



April 3, 2024

The Honorable Marc Berman
California State Capitol
1021 O Street, Suite 8130
Sacramento, CA 95814
Via online portal

RE: Verified Voting Supports Passage of the Defending Democracy from Deepfake Deception Act of 2024

Dear Chair Berman and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of Verified Voting, I write in support of [AB 2655](#), the Defending Democracy from Deepfake Deception Act of 2024, which will help protect California voters by limiting the spread of online disinformation and deepfakes intended to influence elections during peak times before and after Election Day.

We are entering the first-ever election cycle in which disinformation powered by generative AI threatens to pollute our information ecosystems like never before. Using current technology, bad actors can now supercharge false claims by creating what appears to be compelling “evidence” of malfeasance with the touch of a button: Imagine a fake video of an elections official “caught on tape” saying that voting machines are not secure, or a TikTok of “Governor Newsom” incorrectly telling millions of Californians their voting location has changed.

Legislation pending before your committee, AB 2655, seeks to solve these problems by banning the online spread of deepfakes during the formative window before and after Election Day that is meant to suppress or deceive the electorate based on fraudulent content. AB 2655 increases transparency by empowering voters' right to know the provenance of content hosted on large online platforms, and covering only the depiction of demonstrably untrue and provably false content meant to impermissibly influence our elections.

The threat to California’s elections is real. Those trying to disrupt and influence campaigns are already creating and distributing deepfake images, audio, and video content, in the U.S. and around the world at increasing scale. Generative AI has been used to influence the national elections in Slovakia, Bangladesh, Argentina, and Pakistan and has the power to undermine faith in our elections here in California.

We enthusiastically support this effort to safeguard the integrity of our free and fair elections and urge swift passage of AB 2655.

Sincerely,

Pamela Smith
President & CEO