

PROPOSITION 98

This initiative measure is submitted to the people of California in accordance with the provisions of Section 8 of Article II of the California Constitution.

This initiative measure amends a section of the California Constitution; therefore, existing provisions proposed to be deleted are printed in ~~strikeout type~~ and new provisions proposed to be added are printed in *italic type* to indicate that they are new.

PROPOSED LAW**SECTION 1. STATEMENT OF FINDINGS**

(a) Our state Constitution, while granting government the power of eminent domain, also provides that the people have an inalienable right to own, possess, and protect private property. It further provides that no person may be deprived of property without due process of law, and that private property may not be taken or damaged by eminent domain except for public use and only after just compensation has been paid to the property owner.

(b) Notwithstanding these clear constitutional guarantees, the courts have not protected the people's rights from being violated by state and local governments through the exercise of their power of eminent domain.

(c) For example, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Kelo v. City of New London*, held that the government may use eminent domain to take property from its owner for the purpose of transferring it to a private developer. In other cases, the courts have allowed the government to set the price an owner can charge to sell or rent his or her property, and have allowed the government to take property for the purpose of seizing the income or business assets of the property.

(d) Farmland is especially vulnerable to these types of eminent domain abuses.

SECTION 2. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

(a) State and local governments may use eminent domain to take private property only for public uses, such as roads, parks, and public facilities.

(b) State and local governments may not use their power to take or damage property for the benefit of any private person or entity.

(c) State and local governments may not take private property by eminent domain to put it to the same use as that made by the private owner.

(d) When state or local governments use eminent domain to take or damage private property for

public uses, the owner shall receive just compensation for what has been taken or damaged.

(e) Therefore, the people of the state of California hereby enact the "California Property Owners and Farmland Protection Act."

SECTION 3. AMENDMENT TO CALIFORNIA CONSTITUTION

Section 19 of Article I of the California Constitution is amended to read:

SEC. 19. (a) Private property may be taken or damaged *only* for a *stated* public use ~~only~~ and when just compensation, ascertained by a jury unless waived, has first been paid to, or into court for, the owner. The Legislature may provide for possession by the condemnor following commencement of eminent domain proceedings upon deposit in court and prompt release to the owner of money determined by the court to be the probable amount of just compensation. *Private property may not be taken or damaged for private use.*

(b) *For purposes of this section:*

(1) *"Taken" includes transferring the ownership, occupancy, or use of property from a private owner to a public agency or to any person or entity other than a public agency, or limiting the price a private owner may charge another person to purchase, occupy or use his or her real property.*

(2) *"Public use" means use and ownership by a public agency or a regulated public utility for the public use stated at the time of the taking, including public facilities, public transportation, and public utilities, except that nothing herein prohibits leasing limited space for private uses incidental to the stated public use; nor is the exercise of eminent domain prohibited to restore utilities or access to a public road for any private property which is cut off from utilities or access to a public road as a result of a taking for public use as otherwise defined herein.*

(3) *"Private use" means:*

(i) *transfer of ownership, occupancy or use of private property or associated property rights to any person or entity other than a public agency or a regulated public utility;*

(ii) *transfer of ownership, occupancy or use of private property or associated property rights to a public agency for the consumption of natural resources or for the same or a substantially similar use as that made by the private owner; or*

(iii) *regulation of the ownership, occupancy or use of privately owned real property or associated property rights in order to transfer an economic*

benefit to one or more private persons at the expense of the property owner.

(4) “Public agency” means the state, special district, county, city, city and county, including a charter city or county, and any other local or regional governmental entity, municipal corporation, public agency-owned utility or utility district, or the electorate of any public agency.

(5) “Just compensation” means:

(i) for property or associated property rights taken, its fair market value;

(ii) for property or associated property rights damaged, the value fixed by a jury, or by the court if a jury is waived;

(iii) an award of reasonable costs and attorney fees from the public agency if the property owner obtains a judgment for more than the amount offered by a public agency as defined herein; and

(iv) any additional actual and necessary amounts to compensate the property owner for temporary business losses, relocation expenses, business reestablishment costs, other actual and reasonable expenses incurred and other expenses deemed compensable by the Legislature.

(6) “Prompt release” means that the property owner can have immediate possession of the money deposited by the condemnor without prejudicing his or her right to challenge the determination of fair market value or his or her right to challenge the taking as being for a private use.

(7) “Owner” includes a lessee whose property rights are taken or damaged.

(8) “Regulated public utility” means any public utility as described in Article XII, Section 3, that is regulated by the California Public Utilities Commission and is not owned or operated by a public agency. Regulated public utilities are private property owners for purposes of this article.

(c) In any action by a property owner challenging a taking or damaging of his or her property, the court shall consider all relevant evidence and exercise its independent judgment, not limited to the administrative record and without deference to the findings of the public agency. The property owner shall be entitled to an award of reasonable costs and attorney fees from the public agency if the court finds that the agency’s actions are not in compliance with this section. In addition to other legal and equitable remedies that may be available, an owner whose property is taken or damaged for private use may bring an action for an injunction, a writ of mandate, or a declaration invalidating the action of the public agency.

(d) Nothing in this section prohibits a public agency or regulated public utility from entering into an agreement with a private property owner for the voluntary sale of property not subject to eminent domain, or a stipulation regarding the payment of just compensation.

