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SIGNATURES IN QUESTION FOR “BETTER ELECTIONS” BALLOT INITIATIVE

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — Alaska Policy Forum has requested that the Department of Law investigate the signature gathering process for the so-called Better Elections Ballot Initiative, formally known as 19AKBE, “An Act Replacing the Political Party Primary with an Open Primary System and Ranked-Choice General Election, and Requiring Additional Campaign Finance Disclosures.”

A lawsuit was recently filed in superior court alleging that state law was violated in the signature gathering of another initiative, 19OGTX, “An Act relating to the oil and gas production tax, tax payments, and tax credits.” The same out-of-state signature-gathering firm used by the sponsors of 19OGTX, Advanced Micro Targeting, was hired to gather signatures in Alaska for 19AKBE as well.

“Elections are sacred, and it is important for government to show its due diligence in maintaining the integrity of the process. Alaskans are questioning whether an initiative that will appear on their ballots was certified with signatures that were collected in violation of state law.”

— Bethany Marcum, Executive Director at Alaska Policy Forum

Ballot initiative 19AKBE is an extensive, 26-page document that would dramatically change elections in Alaska. Principally, it would eliminate political party primaries, implement ranked-choice voting, and increase donor disclosure mandates. If passed, all primary candidates would be presented on one ballot, voters would “rank” their top candidates in the primary and general elections rather than choosing one, and any campaign donors giving over \$2,000 would have their names and addresses published in a government-maintained database. It is vital that the Department of Law investigate the signature gathering process for this initiative expeditiously, before Alaskans are faced with the choice to profoundly change our electoral system.

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