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BEFORE THE FAIR POLITICAL PRACTICES COMMISSION

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

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| In the Matter of:<br><br>Nevada County,<br><br>Respondent. | FPPC No. 2023-00162<br><br>**STIPULATION, DECISION, AND ORDER**<br><br>Date Submitted to Commission:<br>August 20, 2026 |

## INTRODUCTION

Respondent, Nevada County (the "County"), is a county located in the northern region of the Sierra Nevada of California. The County had a population of 102,356, as of the year the violations occurred in 2022.[1] The County's seat is Nevada City.

Under the Political Reform Act (the "Act"),[2] a local government agency that spends $1,000 or more in public funds to advocate for or against a ballot measure qualifies as a campaign committee and must comply with all provisions of the Act related to campaign committees, including filing campaign

[1] United States Census Bureau.

[2] The Act is contained in Government Code sections 81000 through 91014. All statutory references are to the Government Code, unless otherwise indicated. The regulations of the Fair Political Practices Commission are contained in Sections 18104 through 18998 of Title 2 of the California Code of Regulations. All regulatory references are to Title 2, Division 6 of the California Code of Regulations, unless otherwise indicated.

statements and reports. Additionally, advertisements must adhere to certain advertising disclaimer regulations. Respondent violated the Act by distributing two campaign-related mailings (the "Mailers") at public expense, failing to include disclosure statements on the mailers, and failing to timely file a semi-annual campaign statement and two 24-Hour Independent Expenditure Reports.

## SUMMARY OF THE LAW

The Act and its regulations are amended from time to time. Unless otherwise noted, all legal references and discussions of law pertain to the Act's provisions as they existed at the time of the violations in this case (2022).

**Need for Liberal Construction and Vigorous Enforcement of the Political Reform Act**

When enacting the Political Reform Act, the people of California found and declared that previous laws regulating political practices suffered from inadequate enforcement by state and local authorities.[3] For this reason, the Act is to be construed liberally to accomplish its purposes.[4]

One purpose of the Act is to promote transparency by ensuring that expenditures made in election campaigns are fully and truthfully disclosed so that voters are fully informed and improper practices are inhibited.[5] In furtherance of this purpose, the Act establishes a comprehensive campaign reporting system[6] and requires any committee that supports or opposes a ballot measure to print its name as part of any advertisement.[7] Another purpose of the Act is to provide adequate enforcement mechanisms so the Act will be "vigorously enforced."[8]

**Prohibited Campaign-Related Mailing Sent at Public Expense**

The Act prohibits sending a newsletter or other mailing at public expense.[9] While the Act seems to be written in absolute terms, regulations have focused this prohibition to reflect the intent of the Act. Specifically, newsletters and other mailings are prohibited if (1) the item is a tangible item; (2) the item

[3] Section 81001, subd. (h).
[4] Section 81003.
[5] Section 81002, subd. (a).
[6] Sections 84200, *et seq*.
[7] Section 84506.
[8] Section 81002, subd. (f).
[9] Section 89001.

expressly advocates the qualification, passage, or defeat of a clearly identified measure, or unambiguously urges a particular result in an election; (3) public moneys are paid to distribute the item, or to prepare the item, for more than $50, with the intent of sending the item; and (4) more than 200 substantially similar items are sent during the course of an election.[10]

A communication "expressly advocates" the nomination, election, or defeat of a candidate or the qualification, passage, or defeat of a measure if it contains express words of advocacy such as "vote for," "elect," "support," "cast your ballot," "vote against," "defeat," "reject," "sign petitions for."[11] The following nonexhaustive examples, referring to candidates or measures on the ballot in an upcoming election, illustrate statements that in most contexts would not be susceptible of any reasonable interpretation other than as an appeal to vote for or against a specific candidate or measure: "Smith's the One"; "No Measure A"; "Rally 'round O'Malley"; "Create jobs with Measure X"; "Only Nancy Brown can clean out City Hall"; "Proposition 123 - your last chance to save California"; "Joe Green will earn your trust"; "Bob Boone is unqualified for office and a special-interest puppet"; "Shirley Hall - bad for California, bad for you."[12]

