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22 **UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**  
23 **CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

24 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

25 Plaintiff,

26 vs.

27 SHIRLEY N. WEBER, in her official  
28 capacity as Secretary of State of  
California, and the STATE OF  
CALIFORNIA

Defendants.

Case No.: 2:25-cv-09149-DOC-ADS

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
OF CALIFORNIA’S REPLY IN  
SUPPORT OF MOTION TO  
DISMISS [Dkt. 67]**

DATE: December 4, 2025

TIME: 7:30 A.M.

COURTROOM: TBD

JUDGE: Hon. David O. Carter

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28

TABLE OF CONTENTS..... iii

TABLE OF AUTHORITIES..... iv

INTRODUCTION ..... 1

ARGUMENT .....2

    I. THE UNITED STATES FAILS TO STATE A LEGAL CLAIM UNDER  
    THE NVRA .....2

    II. THE UNITED STATES FAILS TO STATE A LEGAL CLAIM  
    UNDER TITLE III OF THE CRA .....5

        A. Plaintiff has failed to comply with the statutory requirements for  
        records requests under Title III of the CRA.....6

        B. Any records disclosed under Title III of the CRA should be  
        redacted to protect the constitutional rights of voters.....8

    III. THE UNITED STATES HAS WAIVED ANY OPPOSITION TO  
    DISMISSAL OF ITS CLAIM UNDER HAVA.....9

CONCLUSION.....10

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE.....11

**TABLE OF AUTHORITIES**

**Cases**

*Arizona v. Inter Tribal Council of Ariz., Inc.*,  
570 U.S. 1 (2013) .....4

*Atlas Data Priv. Corp. v. We Inform, LLC*,  
No. CV 24-4037, 2025 WL 2444153 (D.N.J. Aug. 25, 2025).....8

*Bellitto v. Snipes*,  
935 F.3d 1192 (11th Cir. 2019).....7

*Greidinger v. Davis*,  
988 F.2d 1344 (4th Cir. 1993).....4, 5

*Kennedy v. Lynd*,  
306 F.2d 222 (5th Cir. 1962).....6, 7

*Oklahoma v. Castro-Huerta*,  
597 U.S. 629 (2022) .....4

*Project Vote, Inc. v. Kemp*,  
208 F. Supp. 3d 1320 (N.D. Ga. 2016) .....2, 3

*Project Vote/Voting for Am., Inc. v. Long*,  
682 F.3d 331 (4th Cir. 2012).....5, 8

*Pub. Int. Legal Found. v. Benson*,  
136 F.4th 613 (6th Cir. 2025).....7

*Pub. Int. Legal Found., Inc. v. Bellows*,  
92 F.4th 36 (1st Cir. 2024) ..... 2, 4, 9

*Shakur v. Schriro*,  
514 F.3d 878 (9th Cir. 2008).....9

*True the Vote v. Hosemann*,  
43 F. Supp. 3d 693 (S.D. Miss. 2014).....3

*United States v. Golden Valley Elec. Ass’n*,  
689 F.3d 1108 (9th Cir. 2012).....6

1 *United States v. Harrell*,  
637 F.3d 1008 (9th Cir. 2011).....6

2

3 *United States v. Powell*,  
379 U.S. 48 (1964) .....5

4

5 *Vien-Phuong Thi Ho v. Recontrust Co.*,  
669 F. App’x 857 (9th Cir. 2016).....9

