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Alien Land Law

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File: 1920-a-2

ORIGINAL

INITIATIVE MEASURE TO BE SUBMITTED DIRECTLY TO THE ELECTORS

The Attorney General has summarized the proposed measure as follows:

Alien Land Law. Initiative Act. Permits acquisition and transfer of real property by aliens eligible to citizenship, to same extent as citizens except as otherwise provided by law; permits other aliens, and companies, associations and corporations in which they hold majority interest, to acquire and transfer real property only as prescribed by treaty, but prohibiting appointment thereof as guardians of estates of minors consisting wholly or partially of real property or shares in such corporations; provides for escheats in certain cases; requires reports of property holdings to facilitate enforcement of act; prescribes penalties and repeals conflicting acts.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA,

County of SAN DIEGO

} ss.

To the Honorable Secretary of State of the State of California:

We, the undersigned, registered, qualified electors of the State of California, residents of.....

.....County, present to the Secretary of State this petition and request that a proposed measure, as hereinafter set forth, be submitted to the People of the State of California for their approval or rejection, at the next ensuing general election or as provided by law. The proposed measure is as follows:

An Act Relating to the Rights, Powers and Disabilities of Aliens and of Certain Companies, Associations and Corporations With Respect to Property in This State, Providing for Escheats in Certain Cases, Prescribing the Procedure Therein, Requiring Reports of Certain Property Holdings to Facilitate the Enforcement of This Act, Prescribing Penalties for Violation of the Provisions Hereof, and Repealing All Acts or Parts of Acts Inconsistent or in Conflict Herewith.

The People of the State of California do enact as follows:

Section 1. All aliens eligible to citizenship under the laws of the United States may acquire, possess, enjoy, transmit and inherit real property, or any interest therein, in this State, in the same manner and to the same extent as citizens of the United States, except as otherwise provided by the laws of this State.

Sec. 2. All aliens other than those mentioned in section one of this act may acquire, possess, enjoy and transfer real property, or any interest therein, in this State, in the manner and to the extent and for the purpose prescribed by any treaty now existing between the Government of the United States and the nation or country of which such alien is a citizen or subject, and not otherwise.

Sec. 3. Any company, association or corporation organized under the laws of this or any other state or nation, of which a majority of the members are aliens other than those specified in section one of this act, or in which a majority of the issued capital stock is owned by such aliens, may acquire, possess, enjoy and convey real property, or any interest therein, in this State, in the manner and to the extent and for the purposes prescribed by any treaty now existing between the Government of the United States and the nation or country of which such members or stockholders are citizens or subjects, and not otherwise. Hereafter all aliens other than those specified in section one hereof may become members of or acquire shares of stock in any company, association or corporation that is or may be authorized to acquire, possess, enjoy or convey agricultural land, in the manner and to the extent and for the purposes prescribed by any treaty now existing between the Government of the United States and the nation or country of which such alien is a citizen or subject, and not otherwise.

Sec. 4. Hereafter no alien mentioned in section two hereof and no company, association or corporation mentioned in section three hereof, may be appointed guardian of that portion of the estate of a minor which consists of property which such alien or such company, association or corporation is inhibited from acquiring, possessing, enjoying or transferring by reason of the provisions of this act. The public administrator of the proper county, or any other competent person or corporation, may be appointed guardian of the estate of a minor citizen whose parents are ineligible to appointment under the provisions of this section.

On such notice to the guardian as the court may require, the Superior Court may remove the guardian of such an estate whenever it appears to the satisfaction of the court:

- (a) That the guardian has failed to file the report required by the provisions of section five hereof; or
- (b) That the property of the ward has not been or is not being administered with due regard to the primary interest of the ward; or
- (c) That facts exist which would make the guardian ineligible to appointment in the first instance; or
- (d) That facts establishing any other legal ground for removal exist.

Sec. 5. (a) The term "trustee" as used in this section means any person, company, association or corporation that as guardian, trustee, attorney-in-fact or agent, or in any other capacity has the title, custody or control of property, or some interest therein, belonging to an alien mentioned in section two hereof, or to the minor child of such an alien, if the property is of such a character that such alien is inhibited from acquiring, possessing, enjoying or transferring it.

(b) Annually on or before the thirty-first day of January every such trustee must file in the office of the Secretary of State of California and in the office of the County Clerk of each county in which any of the property is situated, a verified written report showing:

- (1) The property, real or personal, held by him for or on behalf of such an alien or minor;
- (2) A statement showing the date when each item of such property came into his possession or control;
- (3) An itemized account of all expenditures, investments, rents, issues and profits in respect to the administration and control of such property with particular reference to holdings of corporate stock and leases, cropping contracts and other agreements in respect to land and the handling or sale of products thereof.

INITIATIVE MEASURE RELATING TO THE PROPERTY RIGHTS AND DISABILITIES OF ALIENS IN CALIFORNIA.