If a mailing does not contain express language it still may unambiguously urge a particular result in an election in one of two ways: (1) when it clearly is campaign material or campaign activity, such as bumper stickers, billboards, door-to-door canvassing, posters, advertising "floats," or mass media advertising;[13] or (2) when the style, tenor, and timing of the communication can be reasonably characterized as campaign material and not a fair presentation of facts serving only an informational purpose.[14] Some factors to consider when assessing style, tenor, and timing include, but are not limited to whether the communication is (1) funded from a special appropriation related to the measure as opposed to a general appropriation; (2) consistent with the normal communication pattern for the

[10] Regulation 18901.1, subd. (a).
[11] Section 82025, subd. (c)(2).
[12] Section 82025, subd. (c)(2)(B).
[13] Regulation 18420.1, subd. (b)(1).
[14] Regulation 18420.1, subd. (b)(2).

agency; (3) consistent with the style of other communications issued by the agency; and (4) using inflammatory or argumentative language.[15]

The Commission adopted Regulation 18420.1 based on the California Supreme Court's decision in *Vargas v. City of Salinas, et. al.* (2009) 46 Cal. 4th 1.[16] In *Vargas*, the Court relied heavily on its decision in *Stanson v. Mott* (1976) 17 Cal. 3d 206. *Stanson* established the analysis for determining when communications by a governmental agency that do not contain express advocacy still constitute campaign activity. The Court went on to conclude that certain publicly financed literature that is not clearly campaign material and that purports to contain only relevant information can be prohibited campaign activity depending on the "style, tenor and timing of the publication."[17]

Neither *Vargas* nor *Stanson* directly concerned any provisions of the Act. They were decided based on the constitutional prohibition against unauthorized use of public funds. But, since in those cases the State Supreme Court had defined when government agencies are prohibited from using public moneys to pay for communications related to ballot measures, the Commission adopted the parameters described in *Vargas* for determining when a government agency makes contributions and independent expenditures under the Act.[18]

**Payments by State or Local Agencies for a Campaign-Related Communication**

California Code of Regulations Section 18420.1 addresses the use of public funds by state and local governmental agencies for communications that are campaign-related. Under this regulation, a payment made by a state or local agency, or by any person acting on its behalf, in connection with a communication to the public that expressly advocates the election or defeat of a clearly identified candidate or measure, or that unambiguously urges a particular electoral outcome when considered as a whole and in context, is classified either as a contribution or an independent expenditure under the Political Reform Act.[19]

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[15] Regulation 18420.1, subd. (d).
[16] Fair Political Practices Commission, Minutes of Meeting, Public Session, Sept. 10, 2009, item no. 25, page 3.
[17] *Id*. at 222.
[18] Fair Political Practices Commission, Minutes of Meeting, Public Session, Sept. 10, 2009, item no. 25, page 3.
[19] Regulation 18420.1, subd. (a).

A payment is treated as a contribution if made at the behest of the affected candidate or committee, and as an independent expenditure if made independently of any candidate or committee.[20] The regulation defines "unambiguous urging" to include communications that are clearly campaign material or activity—such as mass media advertisements, signs, or canvassing—as well as materials that, due to their style, tone, and timing, are reasonably characterized as campaign materials rather than informational communications.[21]

Any public expenditure related to such communications, whether direct or indirect, is covered by this regulation. This includes costs related to designing, producing, printing, or formulating content, and encompasses expenditures for polling, research, computer services, software, programming, and the salaries or fees of agency staff, consultants, or vendors involved in the communication.[22]

In assessing whether a communication is campaign-related, relevant considerations include the source of funding (particularly if from a special appropriation tied to a measure), consistency with the agency's usual communication practices, and the presence of language that is inflammatory, persuasive, or otherwise lacks neutrality.[23]