6

7 *Whitman v. Am. Trucking Associations*,  
531 U.S. 457 (2001) .....4

8 **Statutes**

9 5 U.S.C. § 522a(a).....5

10 5 U.S.C. § 552a(b) .....8

11 5 U.S.C. § 552a(e).....9

12 5 U.S.C. § 552(b) .....5, 8

13 44 U.S.C. § 3501 .....8

14 52 U.S.C. § 20501 .....1

15 52 U.S.C. § 20501(b) .....3

16 52 U.S.C. § 20507(a) .....2

17 52 U.S.C. § 20507(i).....2, 5

18 52 U.S.C. § 20701 .....1

19 52 U.S.C. § 20703 .....6, 7

20 52 U.S.C. § 20901 .....1

21 Cal. Elec. Code § 2194(b).....8

22 Cal. Elec. Code § 2193 .....7

23 Cal. Elec. Code § 2201 .....7

24 Cal. Elec. Code §§ 2205–2206 .....7

25 Cal. Elec. Code § 2220–2227 .....7

26 Cal. Gov’t Code § 7924.000 .....8

27

28

1 **INTRODUCTION**

2 The text of The National Voter Registration Act (“NVRA”), 52 U.S.C.  
3 § 20501 *et seq.*, the Help America Vote Act (“HAVA”), 52 U.S.C. § 20901 *et seq.*,  
4 and Title III of the Civil Rights Act of 1960 (“CRA” or “Title III”), 52 U.S.C.  
5 § 20701 *et seq.*, Congress’s intent underlying these statutes, and the case law  
6 interpreting these statutes all compel the same conclusion: Plaintiff’s complaint  
7 must be dismissed. The NVRA, HAVA, and CRA were each passed for the express  
8 purpose of ensuring that eligible Americans can participate in free, fair, and secure  
9 elections—protecting the cornerstone of America’s democracy: the right of eligible  
10 citizens to vote. These statutes do not blindly permit the United States Attorney  
11 General to embark on fishing expeditions into voting records or facilitate massive  
12 voter-data collection by the federal government, as Plaintiff insists. Doing so would  
13 be counter to these statutes’ purpose. There is no legal basis, and Plaintiff offers no  
14 legitimate justification, to support its sweeping demand for California’s complete  
15 unredacted voter registration file and the sensitive personal information of every  
16 Californian included therein. Instead, through its Complaint, Plaintiff asks the  
17 federal judiciary to grant it permission to steamroll state and federal privacy laws  
18 and turn three of this nation’s preeminent voting access statutes, NVRA, HAVA,  
19 and CRA on their heads, contorting them to sacrifice voter privacy protections and  
20 wrongly justify the federal government’s immediate, unfettered access to voters’  
21 data. The statutes simply do not support this. Because the United States has failed  
22 to state a claim upon which the relief it has requested can be granted, the Court  
23 should grant Intervenor-Defendant League of Women Voters of California’s (the  
24 “LWVC’s”) motion to dismiss.

1 **ARGUMENT**

2 **I. THE UNITED STATES FAILS TO STATE A LEGAL CLAIM**  
3 **UNDER THE NVRA**

4 Plaintiff’s Complaint demands data beyond the scope of relief that the  
5 NVRA authorizes. Compl. ¶¶ 12–21, 34, 50–56 [Dkt. 1]. What the United States  
6 wants—access to particular statutorily-protected sensitive voter information—is  
7 unnecessary to ensure California is conducting “a general program that makes a  
8 reasonable effort to remove the names of ineligible voters” and lies beyond the  
9 statute’s reach. *Project Vote, Inc. v. Kemp*, 208 F. Supp. 3d 1320, 1325 (N.D. Ga.  
10 2016) (citing 52 U.S.C. § 20507(a)(3)-(4)); *id.* at 1345 (holding that personal  
11 information like social security numbers and birth dates “is not relevant . . . to  
12 determine whether the State improperly removed or did not add individuals to the  
13 voter roll”); *id.* at 1344 (“Section 8(i) requires the disclosure of individual voter  
14 registration records, but it does not require the disclosure of sensitive information  
15 that implicates special privacy concerns”); *Pub. Int. Legal Found., Inc. v. Bellows*,  
16 92 F.4th 36, 56 (1st Cir. 2024) (“nothing in the text of the NVRA prohibits the  
17 appropriate redaction of uniquely or highly sensitive personal information in the  
18 Voter File”). The NVRA claim must therefore be dismissed.

19 Plaintiff fails to counter consistent NVRA case law that recognizes  
20 redactions of sensitive voter information are appropriate. Instead, it argues that  
21 those cases are distinguishable because they involve private actions, offering no  
22 textual analysis of the statute and no reasoning to support a distinction between  
23 private requesters and the Attorney General. Opp’n to Defs.’ MTD at 7, 12-14 [Dkt.  
24 63]; Opp’n to Intervenors’ MTD at 12-14 [Dkt. 81]. Nor could it. The NVRA’s  
25 public disclosure provision requires states to make records “available for public  
26 inspection.” 52 U.S.C. § 20507(i). It contains no reference whatsoever to the  
27 identity of the requester. To support its argument, the United States cherry-picks  
28 quotes from cases discussing the CRA’s Attorney General inspection provision.