(c) Any person, company, association or corporation that violates any provision of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be punished by a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars or by imprisonment in the county jail not exceeding one year, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

(d) The provisions of this section are cumulative and are not intended to change the jurisdiction or the rules of practice of courts of justice.

Sec. 6. Whenever it appears to the court in any probate proceeding that by reason of the provisions of this act any heir or devisee cannot take real property in this state or membership or shares of stock in a company, association or corporation which, but for said provisions, said heir or devisee would take as such, the court, instead of ordering a distribution of such property to such heir or devisee, shall order a sale of said property to be made in the manner provided by law for probate sales of property and the proceeds of such sale shall be distributed to such heir or devisee in lieu of such property.

Sec. 7. Any real property hereafter acquired in fee in violation of the provisions of this act by any alien mentioned in section two of this act, or by any company, association or corporation mentioned in section three of this act, shall escheat to, and become and remain the property of the State of California. The attorney general or district attorney of the proper county shall institute proceedings to have the escheat of such real property adjudged and enforced in the manner provided by section four hundred seventy-four of the Political Code and title eight, part three of the Code of Civil Procedure. Upon the entry of final judgment in such proceedings, the title to such real property shall pass to the State of California. The provisions of this section and of sections two and three of this act shall not apply to any real property hereafter acquired in the enforcement or in satisfaction of any lien now existing upon, or interest in such property, so long as such real property so acquired shall remain the property of the alien, company, association or corporation acquiring the same in such manner. No alien, company, association or corporation mentioned in section two or section three hereof shall hold for a longer period than two years the possession of any agricultural land acquired in the enforcement of or in satisfaction of a mortgage or other lien hereafter made or acquired in good faith to secure a debt.

Sec. 8. Any leasehold or other interest in real property less than the fee, hereafter acquired in violation of the provisions of this act by any alien mentioned in section two of this act, or by any company, association or corporation mentioned in section three of this act, shall escheat to the State of California. The attorney general or district attorney of the proper county shall institute proceedings to have such escheat adjudged and enforced as provided in section seven of this act. In such proceedings the court shall determine and adjudge the value of such leasehold or other interest in such real property, and enter judgment for the State for the amount thereof together with costs. Thereupon the court shall order a sale of the real property covered by such leasehold, or other interest, in the manner provided by section twelve hundred seventy-one of the Code of Civil Procedure. Out of the proceeds arising from such sale, the amount of the judgment rendered for the State shall be paid into the state treasury and the balance shall be deposited with and distributed by the court in accordance with the interest of the parties therein. Any share of stock or the interest of any member in a company, association or corporation hereafter acquired in violation of the provisions of section three of this act shall escheat to the State of California. Such escheat shall be adjudged and enforced in the same manner as provided in this section for the escheat of a leasehold or other interest in real property less than the fee.

Sec. 9. Every transfer of real property, or of an interest therein, though colorable in form, shall be void as to the state and the interest thereby conveyed or sought to be conveyed shall escheat to the State if the property interest involved is of such a character that an alien mentioned in section two hereof is inhibited from acquiring, possessing, enjoying or transferring it, and if the conveyance is made with intent to prevent, evade or avoid escheat as provided for herein.

A *prima facie* presumption that the conveyance is made with such intent shall arise upon proof of any of the following groups of facts:

(a) The taking of the property in the name of a person other than the persons mentioned in section two hereof if the consideration is paid or agreed or understood to be paid by an alien mentioned in section two hereof;

(b) The taking of the property in the name of a company, association or corporation, if the memberships or shares of stock therein held by aliens mentioned in section two hereof, together with the memberships or shares of stock held by others but paid for or agreed or understood to be paid for by such aliens, would amount to a majority of the membership or the issued capital stock of such company, association or corporation;

(c) The execution of a mortgage in favor of an alien mentioned in section two hereof if said mortgagee is given possession, control or management of the property.

The enumeration in this section of certain presumptions shall not be so construed as to preclude other presumptions or inferences that reasonably may be made as to the existence of intent to prevent, evade or avoid escheat as provided for herein.

Sec. 10. If two or more persons conspire to effect a transfer of real property, or of an interest therein, in violation of the provisions hereof, they are punishable by imprisonment in the county jail or state penitentiary not exceeding two years, or by a fine not exceeding five thousand dollars, or both.

Sec. 11. Nothing in this act shall be construed as a limitation upon the power of the state to enact laws with respect to the acquisition, holding or disposal by aliens of real property in this state.

Sec. 12. All acts and parts of acts inconsistent or in conflict with the provisions hereof are hereby repealed; provided, that—

(a) This act shall not affect pending actions or proceedings, but the same may be prosecuted and defended with the same effect as if this act had not been adopted;

(b) No cause of action arising under any law of this state shall be affected by reason of the adoption of