However, certain communications are not considered contributions or independent expenditures under this regulation. These exceptions include agency reports evaluating a measure when made available upon request; public announcements of agency positions in public meetings or within official agendas or minutes; written arguments submitted for inclusion in a voter information pamphlet; views presented by agency staff at the request of outside organizations in a public meeting; and any communication clearly authorized by law.[24]

Finally, any agency qualifying as a "committee" under Government Code Section 82013 is required to comply with campaign reporting obligations under the Political Reform Act.[25]

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[20] Regulation 18420.1, subds. (a)(1) and (2).
[21] Regulation 18420.1, subds. (b)(1) and (2).
[22] Regulation 18420.1, subd. (c).
[23] Regulation 18420.1, subd. (d).
[24] Regulation 18420.1, subd. (e).
[25] Regulation 18420.1, subd. (f).

**Advertisement Disclosures**

An advertisement includes any general or public communication which is authorized and paid for by a committee for the purpose of supporting or opposing one or more ballot measures.[26] More importantly, an advertisement that is paid for by an independent expenditure must include a disclosure statement that identifies the name of the committee. "Ad paid for by" should immediately precede the committee's name as it appears on campaign statements.[27] Finally, the law requires that the disclosure area look a specific way, including, the text appearing in an Arial or equivalent type of at least 10-point and being in a contrasting color and printed or drawn on the bottom of at least one page that is set apart from any other printed matter.[28]

**Campaign Statements and Reports**

A committee is any person or combination of persons who, in a calendar year, receives contributions totaling $2,000 or more; makes independent expenditures totaling $1,000 or more; or makes contributions totaling $10,000 or more to or at the behest of candidates or other committees.[29] When a state or local governmental agency uses public moneys for a communication that (1) expressly advocates for or against a clearly identified candidate or ballot measure or (2) unambiguously urges a particular result in an election, the Act identifies that payment as an independent expenditure.[30] The standard for determining if a communication by a public agency qualifies as an independent expenditure is the same as the standard for the campaign-related mailings sent at public expense discussed above.[31]

If a state or local governmental agency distributes communications that qualify as campaign expenditures and cost $1,000 or more in a calendar year, it qualifies as an independent expenditure committee.[32] A committee must file a late independent expenditure report within 24 hours of making an

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[26] Section 84501.
[27] Sections 84502, subd. (b) and 84211, subd. (o).
[28] Section 84504.2.
[29] Section 82013.
[30] Regulation 18420.1, subd. (a).
[31] See Regulations 184201.1 and 18901.1.
[32] Regulation 18420, subd. (d).

expenditure of $1,000 or more during the 90 days prior to an election.[33] An expenditure is made on the date the payment is made or on the date consideration, if any, is received, whichever is earlier.[34] The report must include the committee's name, committee's address, number or letter of the measure, jurisdiction of the measure, amount, date, and description of goods or services for which the late independent expenditure was made.[35] In addition to the 24-Hour Independent Expenditure Report, an independent expenditure committee must also file an Independent Expenditure Campaign Statement, which includes some of the information reported on the 24-Hour Independent Expenditure Report and additional information which provides more transparency.[36] Requiring local government agencies to file campaign statements and reports furthers the Act's purpose in disclosing expenditures made in election campaigns so that voters are fully informed and improper practices are inhibited.[37]

## SUMMARY OF THE FACTS

Measure V, a sales tax, was on the November 8, 2022 General Election ballot for the County voters. Measure V was also known as "The Wildfire Prevention, Emergency Services and Disaster Readiness Measure." A "yes" vote would have established a one-half percent sales tax (0.5% sales tax increase) that would sunset after ten years. Measure V required a simple majority approval to pass but was defeated with only 48.41% (24,144) voting "yes."

**Mailer #1**

On or around October 7, 2022, prior to the election, the County distributed a two-sided mailer ("Mailer #1") (Exhibit A) that unambiguously urged support of Measure V. The County delivered Mailer #1 to 33,351 County residents at a cost of $17,708. The County Board of Supervisors paid for Mailer #1 with a special appropriation from the Office of Emergency Services.