1 Opp'n to Intervenor's MTD at 12-13 [Dkt. 81]. But none of these quotes support  
2 the argument that the Attorney General has broader access under the NVRA. In  
3 *Kemp*, the court cited the CRA precisely to make the opposite point: other federal  
4 statutes, including the CRA, also "recognize the confidentiality of certain voter  
5 information." 208 F. Supp. 3d at 1344; *see also True the Vote v. Hosemann*, 43 F.  
6 Supp. 3d 693, 734-35 (S.D. Miss. 2014) (noting that an interpretation allowing  
7 NVRA requesters access to unredacted voter records "flies in the face of" the CRA,  
8 which requires the Attorney General to keep such records confidential). The court  
9 then concluded that "[a]llowing disclosure [under the NVRA] of unredacted voter  
10 applications is inconsistent [] with Congress's concern for individual privacy  
11 evidenced in Federal statutes" and that "it is illogical that in enacting the NVRA,  
12 Congress intended to erode Federal and State law protecting against the disclosure  
13 of private, personal information." *Kemp*, 208 F. Supp. 3d at 1344-45.

14 The United States also argues that Intervenor-Defendants seek to expand the  
15 text of the NVRA by adding a redaction provision. Opp'n to Intervenor's MTD at  
16 11 [Dkt. 81]. That misstates both Intervenor-Defendant LWVC's position and the  
17 case law. Courts have recognized the distinction between making a record  
18 available—which the NVRA requires and the State has agreed to do—and  
19 redacting limited, discrete confidential information within those records—which  
20 multiple, preexisting federal and state laws mandate. *Hosemann*, 43 F. Supp. 3d at  
21 733-34. The Plaintiff cites no authority suggesting that Congress intended  
22 otherwise protected information to lose its protection once a citizen registers to  
23 vote. To the contrary, such a reading would undermine a central purpose of the  
24 NVRA: to "increase the number of eligible citizens who register to vote in  
25 elections." 52 U.S.C. § 20501(b)(1). Properly read, the NVRA mandates  
26 disclosure, but did not silently repeal parallel state and federal privacy protections.  
27 *See Kemp*, 208 F. Supp. 3d at 1345 (holding Congress did not intend to undermine  
28 state privacy laws and citing Georgia's public records law exemptions as an

1 example); *Whitman v. Am. Trucking Associations*, 531 U.S. 457, 468 (2001)  
2 (Congress “does not . . . hide elephants in mouseholes”); *see also Bellows*, 92 F.  
3 4th at 55-56 (federal privacy and voter intimidation statutes must be “read in  
4 tandem with the NVRA” to “address the privacy concerns posed by public  
5 disclosure of the Voter File”). Indeed, the United States itself recognizes the  
6 continuing force of privacy law, admitting that the federal Privacy Act applies to  
7 its own conduct. Opp’n to Intervenor’s MTD at 13-14 [Dkt. 81]. The same principle  
8 applies here: state privacy laws may shape the scope of disclosure without  
9 enlarging—or contradicting—the text of the NVRA.

10 For this reason, the United States is also wrong to maintain that California’s  
11 voter-privacy safeguards are preempted by the NVRA. Opp’n to Intervenor’s MTD  
12 at 16-18 [Dkt. 81]. While a state law that fully prevented the disclosure of voter  
13 records would be at least partially preempted by the NVRA, *see Bellows*, 92 F.4th  
14 at 55-56, that is not what is at issue here. For California, there is no conflict between  
15 the NVRA and the state law because the NVRA does not require the production of  
16 unredacted documents in the first instance. *See id.* (holding that a state ban on the  
17 publication of the voter file interfered with the NVRA’s public disclosure  
18 provision, but noting that redactions of sensitive voter information are consistent  
19 with the NVRA); *Arizona v. Inter Tribal Council of Ariz., Inc.*, 570 U.S. 1, 9 (2013)  
20 (holding that the NVRA preempts state election law only insofar as the two are  
21 inconsistent). Put simply, a desire for unredacted voter records, untethered from  
22 any law, does not translate into a federal mandate. *See Oklahoma v. Castro-Huerta*,  
23 597 U.S. 629, 642 (2022) (“The Supremacy Clause cannot ‘be deployed’ ‘to elevate  
24 abstract and unenacted legislative desires above state law’”) (citation omitted).

