This feedback was especially important for clarifying the language and intent of initiatives. Indeed, one concern of voters at the time pertained to the wording of ballot initiatives. A study by the PPIC in 2013 found that 78 percent of adults, and 83 percent of likely voters, said that ballot initiative wording was typically too complicated and confusing for voters to understand, causing doubt about what would happen if the initiatives actually passed (Baldassare, Bonner, Petek, and Shrestha 2013d). Providing an opportunity for public comment was thus seen as a way to generate additional feedback that could lead to initiatives that are easier for the general voting public to grasp and support or oppose.

The BITA public comment period also provided an “amendment window” for proponents of the proposed initiatives to make changes to their initial ballot initiatives—here again, with the intent of making the process more responsive to public feedback. According to BITA, the comment period for each proposed initiative is to be initiated by the California attorney general (AG) upon receiving a request from the initiative proponent to prepare a circulating title and summary for the proposed measure. During this 30-day comment period, proponents can use the public comments provided about their measure to make reasonably germane amendments to their initiative. Once the public review period ends, proponents then have five days to submit their final amendments. (Senate Bill 1253, 2014).

Another change BITA made was the extension of the amount of time given to proponents to gather signatures, from 150 to 180 days. Prior to BITA, California had one of the shortest signature-gathering periods for ballot initiatives of any state (NCSL 2018). Lengthening this period was intended, in part, to allow for greater overlap and synchronization with the legislative season, and to provide support for grassroots signature collection. Grassroots groups do not typically have the same, well-funded signature-gathering operations of wealthier special interest groups. Providing more time would, proponents believed, create a more level playing field, allowing grassroots groups to compete more effectively with big-money interests in bringing their initiatives to the ballot (Berggruen and Steinberg 2014).

Next, BITA changed the timing of joint legislative public hearings. Before BITA, the California Secretary of State (SOS) was required to transmit copies of the initiative to the state legislature only once the measure was officially certified to appear on the ballot. Then, each of the appropriate legislative committees would be called on to hold a joint legislative public hearing on the initiative at some point before the date of the election. Under BITA, however, once initiative proponents collect just 25 percent of the signatures required for an initiative to qualify for the ballot (i.e., before the measure is certified to appear on the ballot), the SOS must transmit copies of the initiative to the appropriate legislative committees. The legislature is then instructed to hold joint legislative public hearings no later than 131 days before the date of the election when the ballot initiative is to be voted on if it qualifies.

By triggering joint legislative public hearings when just 25 percent of the required signatures have been gathered, this reform was intended to provide the legislature the opportunity to hold public hearings earlier in the initiative process. In theory, this earlier time frame could allow the legislature to work with proponents sooner, to try to agree on compromise legislation, or discover any additional considerations that proponents should address. Should initiative proponents agree on compromise legislation, deem their initiative no longer necessary, or decide to propose

a new amended version of their initiative, BITA grants proponents the ability to withdraw their measure from the ballot at any time before the measure qualifies for the ballot (Senate Bill 1253, 2014).

Specifically, under BITA, proponents can now withdraw their initiative after the measure petitions have been filed with the appropriate elections official (thus making the measure eligible for the ballot), as long as they withdraw it before the Secretary of State officially certifies the initiative has qualified for the ballot. Whereas before BITA, once measure petitions were filed with the appropriate elections official, making the initiative eligible for the ballot, the initiative proponent was no longer allowed to withdraw it. By extending the window of opportunity for withdrawing a measure, BITA provides proponents more time to consider working out a compromise with the legislature, as well as time to address any issues with the submitted initiative language.

While California's ballot initiative process allows citizens to propose and enact laws without having to go through the legislature, there are reasons why withdrawing an initiative or seeking a legislative solution can be advantageous—such as the ability of the legislature to make amendments. As one initiative process insider explained:

We feel like voters are frequently voting on things that are very complicated, and they don't understand that it's very rigid. Once something's written, then it can't be changed that frequently. . . . So we ended up with things that were maybe basically a good idea, but they had flaws and it [sic] was rigid, and you would vote on it, and it's "yes or no" and that's it. You can't change it without voting on it again, so it's a kind of inflexibility, whereas with the legislative process there is give and take before it is finalized, and even then it can be changed by legislative action. So if they find that they made a drafting error, they say "oh we can fix that next session."