The timing of Mailer #1, shortly before the General Election, combined with its affirmative statements, crossed the line from informational content into advocacy. Mailer #1 used promotional

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[33] Sections 82036.5 and 84204.
[34] Section 82025 (a).
[35] Section 84204.
[36] Section 84200, subd. (b).
[37] Section 81002, subd. (a).

language that goes beyond neutral description, such as: "Measure V is responsive to community priorities such as: Preventing Wildfires, Improving Evacuation Routes, Enhancing Emergency Communications, Enforcing Fire Safety Laws, Helping Low-Income Seniors & People with Disabilities, Providing Free Green Waste Disposal." Furthermore, Mailer #1 employed emotionally charged statements that invoked concern by stating, "As wildfires become more frequent and more destructive... Nevada County must be well prepared for ongoing natural disasters," which implied Measure V must pass to address these concerns.

The language in Mailer #1 served to instill a sense of urgency and necessity. The statement that "Nevada County must be well prepared" introduced normative language that implied voting for Measure V is the required action. Mailer #1 encouraged "yes" votes with phrases like "Measure V is responsive to community priorities." Furthermore, the design choices, like the images of a vulnerable senior and traffic in an evacuation route, are likely to elicit strong, positive sentiments towards Measure V to combat the concerns presented. Mailer #1 obscured the negative aspect, a one-half percent sales tax increase, burying it in the smallest font within the largest bulk of writing. By emphasizing only the positives while obscuring the downsides (like a hidden tax increase), the communication becomes a form of advocacy likely to persuade the reader, not objectively inform them. This resulting lack of neutrality makes the presentation unfair and fundamentally promotional.

The disclaimer that stated, "Provided for informational purposes only. Nevada County does not advocate a yes or no vote on any candidate or measure," did not cure the otherwise impermissible advocacy. Based on the plain language, timing, and affirmative language, Mailer #1 unambiguously urges a particular result in the election in violation of the Act. The County further violated campaign finance laws by failing to include required disclosure language on Mailer #1 and by failing to file mandatory campaign statements and reports, as discussed below.

**Mailer #2**

On or around October 26, 2022, prior to the election, the County distributed a two-sided mailer ("Mailer #2") (Exhibit B) that unambiguously urged support of Measure V. The County delivered

Mailer #2 to 33,101 County residents at a cost of $16,906. The County Board of Supervisors paid for Mailer #2 with a special appropriation from the Office of Emergency Services.

Mailer #2 was titled “Voter Information for the November General Election – Measure V.” Despite including a disclaimer that the County “does not advocate a yes or no vote,” the overall style and tenor of the communication caused it to cross the line into advocacy.

Mailer #2 prominently used a concerning statistic: “92% of Nevada County residents live in high or very high fire hazard severity zones.” It then immediately claimed that Measure V will alleviate this concern with the statement, “Measure V responds to community priorities such as improving evacuation routes to get residents out safely and first responders in quickly during an emergency.”

Mailer #2 employed normative and emotionally charged language that suggested Measure V was the necessary solution to dangerous conditions. Phrases like “Measure V responds to community priorities,” “get residents out safely,” and “helping low-income seniors” are persuasive and value-laden, implying a preferred "yes" vote. The repeated theme of “readiness” associated with Measure V further highlighted the urgency.

Mailer #2 focused on favorable effects without fully addressing potential costs, tradeoffs, or counterarguments. By emphasizing only the positives while minimizing the downsides (like a tax increase), the communication became a form of advocacy likely to persuade the reader, not objectively inform them. The lack of neutrality makes the presentation unfair and fundamentally promotional.

The formatting was also promotional: benefits are in bullet points and an easy-to-read format, while the only negative mentioned, the $12 million annually from the proposed one-half percent sales tax, is included in a large paragraph. Furthermore, the second side of the mailer does not mention the sales tax increase or any negatives at all. Mailer #2 urges a particular result and is therefore in violation of Section 89001. The County further violated campaign finance laws by failing to include required disclosure language on Mailer #2 and by failing to file mandatory campaign statements and reports, as discussed below.