25 Finally, Plaintiff does not dispute that reading the NVRA to require  
26 disclosure of Social Security numbers would “create[] an intolerable burden” on  
27 the right to vote. Opp’n to Intervenor’s MTD at 15-16 [Dkt. 81] (quoting  
28 *Greidinger v. Davis*, 988 F.2d 1344, 1355 (4th Cir. 1993)). It nevertheless tries to

1 limit that reasoning to Social Security numbers. *Greidinger*—cited in *Project*  
2 *Vote/Voting for Am., Inc. v. Long*, 682 F.3d 331 (4th Cir. 2012) [hereinafter  
3 “*Project Vote*”]—did not strike down a law that conditioned voting on the release  
4 of Social Security numbers merely because they are Social Security numbers. 988  
5 F.2d 1344. Rather, the court recognized that requiring disclosure of such individual  
6 identifiers would violate privacy interests protected under statutes like the Privacy  
7 Act and the Freedom of Information Act (“FOIA”). *Id.* at 1353-54. The Privacy  
8 Act and FOIA, like California’s voter privacy law, also protect other universal  
9 personal identifiers, including driver’s license and state ID numbers. 5 U.S.C.  
10 § 522a(a)(4) (defining “record” under the Privacy Act to include an “identifying  
11 number, symbol, or other identifying particular assigned to the individual”); 5  
12 U.S.C. § 552(b)(6) (exempting from disclosure “information of a personal nature  
13 where disclosure would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal  
14 privacy”). Forcing disclosure of either such types of identifiers would thus impose  
15 the same “intolerable burden” on the right to vote that the *Project Vote* and  
16 *Greidinger* courts recognized. *Project Vote*, 682 F.3d at 339; *Greidinger*, 988 F.2d  
17 at 1355. That the Attorney General is the requester does not change the statute nor  
18 the analysis: the NVRA’s **public** disclosure provision, 52 U.S.C. § 20507(i)(1),  
19 applies equally to the public and the Attorney General.

20 **II. THE UNITED STATES FAILS TO STATE A LEGAL CLAIM**  
21 **UNDER TITLE III OF THE CRA**

22 Nothing in Title III creates a special, truncated proceeding or shields the  
23 Attorney General’s demand from ordinary judicial scrutiny. Indeed, in a closely  
24 analogous statutory scheme, the Supreme Court held that a similarly worded  
25 enforcement statute required courts to apply standard civil procedures and to ensure  
26 statutory prerequisites were satisfied. *See United States v. Powell*, 379 U.S. 48, 57-  
27 58 & n.18 (1964). Under current binding law, the Court must evaluate whether  
28 Plaintiff complied with Title III—including whether it has followed procedural

1 requirements (like making a proper demand with its basis and purpose) and whether  
2 the evidence sought is relevant and material to its investigation. *See United States*  
3 *v. Golden Valley Elec. Ass’n*, 689 F.3d 1108, 1113 (9th Cir. 2012). Plaintiff’s  
4 reliance on a single, outdated and out of circuit case, *Kennedy v. Lynd*, 306 F.2d  
5 222, 229 n.6 (5th Cir. 1962), to overstep all judicial process is misguided. Plaintiff  
6 also misrepresents that case. Indeed, *Lynd* is insightful for other purposes,  
7 including that the “statement of the basis and purpose” is a requirement for any  
8 such request and that “basis” and “purpose” are distinct requirements under the  
9 statute. *Lynd* at 229 n.6. Plaintiff’s assertion that its Title III demand is above  
10 judicial process, Opp’n to Defs.’ MTD [Dkt. 81] at 11-12, is simply wrong.

11 **A. Plaintiff has failed to comply with the statutory requirements for**  
12 **records requests under Title III of the CRA.**

13 In its opposition, Plaintiff fails to address the fact that it has not provided a  
14 statement of “the basis and the purpose” that supports its request for the full  
15 unredacted voter file. 52 U.S.C. § 20703. Plaintiff’s unrestricted interpretation of  
16 Title III would give the Attorney General unfettered investigatory authority,  
17 demanding *any* records, no matter how tangential, into *any* possible violation of  
18 *any* federal law, however unfounded or obscure. Such an interpretation would  
19 render Title III’s “basis and purpose” requirement meaningless, underscoring the  
20 impropriety of Plaintiff’s insisted reading. *See United States v. Harrell*, 637 F.3d  
21 1008, 1011 (9th Cir. 2011) (courts “must ‘make every effort not to interpret a  
22 provision in a manner that renders other provisions of the same statute inconsistent,  
23 meaningless or superfluous” (internal citation and alteration omitted)). If merely  
24 listing any supposed purpose was sufficient to satisfy the demands of the statute,  
25 there would have been no reason for Congress to include this as a requirement  
26 under the statutory scheme. Instead, Title III requires the Attorney General to  
27 articulate both “the basis and the purpose” to support the demand. 52 U.S.C.  
28 § 20703. Plaintiff provides neither. Even assuming (which this Court should not)