According to the California Constitution, once an initiative is voted into law, there are only two ways to make changes to it. Either the legislature places a new measure on the ballot that overturns or amends the previous measure (Kashani and Stern 2011), or the initiative itself permits the legislature to make amendments without needing voter approval (California Constitution, Article II, Sec. 10). In contrast, the California state legislature can pass bills that amend existing legislation at any time. Proponents of change argued it was important to create more opportunities in the initiative process for crafting legislative solutions to the issues raised by ballot measure proponents.

While BITA has only been in effect for one election cycle, its changes to the ballot initiative process have the potential to be significant in the future. BITA's main goals are to improve government transparency, boost public involvement, and offer more opportunities for proponents and the legislature to compromise on or fine-tune initiatives during the process. Below, we examine how successful BITA has been at achieving its goals.

C. Studying BITA in Action: Legislative Compromise in the 2016 Election Cycle

The California Civic Engagement Project at the University of California, Davis conducted a two-year multimethod research project funded by the James Irvine Foundation. The goal of this report was to examine the extent of BITA's influence on legislative compromise during the 2016 election cycle (the first cycle BITA was implemented into the California ballot initiative process), and to provide recommendations on how to improve BITA's impact on future elections. This research also sought to assess whether BITA's changes to the ballot initiative process influenced the final version of the measures placed on the ballot. Finally, it also tried to gauge BITA's ef-

fectiveness in responding to the public’s support for involvement, transparency, and effective legislative compromise.

Data from our study came from three main sources:

- a. In-depth confidential interviews with key players in California’s ballot initiative process.
- b. Online public comments received by the State of California Department of Justice during the 30-day public comment period.
- c. An analysis of joint legislative public hearings on proposed initiatives.

The following sections report on the study findings, while highlighting some initial concerns that have been raised following BITA’s implementation. This paper also suggests some possible adjustments to be considered with regard to BITA, weighing its effect on the initiative process.

D. BITA’s Effect on Initiatives during 30-Day Comment Period

As noted above, BITA implemented a new 30-day public comment period, as well as an earlier time frame for holding joint legislative public hearings. These changes to the ballot initiative process were designed to provide initiative proponents a chance to make amendments to their measure so that the best possible version of their initiative could ultimately appear on the ballot.

While useful, the window introduced by BITA to actually carry out these changes may be too limited. After the 30-day public comment period ends, initiative proponents have only five days remaining to change the language of their bill. Once these five days have elapsed, the only way proponents can make additional changes to an initiative is to submit a new initiative measure, and request a new circulating title and summary (footnote: SB 1253 text, SEC 5, 4). As one legislative staff member explained:

There is no ability to—and I think this was a distinction that really got lost a lot in the discussion over the legislation—there is no ability to say “there is this error in this initiative that we have just been 6 months gathering signatures on, and it’s just come to light now that this error exists and it’s a sort of fatal flaw to this, let’s fix that before this goes on the ballot.” There is no ability to do that.

So, while the new public review period allows proponents to hear outside perspectives on their proposed initiatives, the single amendment window provided may still not allow enough time for initiative proponents to flush out all of the flaws in their measure and make any changes in response to feedback given on their measure. At the same time, other factors may have also limited the impact potential of this feedback process. For example, some key players in the ballot initiative process reported that many initiative proponents in the 2016 election cycle did not actually look at the public comments for feedback. Instead, some sources suggested, these proponents merely crafted their initiatives to conform to the direction given by attorneys and financial backers. We have provided an in-depth examination of the 30-day comment period in our first paper of this series titled, *California’s 2014 Ballot Initiative Transparency Act (BITA) and Its Impact on Public Involvement in the Ballot Initiative Process*.

E. The Extent and Influence of Legislative Compromise on Final Initiatives

The purpose of BITA was not just to provide a means for collecting public feedback. A key goal of BITA was to generate more compromise between the initiative proponents and the state legislature (the legislature is also allowed to place measures on the ballot) in order to achieve the

best possible legislative result. Ultimately, then, the goal of this process was to see more effective, comprehensible, and possibly fewer initiatives on the ballot. But has this been the case?

Given the historically high number of ballot initiatives in California, this is a pertinent question. Indeed, in recent years, Californians have become accustomed to voting on numerous ballot initiatives. From 1960 to 2011, initiative measures could appear on primary, special, and general election ballots (SOS). Then, starting in July 2011, the initiative process changed, and began to require initiative measures (except for those initiated by the legislature) to appear only on general election ballots (SOS). In each even year from 1996–2016, voters have been called to vote on an average of 18 ballot propositions (Ballotpedia, c). To learn how voters felt about this, the PPIC conducted a survey in 2013 and found that 67 percent of likely voters said there were too many propositions on the ballot (Baldassare, Bonner, Petek, and Shrestha 2013d).