**Campaign Filings**

As an independent expenditure committee, the County failed to timely file a semi-annual campaign statement, Independent Expenditure Campaign Statement, for the reporting period of January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022, despite qualifying as an independent expenditure committee upon making a $17,708 independent expenditure for Mailer #1 discussed above on or around October 7, 2022. The deadline for filing the above Independent Expenditure Campaign Statement was January 31, 2023 and the total amount reported should have included $34,614 in independent expenditures.

Additionally, the County failed to timely file two 24-hour Independent Expenditure Reports (24-Hour Independent Expenditure Report) for the Mailers. The County failed to timely file a 24-Hour Independent Expenditure Report for the $17,708 independent expenditure for Mailer #1 made on or around October 7, 2022 by the October 8, 2022 deadline. The County failed to timely file a 24-Hour Independent Expenditure Report for the $16,906 independent expenditure for Mailer #2 made on or around October 26, 2022 by the October 27, 2022 deadline.

## VIOLATIONS

<u>Count 1: Prohibited Campaign-Related Mass Mailing Sent at Public Expense</u>

The County sent a prohibited campaign-related mass mailing at public expense on or around October 7, 2022, in violation of Government Code Section 89001 and Regulation 18901.1.

<u>Count 2: Prohibited Campaign-Related Mass Mailing Sent at Public Expense</u>

The County sent a prohibited campaign-related mass mailing at public expense on or around October 26, 2022, in violation of Government Code Section 89001 and Regulation 18901.1.

<u>Count 3: Failure to Include Proper Disclosure on Campaign Advertisements</u>

The County failed to include a proper advertising disclosure on the mailer sent on or around October 7, 2022, in violation of Government Code Section 84502.

<u>Count 4: Failure to Include Proper Disclosure on Campaign Advertisements</u>

The County failed to include a proper advertising disclosure on the mailer sent on or around October 26, 2022, in violation of Government Code Section 84502.

Count 5: Failure to Timely File Semi-annual Campaign Statement

The County failed to timely file a semi-annual campaign statement reporting $34,614 in independent expenditures during the reporting period of January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022, in violation of Government Code Section 84200, subdivision (b).

Count 6: Failure to Timely File 24-Hour Independent Expenditure Report

The County failed to timely file a 24-hour Independent Expenditure Report for the $17,708 independent expenditure made on or around October 7, 2022, in violation of Government Code Section 84204.

Count 7: Failure to Timely File 24-Hour Independent Expenditure Report

The County failed to timely file a 24-hour Independent Expenditure Report for the $16,906 independent expenditure made on or around October 26, 2022, in violation of Government Code Section 84204.

## PROPOSED PENALTY

This matter consists of seven proposed counts. The maximum penalty that may be imposed is $5,000 per count. Thus, the maximum penalty that may be imposed for the counts charged here is $35,000.[38]

This matter does not qualify for the streamline program because it involves the use of public funds for campaign-related purposes, a violation which is not eligible for the streamline program. Regarding the violations pertaining to the missing advertisement disclosures and the late filing of campaign statements and reports, while those may be eligible under the streamline program on their own, since they are tied to the violations involving the use of public funds, they are not eligible under the streamline program.

In determining the appropriate penalty for a particular violation of the Act, the Commission considers the facts of the case, the public harm involved, and the purpose of the Act. In particular, the Commission considers the factors codified in Regulation Section 18361.5(e)(1)-(8): (1) The extent and gravity of the public harm caused by the specific violation; (2) The level of experience of the violator

[38] See Regulation 83116, subd. (c).

with the requirements of the Political Reform Act; (3) Penalties previously imposed by the Commission in comparable cases; (4) The presence or absence of any intention to conceal, deceive or mislead; (5) Whether the violation was deliberate, negligent or inadvertent; (6) Whether the violator demonstrated good faith by consulting the Commission staff or any other governmental agency in a manner not constituting complete defense under Government Code Section 83114(b); (7) Whether the violation was isolated or part of a pattern and whether the violator has a prior record of violations of the Political Reform Act or similar laws; and (8) Whether the violator, upon learning of a reporting violation, voluntarily filed amendments to provide full disclosure.[39]

