



Hanson Bridgett Practice Group Political & Election Law

Hanson Bridgett provides a “one-stop shop” for individuals and organizations in the political arena. We serve as advisors and advocates to candidates and organizations, providing a full range of campaign-related legal services. We represent proponents and opponents of ballot measures at the state and local level, including drafting initiatives and litigating pre and post election challenges. We advocate for clients with regard to pending or new legislation as well as assist in regulatory proceedings. From pension reform to high speed rail, from local sales taxes to federal infrastructure investments, we are subject matter experts in all aspects of government and electorate decision-making at the local, state and federal level.

Our Experience

Advice

We provide strategic and legal advice to individuals and organizations regarding campaigns and elections, often serving as campaign counsel. We provide the full range of campaign reporting services necessary to ensure compliance with California’s Political Reform Act and Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) regulations, as well as federal laws and regulations adopted by the Federal Elections Commission (FEC).

Ballot Measures

At Hanson Bridgett, we understand that the political stakes for our clients are high, and that our legal advice must be able to withstand all challenges. We have drafted ballot measures, or otherwise advised those who would place measures on the ballot, on a wide variety of issues both local and

state-wide. Examples of state-wide measures in which Hanson Bridgett attorneys have been involved include a call for a constitutional convention, reform of the education system, imposition of a tobacco tax to pay for expanded children's health care, and redistricting. At the local level, we have assisted in efforts to enable public utility annexations, rebuild hospitals, adopt local taxes, and reform lobbying rules.

Litigation

Hanson Bridgett litigates issues surrounding measures and elections, both before and after ballots are cast. Our attorneys frequently litigate cases in the constitutional law arena, involving Proposition 218, civil rights, the First Amendment, open government, campaign finance, elections code and Voting Rights Act issues. We have successfully challenged—and defended challenges to—ballot pamphlet language, including recovery of attorneys' fees. Our attorneys represent clients in both state and federal court, and are specialists in both trial and appellate settings.

Advocacy and Legislation

We have a solid understanding of the principles of legislative drafting, have prepared ordinances with the force of law for many clients, and have submitted draft legislative language to members of Congress, the State Legislature and local governments on behalf of both public and private entities. We have worked with the staff of legislators, and directly with the elected members themselves, to advocate clients' positions on pending federal and state legislation. We have testified before State Senate and Assembly committee hearings and assisted in creation of favorable "legislative history" later relied on by courts and administrative agencies in the implementation of the law. On the regulatory side, we regularly assist clients at each phase of rule-makings at both the state and local levels, analyzing potential regulations and offering comments or proposals for rule-maker consideration and adoption.

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About Our Group

Hanson Bridgett's deep involvement in California government stems from more than forty years representing public institutions in the state. Our lawyers understand what makes government and its leaders tick and are familiar with the broad range of issues confronting our state. This understanding makes us valued counselors and tireless advocates for those who wish to reform government or otherwise make new law through the political process.

Our firm's rich history has been steeped in politics since the beginning. We were fortunate to employ George Moscone as an associate when he was just starting his career. In the more recent past, Congresswoman (and former State Senator) Jackie Speier and Senate President pro Tem Darrell Steinberg worked at Hanson Bridgett prior to assuming to their most recent elected positions. Currently, our firm houses Douglas Bosco, who served in the California Legislature from 1978 to 1982 and the United States Congress from 1982 to 1990, and Gary Giacomini, who served for 24 years on the Marin County Board of Supervisors.



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