Nevertheless, despite BITA's implementation during the 2016 election cycle, and its role in introducing more opportunity for legislative compromise, the 2016 ballot still presented voters with 17 items to be voted on. Not only were there a large number of initiatives on the ballot, there were also numerous initiatives put forward on similar topics, some of them with similar details. For example, the 2016 ballot featured two plastic bag initiatives, and two death penalty-related initiatives. Some key players interviewed for this study noted that situations like these could possibly have been prevented had initiative proponents and the state legislature been able to work together to find a compromise. In such cases, they suggested, dueling or complementary ballot initiatives might have been replaced by a bill generated by the legislature.

Still, even in this one election cycle, we were able to identify several cases in which BITA may have had some effect on the initiative process. The proposed initiative cited most often by study interviewees as having been impacted by BITA was the "Fair Wage Act of 2016" initiative, commonly referred to as the Minimum Wage Bill. According to interviewees, the fact that proponents of this bill secured enough signatures to qualify the initiative for the ballot attracted the attention of the state legislature and the governor. Both decided to work out compromise legislation with the initiative proponents (the legislature compromised by proposing, and later passing into law, Senate Bill 3), which in turn allowed proponents to withdraw their measure from the ballot.

Some of our interviewees consider this process of negotiation to be a direct result of the mechanisms offered by BITA. As one union organizer put it:

A group of concerned citizens put something on the ballot, and it gave the opportunity for state government to respond. As I said to my members, we want the state government to be listening to the voice of the people. So, 700,000 people signed the measure to raise the minimum wage and the state government responded. That is exactly what we want from our leadership.

Indeed, at least in this case, some of our interviewees read this as demonstrating BITA's potential for playing a moderating role, ultimately inviting more compromise legislation. As one legislative member put it, "the minimum wage initiative is the best example" of how BITA could lead to a legislative compromise:

The union pushed a minimum wage initiative that was much more aggressive in timetable in imposing a higher minimum wage than the government and business communities were comfortable with, yet [raising the] minimum wage polled high . . . whether they intended it or not, what the union did was force the legislature to deal with it and then the other guys dropped it.

Another instance where BITA may have played a role in the outcome of a measure was with Proposition 55, the “Extension of the Proposition 30 Income Tax Increase” initiative. According to our interviewees, when California Governor Jerry Brown expressed concern about a clause in the measure, the initiative proponents used the amendment window provided by BITA to remove that clause, allowing there to be more support for the initiative.

However, it should be noted that some interviewees believed that BITA’s mechanisms were not specifically or necessarily responsible for opening the path to negotiating issues found in proposed measures. Rather, they suggested, it was simply the threat of seeing the initiative on the ballot that brought different parties to the table and served as the catalyst for finding legislative compromise. In other words, parties may have reason to come together to seek compromise for a variety of other reasons that may not be related to BITA reforms. This offers a useful insight for future analysis. For it may well be that the effectiveness of BITA cannot be measured without considering the specific issues addressed by different ballot initiatives, and the general political climate in which they emerge.

F. Opportunities to Improve BITA at the Legislative Level

Overall, while the full extent of BITA’s impact cannot yet be known, this initial research shows that BITA did bring about some improvements that may render it increasingly effective in future election cycles. However, there were some concerns raised around aspects of BITA that could hinder BITA’s overall effectiveness.

One such issue our research identified involved initiative amendments. Many interviewees suggested that the changes brought about by BITA would not be as effective unless proponents were allowed to make some amendments to their initiatives during the initiative process. For instance, some interviewees felt that BITA could better achieve its goals if the joint legislative public hearings could contribute to a revised initiative, thereby enabling an amended version to go on the ballot. Others suggested that the legislature should be allowed to make amendments after a certain period of time, in case mistakes are discovered later on in the process—however, allowing this may require a constitutional amendment.

Another key concern of our study interviewees lay with the timing of joint legislative public hearings. Many key players in the initiative process felt that the hearings occurred too late in the ballot initiative process, at a time when initiative proponents were likely to feel too financially invested in their initiative to consider pulling their measure off the ballot. As one legislative interviewee explained:

When a ballot initiative reaches the 25 percent threshold, there is a notification, a letter from the Secretary of State to the state legislature. . . . They [the legislature] assign it to appropriate standing committees. Then those committees decide on their own when to have the hearing. So if you are interested in having that compromise occur, you want that hearing to occur ASAP. The longer you wait, the more money the initiative proponents have spent and the more they are invested, so the harder bargain they are gonna drive and less likely to have the compromise that I think you folks hope would happen.