(e) If property is acquired by a public agency through eminent domain, then before the agency may put the property to a use substantially different from the stated public use, or convey the property to another person or unaffiliated agency, the condemning agency must make a good faith effort to locate the private owner from whom the property was taken, and make a written offer to sell the property to him at the price which the agency paid for the property, increased only by the fair market value of any improvements, fixtures, or appurtenances added by the public agency, and reduced by the value attributable to any removal, destruction or waste of improvements, fixtures or appurtenances that had been acquired with the property. If property is repurchased by the former owner under this subdivision, it shall be taxed based on its pre-condemnation enrolled value, increased or decreased only as allowed herein, plus any inflationary adjustments authorized by subdivision (b) of Section 2 of Article XIII A. The right to repurchase shall apply only to the owner from which the property was taken, and does not apply to heirs or successors of the owner or, if the owner was not a natural person, to an entity which ceases to legally exist.

(f) Nothing in this section prohibits a public agency from exercising its power of eminent domain to abate public nuisances or criminal activity.

(g) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit or impair voluntary agreements between a property owner and a public agency to develop or rehabilitate affordable housing.

(h) Nothing in this section prohibits the California Public Utilities Commission from regulating public utility rates.

(i) Nothing in this section shall restrict the powers of the Governor to take or damage private property in connection with his or her powers under a declared state of emergency.

SECTION 4. IMPLEMENTATION AND AMENDMENT

This act shall be self-executing. The Legislature may adopt laws to further the purposes of this act and aid in its implementation. No amendment to this act may be made except by a vote of the people pursuant to Article II or Article XVIII of the California Constitution.

SECTION 5. SEVERABILITY

The provisions of this act are severable. If any provision of this act or its application is held invalid, that invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications that can be given effect without the invalid provision or application.

SECTION 6. EFFECTIVE DATE

The provisions of this act shall become effective on the day following the election (“effective date”); except that any statute, charter provision, ordinance, or regulation by a public agency enacted prior to January 1, 2007, that limits the price a rental property owner may charge a tenant to occupy a residential rental unit (“unit”) or mobile home space (“space”) may remain in effect as to such unit or space after the effective date for so long as, but only so long as, at least one of the tenants of such unit or space as of the effective date (“qualified tenant”) continues to live in such unit or space as his or her principal place of residence. At such time as a unit or space no longer is used by any qualified tenant as his or her principal place of residence because, as to such unit or space, he or she has: (a) voluntarily vacated; (b) assigned, sublet, sold or transferred his or her tenancy rights either voluntarily or by court order; (c) abandoned; (d) died; or he or she has (e) been evicted pursuant to paragraph (2), (3), (4) or (5) of Section 1161 of the Code of Civil Procedure or Section 798.56 of the Civil Code as in effect on January 1, 2007; then, and in such event, the provisions of this act shall be effective immediately as to such unit or space.

PROPOSITION 99

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This initiative measure amends a section of the California Constitution; therefore, new provisions proposed to be added are printed in *italic type* to indicate that they are new.

TITLE. This measure shall be known as the “Homeowners and Private Property Protection Act.”

PROPOSED LAW**SECTION 1. PURPOSE AND INTENT**

By enacting this measure, the people of California hereby express their intent to:

(a) Protect their homes from eminent domain abuse.

(b) Prohibit government agencies from using eminent domain to take an owner-occupied home to

transfer it to another private owner or developer.

(c) Amend the California Constitution to respond specifically to the facts and the decision of the U.S. Supreme Court in *Kelo v. City of New London*, in which the Court held that it was permissible for a city to use eminent domain to take the home of a Connecticut woman for the purpose of economic development.

(d) Respect the decision of the voters to reject Proposition 90 in November 2006, a measure that included eminent domain reform but also included unrelated provisions that would have subjected taxpayers to enormous financial liability from a wide variety of traditional legislative and administrative actions to protect the public welfare.

(e) Provide additional protection for property owners without including provisions, such as those in Proposition 90, which subjected taxpayers to liability for the enactment of traditional legislative and administrative actions to protect the public welfare.

(f) Maintain the distinction in the California Constitution between Section 19, Article I, which establishes the law for eminent domain, and Section 7, Article XI, which establishes the law for legislative and administrative action to protect the public health, safety and welfare.

(g) Provide a comprehensive and exclusive basis in the California Constitution to compensate property owners when property is taken or damaged by state or local governments, without affecting legislative and administrative actions taken to protect the public health, safety and welfare.

SECTION 2. AMENDMENT TO THE CALIFORNIA CONSTITUTION

Section 19 of Article I of the California Constitution is amended to read:

SEC. 19. (a) Private property may be taken or damaged for a public use *and* only when just compensation, ascertained by a jury unless waived, has first been paid to, or into court for, the owner. The Legislature may provide for possession by the condemnor following commencement of eminent domain proceedings upon deposit in court and prompt release to the owner of money determined by the court to be the probable amount of just compensation.

(b) *The State and local governments are prohibited from acquiring by eminent domain an owner-occupied residence for the purpose of conveying it to a private person.*

(c) *Subdivision (b) of this section does not apply when State or local government exercises the power of eminent domain for the purpose of protecting*