Using public funds for a prohibited purpose carries a high degree of public harm. The nature of the County's violations of the Act is particularly concerning, as recognized by the California Supreme Court in *Stanson v. Mott*, where the court stated "the use of the public treasury to mount an election campaign which attempts to influence the resolution of issues which our Constitution leaves to the 'free election' of the people [sic] does present a serious threat to the integrity of the electoral process."[40] The use of public funds to support or oppose ballot measures is prohibited because of the public harm of taxpayer funds being used to influence the voting public's views on ballot measures. Here, the County supported the passage of a local measure using $34,614 in public funds. The County influenced the election with the Mailers, but Measure V failed.

The Act seeks to further protect the integrity of our electoral process by ensuring that voters know who is responsible for the political advertisements that seek to influence how they cast their ballot, and the voting public is harmed when that information is not included on campaign advertisements. In this case, the public harm was caused by the Mailers failing to include proper advertisement disclaimers. In mitigation, the language and logo on the Mailers clearly identified the County as the responsible party, and therefore mitigated the harm that would have resulted from a completely anonymous advertisement.

The public harm inherent in campaign late-filing violations is that the public is deprived of important, time-sensitive information regarding campaign activity, which is heightened when related to

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[39] Regulation 18361.5, subd. (e)(1)-(8).
[40] *Stanson* at 218.

pre-election activity and 24-Hour reporting. Here, the County's failure to timely file two 24-Hour Independent Expenditure Reports prior to the November 8, 2022 General Election, and failure to timely file a Independent Expenditure Campaign Statement, resulted in the public having limited knowledge of the County's campaign activity before and after the election, including the amount of money spent.

The Commission also considers the penalties in prior cases with comparable violations. Furthermore, at the February 18, 2021, Commission Meeting, the Commission directed the Enforcement Division to pursue penalties at or above 90 percent of the maximum penalty when governmental agencies, like the County, engage in campaigning at public expense. Some recent similar cases include the following:

*In the Matter of City of Garden Grove and Scott Stiles,* FPPC No. 2018-01357 (The Commission approved a stipulated decision in October 2023). Garden Grove and Stiles sent 32,000 copies of an identical and prohibited campaign-related mass mailing at public expense at a total cost of $11,526, which unambiguously urged the passage of local tax Measure O, in violation of Sections 89001, 84502, 84504.2, 84204, and 84200. The four count stipulation charged a total of $18,000, for sending a prohibited mass mailing at public expense, improper advertisement disclosures on the mailer, failure to timely file a 24-Hour report, and failure to timely file a semi-annual campaign statement for $4,500 each.

As in *Garden Grove*, the County here improperly used public funds to distribute mass mailings without proper advertisement disclosures and failed to timely file campaign statements and reports. The Commission has expressed a strong desire for these types of violations to be charged at or above 90% of the maximum penalty of $5,000 per count. In particular, and as noted above, *Garden Grove*, resulted in a fine of $4,500 for each violation. However, while Garden Grove sent 32,000 copies of one mailer at a cost of $11,526, the County sent 66,402 copies of two mailers and spent a total of $34,614 campaigning for Measure V. Therefore, a similar penalty per count is recommended here.

Neither the Respondent nor their counsel contacted the Commission seeking advice pertaining to the regulations affecting public mailers and any required filings. There is no prior record of any similar violations against the County.

As part of the negotiated settlement, corrective campaign reports and statements have been filed now to provide full disclosure. Additionally, the County was cooperative during the investigation and exhibited intent to resolve the matter expeditiously.

For the foregoing reasons and considering the seriousness of the violations, while considering the mitigating factors, and the direction mandated by the Commission, a penalty of $4,500 each for Counts 1 through 7 is recommended, for a total penalty in the amount of $31,500.

