



# County of Sonoma

## State of California

Date: July 9, 2024

Item Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Resolution Number: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ 4/5 Vote Required

**Resolution Of The Board Of Supervisors Of The County Of Sonoma, State Of California,  
Modifying Resolution 24-0197 Submitting the Sonoma County Prohibition on Concentrated  
Animal Feeding Operations Initiative Petition to the Voters of Sonoma County at the  
November 5, 2024, Presidential General Election**

**Whereas**, on August 21, 2023, proponents of an ordinance filed with the Sonoma County Registrar of Voters Office a notice of intent to circulate an initiative petition of an ordinance to phase out existing and prohibit future Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) in most unincorporated areas of Sonoma County; and

**Whereas**, County Counsel prepared a ballot title and summary for the proposed Initiative, as required by law, entitling the Initiative "Sonoma County Prohibition on Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations" (hereinafter the "Initiative"); and

**Whereas**, the proponents of the Initiative thereafter published a Notice of Intent to Circulate Petition, circulated their petition for signature, and on March 4, 2024, filed the petition and signatures with the Registrar of Voters; and

**Whereas**, the Registrar of Voters Office has examined the signatures and verified that sufficient signatures support placing the Initiative on the ballot at the November 5, 2024, Presidential General Election; and

**Whereas**, the Registrar of Voters Office certified the results of the examination to the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors on April 16, 2024;

**Whereas**, at the April 16, 2024 Board meeting, the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors directed various County departments and agencies to prepare reports regarding the impacts on Sonoma County from the Initiative, as authorized by Elections Code sections 9115 and 9111;

**Whereas**, on May 14, 2024, the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors received and discussed said reports and considered taking a formal position on the proposed Initiative at a duly noticed public meeting at which all interested members of the public on both sides of the issue were provided the opportunity to provide comment on the reports and the Initiative;

**Whereas**, after closing public comment, the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors adopted Resolution No. 24-0197, submitting the Initiative to the Voters of Sonoma County at the November 5, 2024, Presidential General Election, and approved a ballot question language;

**Whereas**, in addition to submitting the Initiative to the voters, the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors took a formal position opposing the Initiative and authorized the Chair to sign a letter opposing the measure;

**Whereas**, at the May 14, 2024 Board meeting, several commenters and staff raised concerns that the proposed ballot language for the Initiative was misleading and likely to prejudice voters in favor of the Initiative, and the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors directed staff to review the language further;

**Whereas**, after further review of the language of the initiative and the use of the term “Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation” or “CAFO” in particular, staff determined that the operational portions of the proposed initiative were most accurately distilled into what the measure would technically require in terms of regulating certain agricultural uses. Conversely, the intentions and policy goal language motivating the proposed technical requirements are distinguishable. That the operational requirements of the initiative will achieve all the initiative’s stated goals is not indisputable. More specifically, the term CAFO is utilized by the EPA for water quality regulatory purposes. The term has been borrowed for the proposed initiative but used differently than in the EPA regulations. The use of the term CAFO is a

definitional tool in the initiative but does not make the diverse and broad policy objectives of the initiative indisputable outcomes. For these reasons, and to not mislead the voting public, staff agreed with the concerns raised and proposed slightly revised language for the ballot question to focus on the regulatory requirements it would create;

**Whereas**, on July 9, 2024, the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors held another duly noticed public meeting to consider the Initiative and the proposed ballot language;

**Whereas**, all interested members of the public on both sides of the issue were provided the opportunity to provide comment on the proposed revisions to the ballot question;

**Whereas**, the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors now desires to modify Resolution No. 24-0197 to revise the ballot question being submitted to the Voters.

**Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved** That Resolution No. 24-0197 is hereby revised to read in its entirety as follows:

1. The Initiative shall be submitted to the voters in the following revised form:

SONOMA COUNTY PROHIBITION ON CONCENTRATED ANIMAL FEEDING OPERATIONS	
Should the County Code be amended to prohibit, outside of the Coastal Zone, farms and other animal production operations that meet the definition of "Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations" (CAFOs), as defined by federal regulations, require phase out of existing CAFOs over three years, authorize daily financial penalties for violations, and require, among other things, the Agricultural Commissioner to create a job retraining program for CAFO workers?	YES
	NO

2. The County Clerk is hereby authorized, instructed, and directed to provide and furnish any and all official ballots, notices, printed matter, and all supplies, equipment, and paraphernalia that may be necessary in order to properly and lawfully conduct an election.

3. The County Clerk is hereby further directed to take the necessary and appropriate actions to provide the necessary election officers, polling places, and voting precincts.
4. Arguments for and against the Initiative may be submitted to the Registrar of Voters Office by August 16, 2024, in accordance with the deadlines established for the November 5, 2024, Presidential General Election.
5. In accordance with the provisions of the Elections Code, the County Counsel is authorized to prepare an impartial analysis of the Initiative, and the Auditor is directed to review the Initiative and determine whether the Initiative, if adopted, would affect the revenues or expenditures of the County, and, if so, to prepare a fiscal analysis.
6. Notice of time and place of holding the election, together with any other notices required by law, shall be given to the County Clerk.

**Supervisors:**

Gorin:

Coursey:

Gore:

Hopkins:

Rabbitt:

Ayes:

Noes:

Absent:

Abstain:

**So Ordered.**