1 that the Attorney General can invoke Title III on a purpose and basis that is  
2 divorced from protecting individuals’ rights to register and vote—Plaintiff’s  
3 purported basis and purpose here fail to meet statutory requirements. First, Plaintiff  
4 cannot credibly argue that it satisfied the statutory text by providing a statement of  
5 “the basis and the purpose” along with the request to California. 52 U.S.C. § 20703.  
6 And indeed, Plaintiff never even makes such an allegation in the Complaint. *See*  
7 *generally* Compl. [Dkt. 1].

8 Second, Plaintiff’s post hoc claimed purpose for its CRA request—assessing  
9 the State’s list maintenance efforts—is incompatible with the sweep of the  
10 requested information. The State’s compliance with the NVRA and HAVA is  
11 assessed by reviewing the State’s procedures—not by examining the private  
12 information of individual registrants at a single snapshot in time. *See, e.g., Pub. Int.*  
13 *Legal Found. v. Benson*, 136 F.4th 613, 624-25 (6th Cir. 2025); *Bellitto v. Snipes*,  
14 935 F.3d 1192, 1205 (11th Cir. 2019). California has already demonstrated that its  
15 procedures comply with federal law. *See* Cal. Elec. Code §§ 2193, 2201, 2205–06,  
16 2220–27; related regulations and guidance; Brudigam Decl. Exs. 4, 8 [Dkt. 37-2].  
17 Plaintiff, by contrast, has not alleged a single deficiency in California’s list-  
18 maintenance practices. Compl. ¶¶ 53, 63.

19 Plaintiff’s asserted “basis”—questions about California’s EAVS  
20 responses—is equally unmoored. Plaintiff never identified this supposed basis  
21 when requesting the data, and its July 10 letter never referenced Title III. Brudigam  
22 Decl. Ex. 1 [Dkt. 37-2]. The issues Plaintiff raised have nothing to do with  
23 protected personal identifiers like Social Security and driver’s license numbers.  
24 Plaintiff fails to explain how any perceived gaps in EAVS reporting justify a  
25 demand for unredacted records of 23 million voters. Despite this mismatch,  
26 Plaintiff asserts that its basis is “not open to judicial review.” Opp. to Defs.’ MTD  
27 14 [Dkt. 63] (citing *Lynd*, 306 F.2d at 226). But Title III requires the basis—not  
28

1 merely “a basis”—and that basis must be real, articulated, and tethered to the  
2 records demanded. Plaintiff has met none of these requirements.

3 **B. Any records disclosed under Title III of the CRA should be**  
4 **redacted to protect the constitutional rights of voters.**

5 Nothing in Title III of the CRA requires States to disclose sensitive personal  
6 information to the federal government. Even if Plaintiff made a valid demand under  
7 Title III with a statutorily sufficient statement of its basis and purpose, the sensitive  
8 personal information it seeks would remain protected by California and federal law  
9 from disclosure—even to the federal government. As with the NVRA, there is no  
10 conflict between the state and federal schemes—California’s Election Code, Cal.  
11 Elec. Code § 2194(b)(1); Cal. Gov’t Code § 7924.000(b)-(c), and the CRA both  
12 seek to protect individual voters’ right to vote. *See Atlas Data Priv. Corp. v. We*  
13 *Inform, LLC*, No. CV 24-4037, 2025 WL 2444153 at \*2-3 (D.N.J. Aug. 25, 2025)  
14 (finding state law limiting disclosure of personal information not preempted by the  
15 NVRA). Furthermore, at the time the CRA was enacted, the records subject to  
16 disclosure to the Attorney General were not required to contain Social Security  
17 numbers or other sensitive identifying data, voter data could not be electronically  
18 transferred, compounded, or shared, and the Attorney General was not yet subject  
19 to the Privacy Act of 1974. The current reality is that the vulnerability of electronic  
20 data, particularly sensitive personal identifiers, cannot be overlooked or  
21 compromised without a very compelling reason, which both federal law and state  
22 law recognize. *See, e.g.*, 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(6) (exempting private records from  
23 FOIA disclosure); 5 U.S.C. § 552a(b) (establishing protections for personal  
24 information held by the federal government); E-Government Act § 208, 44 U.S.C.  
25 § 3501 note (purpose of law to “ensure sufficient protections for the privacy of  
26 personal information . . .”); Cal. Elec. Code § 2194(b)(1). For this reason, courts  
27 have struck the correct balance, allowing for redactions to ensure voters’ privacy  
28 protection and safety, while allowing for less sensitive data to be reviewed where