**CONCLUSION**

Complainant, the Enforcement Division of the Fair Political Practices Commission, and Respondent the County hereby agree as follows:

1. The County, as indicated in the respective counts, violated the Act as described in the foregoing pages, which are a true and accurate summary of the facts in this matter.

2. This stipulation will be submitted for consideration by the Fair Political Practices Commission at the next regularly scheduled meeting or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard.

3. This stipulation resolves all factual and legal issues raised in this matter—for the purpose of reaching a final disposition without the necessity of holding an administrative hearing to determine the liability of the County pursuant to Section 83116.

4. The County has consulted with their attorney, Christopher Pisano, and understands, and hereby knowingly and voluntarily waives, all procedural rights set forth in Sections 83115.5, 11503, 11523, and Regulations 18361.1 through 18361.9. This includes but is not limited to the right to appear personally at any administrative hearing held in this matter, to be represented by an attorney at the County's own expense, to confront and cross-examine all witnesses testifying at the hearing, to subpoena witnesses to testify at the hearing, to have an impartial administrative law judge preside over the hearing as a hearing officer, and to have the matter judicially reviewed.

5. The County agrees to the issuance of the decision and order set forth below. Also, the County agrees to the Commission imposing against them an administrative penalty in the amount of $31,500. Cashier's check(s) or money order(s) totaling said amount—to be paid to the General Fund of the State of California—is/are submitted with this stipulation as full payment of the administrative

penalty described above, and same shall be held by the State of California until the Commission issues its decision and order regarding the matter. In addition, as part of the settlement, the County agrees to file all necessary statements and reports as mandated by law to provide full disclosure of the activities.

6. If the Commission declines to approve this stipulation—then this stipulation shall become null and void, and within fifteen business days after the Commission meeting at which the stipulation is rejected, all payments tendered by the County in connection with this stipulation shall be reimbursed to the County. If this stipulation is not approved by the Commission, and if a full evidentiary hearing before the Commission becomes necessary, neither any member of the Commission, nor the Executive Director, shall be disqualified because of prior consideration of this Stipulation.

7. The parties to this agreement may execute their respective signature pages separately. A copy of any party's executed signature page including a hardcopy of a signature page transmitted via fax or as a PDF email attachment is as effective and binding as the original.

Dated: _____________ _____________________________________________

Kendall L.D. Bonebrake, Chief of Enforcement
Fair Political Practices Commission

Dated: _____________ _____________________________________________

Lisa Swarthout, Board Chair, o/b/o Respondent Nevada County

The foregoing stipulation of the parties "In the Matter of the Nevada County," FPPC No. 2023-00162, is hereby accepted as the final decision and order of the Fair Political Practices Commission, effective upon execution below by the Chair.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Dated: ___________________ _____________________________________________

Adam E. Silver, Chair
Fair Political Practices Commission

Voter Information for the November General Election

# MEASURE V

## The Wildfire Prevention, Emergency Services and Disaster Readiness Measure

| **Official Ballot Question - Measure V** | |
|---|---|
| To maintain critical County of Nevada services with locally controlled funding that cannot be taken by the State, such as: wildfire prevention / emergency preparedness; reducing flammable brush countywide; improving evacuation routes; preventing illegal campfires; helping seniors / disabled residents maintain defensible space; enhancing emergency communications, early warning / 911 response; and for general government use; shall the County of Nevada measure establishing 1/2% sales tax, providing $12,000,000 annually for ten years, with citizen oversight /audits, be adopted? | YES |
| | NO |

## Measure V is responsive to community priorities such as:

**Preventing Wildfires**

**Enforcing Fire Safety Laws**

**Improving Evacuation Routes**

**Helping Low-Income Seniors & People with Disabilities**

**Enhancing Emergency Communications**

**Providing Free Green Waste Disposal**

READY NEVADA COUNTY

**Measure V is on the November 8th General Election ballot.**
**Visit ReadyNevadaCounty.org/MeasureV for more information.**

