PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Scott Macdonald
(310-996-2671)
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
PROP 25 SEEN AS A CURE WORSE THAN THE DISEASE
LOS ANGELES

Charging that it would cost taxpayers $55 million a year, give millionaire candidates an unfair advantage and open the door wide to special interest money, opponents today said Proposition 25 would be a cure worse than the disease.

The campaign against Proposition 25, the campaign finance initiative on the March ballot, is being run by Taxpayers for Fair Elections, a coalition of taxpayers, seniors, teachers, business, labor and campaign finance reform experts.

The primary author of Proposition 25 is millionaire Ron Unz, who recently dropped out of the race for the Republican nomination for U.S. Senate.

“It’s hard to imagine something more unfair than Prop. 25,” said Lois Wellington, president, Congress of California Seniors. “It sets contribution limits for all candidates — except the ones with the most money to start with, the millionaires. It also allows unlimited amounts of soft money to be spent on elections by the political parties.”

Taxpayer groups also charge that Prop. 25 would use taxpayer money to pay for campaign ads for candidates and, for the first time anywhere, for initiative campaigns. Taxpayer money would also be used to pay for packets of political ads from campaigns, that would be mailed to the voters at the state’s expense.

“If you like political ads, you’ll love Prop. 25 — because if this measure passes, we’ll get to pay for those ads, even if we don’t agree with them,” said Peter Kanelos, president of Responsible Voters for Lower Taxes. “The state’s legislative analyst says Prop. 25 would cost about $55 million a year, with automatic increases built in each year. And this is no voluntary check-off — the only say we have about this use of our money, is when we vote on Prop. 25.”

Prop. 25 would also allow unlimited, and almost unrestricted use of so-called “soft money” in state, local and initiative campaigns. Soft money, is money contributed to political parties or so-called independent committees, instead of directly to candidates.

Opponents of Proposition 25 include the League of Women Voters of California, California Taxpayers’ Association, Congress of California Seniors, Responsible Voters for Lower Taxes, California Teachers Association, California Chamber of Commerce, Consumer Federation of California, and former chairs of the California Fair Political Practiccs Commission Daniel Lowenstein and Ben Davidian.