Many suggested that the hearings should be required to take place earlier in the process, specifically, 30 days after the 25 percent signature threshold is met. Earlier hearings, they argued, would mean that initiative proponents might be more amenable to compromise with the legislature. However, others acknowledged that while scheduling hearings for measures that reach the 25 percent signature threshold may be beneficial to initiative proponents, it could be a source of

complication for the legislature. Our interviewees explained that it could be difficult to find enough time in the legislature's calendar to schedule hearings for every measure that reaches the 25 percent signature threshold in addition to all other committee hearings the legislature must have. This could explain why some hearings are not scheduled until later in the ballot initiative process, at a time when the legislature thinks the initiative is likely to qualify for the ballot.

It is important to note that we also encountered skepticism about the ability of joint legislative public hearings to have any impact, even if the hearings are held earlier in the initiative process. This skepticism was grounded in a few explanations. Some argued that the current hearings are mostly pro forma in nature, and that most of the legislative compromise that happens occurs privately, and not in a public hearing. In this sense, changing the timing of these hearings might seem to make little difference.

Others pointed to the varying levels of interest shown by different parties in the process, and how they affect the way different initiatives are handled. In order for hearings to produce robust conversations between the legislators and the initiative proponents, these interviewees argued, both sides would have to commit to working together to find a compromise. However, the success of a hearing can vary: outcomes may depend on the content of the measure itself, how open its proponents are to compromising with the legislature, and how interested and open the legislature is in working with the proponents to come up with a compromise.

In other words, passions, personalities, and politics may outweigh procedures in terms of their influence on individual initiative outcomes. BITA, like many laws, may prove to have a different impact depending on the content and context at hand.

G. Recommendations

While the 2016 election cycle was the first time BITA was implemented, our research findings suggest that there are some adjustments that could increase BITA's effectiveness in positively impacting the ballot initiative process for future elections. The following three recommendations are supported by our findings.

1. Hold earlier joint legislative public hearings. BITA mandates that once proponents receive 25 percent of the signatures required to qualify their measure for the ballot, the hearings will be triggered. But as our interviewees noted, sometimes the hearings are scheduled late in the initiative process, at a time when proponents have become too financially invested in their measure, and are thus less likely to want to reach a compromise with the legislature. If hearings were scheduled earlier, the legislature would need to set aside time and staff resources for this purpose that would consider the timing of the legislature's other duties.

2. Implement strategies to make hearings more impactful and meaningful, and less pro forma. Many of our interviewees felt that the hearings were largely a formality, and that the real compromises and conversations happened privately, behind the scenes. Finding ways to make these important and often robust conversations take place publicly, during the joint legislative hearings, could make the hearings more valuable for both the initiative proponents and the legislative committees.

3. Grant additional opportunities for proponents to amend their measures during the initiative process. One option to consider would be to allow proponents to make amendments to their initiatives after they receive their joint legislative public hearing. Under BITA, proponents are now given the 30-day public comment period, plus five days after the end of the period, to submit amendments to their initiative. However, this may not be sufficient. It could be of value to consider providing proponents an opportunity after their hearing to make amendments to their initia-

tive based on the feedback they received from the legislative committee. Allowing this could make the joint legislative public hearings more effective and less pro forma, as discussed above. We acknowledge that any amendments proponents make to their measures would need to be reasonably germane. However, if hearings are held early enough in the process, it could provide proponents more time to withdraw their measure—should their amendments not be reasonably germane—and submit a newly revised initiative for the ballot that addresses the feedback and suggestions given by the legislature during the joint legislative public hearing.

H. Conclusion

While BITA has only been implemented for one election cycle, our findings show that it has the potential to allow more legislative compromise opportunities. However, the effectiveness of BITA will depend on how receptive the state legislature and the initiative proponents are to working towards compromise, and how proactively and efficiently they utilize the new allowances provided under BITA.

Since our research is early, more data will be needed on future elections to better assess the impact BITA has on California's ballot initiative process. In the meantime, we believe that the changes discussed above could potentially increase the efficacy of BITA's reforms on the ballot initiative process. Together, these modifications could allow for more legislative compromise in future election cycles, generating outcomes that are transparent and more accountable, and more responsive to public needs.

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