1 necessary. *See, e.g., Project Vote*, 682 F.3d at 339; *Bellows*, 92 F.4th at 56. In  
2 attempting to counter arguments about its failure to comply with federal privacy  
3 law, Plaintiff gives the game away: citing an internal policy about data collected  
4 directly from individuals. *See* Opp. to Intervenor’s MTD at 14 n.7 [Dkt. 81]  
5 (indicating the policy applies to “the information you provide through this form”).  
6 Here, the information being sought is *not* being sought directly from the individuals  
7 whose data is at issue but from the State of California, underscoring both the  
8 inapplicability of Plaintiff’s cited policy and its failure to comply with the Privacy  
9 Act, which makes clear that federal agencies “shall . . . collect information to the  
10 greatest extent practicable directly from the subject individual,” 5 U.S.C.  
11 § 552a(e)(2).

12 Here, Plaintiff provides no justification that warrants release of every  
13 Californian voter’s sensitive personal data. The balance between election oversight  
14 and avoiding unnecessary violations of individuals’ privacy must be met. At the  
15 very least, this means Plaintiff’s demand for *unredacted* sensitive voter data  
16 pursuant to Title III of the CRA must fail.

17 **III. THE UNITED STATES HAS WAIVED ANY OPPOSITION TO**  
18 **DISMISSAL OF ITS CLAIM UNDER HAVA**

19 In opposition, the United States offers nothing to counter Intervenor’s  
20 motion to dismiss its HAVA claim. As such, this claim must fail. *See Vien-Phuong*  
21 *Thi Ho v. Recontrust Co.*, 669 F. App’x 857, 859 (9th Cir. 2016) (“litigants waive  
22 arguments by failing to raise them in an opposition to a motion to dismiss” (citing  
23 *Shakur v. Schriro*, 514 F.3d 878, 892 (9th Cir. 2008))). Nothing in the HAVA  
24 provisions cited in the Complaint allows the release of millions of voters’ sensitive  
25 personal information, including driver’s license numbers, state identification  
26 numbers, or Social Security numbers. Nor does the United States explain why any  
27 such personal identifiers would be relevant to assess California’s compliance with  
28 HAVA.

1 Unable to ground its demands in the statute Congress enacted, the United  
2 States instead relies on broad assertions unmoored from statutory text. But this  
3 Court cannot rewrite HAVA to supply the authority the United States wishes it had.  
4 As such, Plaintiff’s HAVA claims fail as a matter of law and must be dismissed.

5 **CONCLUSION**

6 The Court should grant Intervenor-Defendant League of Women Voters of  
7 California’s motion to dismiss, [Dkt. 67], pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil  
8 Procedure 12(b)(6).

9  
10 Dated: December 1, 2025

Respectfully submitted,

11  
12 /s/ Grayce Zelphin

13 Grayce Zelphin  
14 ACLU Foundation of Northern California  
15 *Counsel for Intervenor-Defendant League*  
16 *of Women Voters of California*  
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1 **CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE**

2 The undersigned counsel of record for Defendant-Intervenor the League of  
3 Women Voters of California, certifies that this brief contains 3033 words, which  
4 complies with the page limit set by Section 6 under “Judge’s Procedures” on  
5 Judge Carter’s courtroom website, [https://apps.cacd.uscourts.gov/Jps/honorable-](https://apps.cacd.uscourts.gov/Jps/honorable-david-o-carter)  
6 [david-o-carter](https://apps.cacd.uscourts.gov/Jps/honorable-david-o-carter), and with L.R. 11-6.1.

7  
8 Dated: December 1, 2025

Respectfully submitted,

9 /s/ Grayce Zelphin

10  
11 Grayce Zelphin  
12 ACLU Foundation of Northern California  
13 *Counsel for Defendant-Intervenor League*  
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