



County of San Bernardino



**Ensen Mason CPA, CFA • Auditor-Controller/Treasurer/Tax Collector**

**NEWS RELEASE – For Immediate Release**

**July 16, 2019**

## **MASON OPPOSES LEGISLATIVE TRANSPARENCY ROLLBACK**

**San Bernardino, CA** — San Bernardino County Auditor-Controller/Treasurer/Tax Collector (ATC) Ensen Mason today announced his opposition to SB 268 by Sen. Scott Weiner (D-SF), which would roll back transparency provisions for tax and bond measures. Assemblyman Jay Obernolte (R-Big Bear) authored AB 809 and AB 195 in 2015 and 2016 requiring the tax rate, duration and amount of revenue to be raised by a tax or bond measure be disclosed to the voters on the 75 word ballot label, as opposed to being buried deep inside the sample ballot booklet.

SB 268 removes some of these protections by requiring that for local bond measures, as well as certain taxes, this critical information will be moved off the ballot label and into the massive, rarely read, sample ballot booklet. Adding insult to injury, the ballot label would instead contain the statement “See voter guide for information” instead of providing that information in a place where everyone will see it, as it is now.

“Jay Obernolte and the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association are to be commended for successfully pushing legislation a few years ago requiring that taxpayers be informed of the amount of taxes and bonds they are being asked to pay and for how long. It is unconscionable to me that we would go back to keeping taxpayers in the dark through SB 268,” said Mason. “We need more transparency and honesty in government, not less. SB 268 will make it harder for voters to understand the financial impacts of bonds and taxes they are being asked to vote on. I urge legislators to vote NO on this anti-taxpayer, anti-transparency piece of legislation.”

ATC Mason defeated an incumbent to win election to his office in 2018 as a Taxpayer Advocate/CPA dedicated to bringing more transparency and communication to his office on behalf of the taxpayers he serves. He has initiated over twenty measures to put his words into action within his office in the first six months of 2019.

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