NEVADA COUNTY CALIFORNIA

*Provided for informational purposes only. Nevada County does not advocate a yes or no vote on any candidate or measure.*

NEVADA COUNTY

County of Nevada
950 Maidu Avenue
Nevada City, CA 95959

PAID
PERMIT NO. 1142
Sacramento, CA

# About Measure V:

## The Wildfire Prevention, Emergency Services and Disaster Readiness Measure

As wildfires become more frequent and more destructive, heat events become increasingly common, and climate uncertainties mean more risk of droughts, floods, and extreme weather events, Nevada County must be well prepared for ongoing natural disasters.

- Locally controlled with 10-year sunset
- Generate $12 million annually
- Citizen oversight and annual audits
- Recorded independently from other funds
- Applies to visitors and residents
- Not applied to groceries or prescriptions

Visit ReadyNevadaCounty.org/MeasureV for more information.

VOTE

## Nevada County Voter Information

Ballots will be mailed to all registered voters beginning on **October 11**. Ballots must be postmarked on or before Election Day (**November 8**) and received by **November 15**.

Visit NevadaCountyCA.gov/Elections for more election information.

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**Are You Prepared? Five steps to be ready for any emergency:**

- ☐ Sign up for CodeRED Emergency Alerts
- ☐ Know your Zone and evacuation routes
- ☐ Find Your 5 to connect with in an emergency
- ☐ Pack your Go-bag
- ☐ Make a plan with your family


**You can find detailed emergency preparedness information at ReadyNevadaCounty.org/Handbook.**

Voter Information for the November General Election

# MEASURE V


**Measure V responds to community priorities such as improving evacuation routes to get residents out safely and first responders in quickly during an emergency.**

If approved by voters, Measure V would generate $12 million annually through a ½ percent sales tax for wildfire prevention, emergency services, disaster readiness, and other general services. All revenue would be locally controlled with funds that cannot be taken by the state. This general sales tax would be subject to Citizens Oversight, annual independent audits, and expire after 10 years.

READY NEVADA COUNTY

**Measure V is on the November 8th General Election ballot.**
**Visit ReadyNevadaCounty.org/MeasureV for more information.**

NEVADA COUNTY CALIFORNIA

*Provided for informational purposes only. Nevada County does not advocate a yes or no vote on any candidate or measure.*

READY NEVADA COUNTY
Office of Emergency Services
County of Nevada
950 Maidu Avenue
Nevada City, CA 95959

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 1142
Sacramento, CA

ECRLOT 0187A**R011 p0015153/SK/PK000004/P000002

[redacted]

# Measure V addresses countywide priorities such as:

### Flammable Brush Removal

- Clear evacuation routes
- Provide free year-round green waste disposal sites
- Assist low-income seniors and people with disabilities

### Communications and Disaster Resources

- Improve early warning and alert systems
- Enhance emergency communications infrastructure
- Expand shelter capacity for residents, pets, and livestock

### Planning and Prevention

- Create countywide disaster plans
- Expand community education and outreach programs
- Enforce fire safety laws to prevent illegal campfires

## Nevada County Voter Information

VOTE

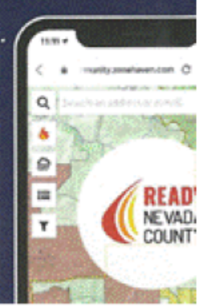
All registered voters in Nevada County will be mailed a ballot starting on **October 11**. Ballots must be postmarked on or before Election Day **(November 8)** and received by **November 15.** Please visit NevadaCountyCA.gov/Elections for more information.

## Know Your Zone & Sign Up for CodeRED Emergency Alerts

Zones & CodeRED Emergency Alerts work together to save time when minutes count. There are 250 evacuation zones in Nevada County. **Do you know yours?**

1. Go to community.zonehaven.com.
2. Enter your address into the search bar.
3. Find your zone in the pop-up window and write it down.

AWARE



**Learn More: ReadyNevadaCounty.org/Handbook**