

Assembly Bill No. 1638

CHAPTER 929

An act to add Section 15620.5 to the Government Code, and to amend Sections 8262, 8269, 9262, 9269, 9275, 30458.2, 30458.9, 30459.5, 32462, 32469, 32475, 38621, 40202, 40209, 40215, 41162, 41169, 41175, 43513, 43520, 43526, 45858, 45865, 45871, 46613, 46620, 46626, 50112.2, 50156.2, 50156.9, 50156.15, 55323, 55330, 55336, 60623, and 60630 of, and to add Sections 6832.5, 6902.4, 7658.1, 8174, 8878.5, 9033, 9184, 9272.1, 11253, 11254, 11409, 30283.5, 30354, 30384, 30459.2A, 32256.5, 32389, 32432, 32472.1, 38455, 38504, 38505, 38624, 40103.5, 40167, 40212.5, 41097.5, 41127.6, 41172.5, 43158.5, 43448, 43484, 43523.5, 45156.5, 45609, 45752, 45868.5, 46157.5, 46464, 46544, 46623.5, 50112.4, 50138.6, 50150.5, 50156.17, 55046, 55209, 55262, 55333.5, 60212, 60493, 60564, 60632.1, 60633.1, and 60633.2 to, the Revenue and Taxation Code, relating to taxation.

[Approved by Governor October 10, 1999. Filed
with Secretary of State October 10, 1999.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1638, Committee on Revenue and Taxation. State Board of Equalization: sales and use taxes: excise and special taxes.

The Sales and Use Tax Law provides that the State Board of Equalization may, in its discretion, enter into a written installment payment agreement with a person for the payment of any taxes due, interest, and applicable penalties, in installments over an agreed period.

This bill would require the board to provide each taxpayer who has an installment payment agreement in effect with an annual statement specifying certain information.

The Sales and Use Tax Law establishes specified limitation periods for the approval by the State Board of Equalization of any refund for an overpayment.

This bill would suspend that limitation period during any period of a person's life that the person is "financially disabled," as defined.

The State Board of Equalization administers various excise and special tax laws, including the Motor Vehicle Fuel License Tax Law, the Use Fuel Tax Law, the Private Railroad Car Tax Law, the Cigarette and Tobacco Products Tax Law, the Alcoholic Beverage Tax Law, the Timber Yield Tax Law, the Energy Resources Surcharge Law, a taxpayer's bill of rights law, the Emergency Telephone Users Surcharge Act, the Hazardous Substances Tax Law, the Integrated Waste Management Fee Law, the Oil Spill Response, Prevention, and Administration Fees Law, the Underground Storage



Tank Maintenance Fee Law, the Fee Collection Procedures Law, and the Diesel Fuel Tax Law.

This bill would provide for purposes of one or more of those laws, as applicable, that the board may establish a uniform policy for the acceptance of specified documents, relieve certain interest imposed on a person if the failure to pay tax is due to an unreasonable error or delay by an employee of the board, make technical changes to the board's education and information programs, specify that a taxpayer is entitled to reimbursement of fees and expenses for a hearing before the board if, among other things, a claim is made within one year of the date the decision of the board becomes final, authorize the board to enter into written installment payment agreements, require the return of property levied upon under certain circumstances, allow the board an alternative procedure with respect to the recovery of certain erroneous refunds or credits, and allow the board to release or subordinate certain liens if the board determines that the release or subordination will facilitate the collection of tax or will be in the best interest of the state and the taxpayer.

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

SECTION 1. Section 15620.5 is added to the Government Code, to read:

15620.5. The board, whenever it deems it necessary to ensure voluntary compliance with the due dates prescribed by law for submission of any remittance, claim for credit or refund, document, return, or other information delivered to the board through the United States mail or through a bona fide commercial delivery service, may establish a uniform policy for the acceptance of the remittance, claim for credit or refund, document, return, or other information in cases where the cancellation mark stamped upon the envelope containing the remittance, claim for credit or refund, document, return, or other information shows a date after the date specified in law. This policy shall not be construed as an extension of the prescribed time limits for remitting payments, filing claims for refund or credit, submitting documents, returns, or other information.

SEC. 1.5. Section 6832.5 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

6832.5. On or before July 1, 2000, the board shall provide each taxpayer who has an installment payment agreement in effect under Section 6832 with an annual statement setting forth the initial balance at the beginning of the year, the payments made during the year, and the remaining balance as of the end of the year.

SEC. 1.7. Section 6902.4 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:



6902.4. (a) The limitation period specified in Section 6902 shall be suspended during any period of a person's life that the person is financially disabled.

(b) (1) For purposes of subdivision (a), a person is financially disabled if the person is unable to manage his or her financial affairs by reason of medically determinable physical or mental impairment of the person that can be expected to result in death or that has lasted or can be expected to last for a continuous period of not less than 12 months. A person shall not be considered to have an impairment unless proof of the existence thereof is furnished in the form and manner as the board may require.

(2) A person shall not be treated as financially disabled during any period that the person's spouse or any other person is authorized to act on behalf of the person in financial matters.

(c) This section applies to periods of disability commencing before, on, or after the effective date of the act adding this section, but does not apply to any claim for refund that, without regard to this section, is barred by operation or rule of law, including *res judicata*, as of the effective date of the act adding this section.

SEC. 1.9. Section 7658.1 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

7658.1. (a) The board, in its discretion, may relieve all or any part of the interest imposed on a person by Sections 7655 and 7661 where the failure to pay tax is due in whole or in part to an unreasonable error or delay by an employee of the board acting in his or her official capacity.

(b) For purposes of this section, an error or delay shall be deemed to have occurred only if no significant aspect of the error or delay is attributable to an act of, or a failure to act by, the distributor.

(c) Any person seeking relief under this section shall file with the board a statement under penalty of perjury setting forth the facts on which the claim for relief is based and any other information which the board may require.

(d) The board may grant relief only for interest imposed on tax liabilities that arise during taxable periods commencing on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 2. Section 8174 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

8174. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this part, if the board finds that neither the person liable for payment of tax nor any party related to that person has in any way caused an erroneous refund for which an action for recovery is provided under Section 8171, no interest shall be imposed on the amount of that erroneous refund until 30 days after the date on which the board mails a notice of determination for repayment of the erroneous refund to the person. The act of filing a claim for refund shall not be considered as causing the erroneous refund.



(b) This section shall be operative for any action for recovery under Section 8171 on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 3. Section 8262 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

8262. (a) The board shall develop and implement an education and information program directed at, but not limited to, all of the following groups:

- (1) Taxpayers newly registered with the board.
- (2) Board audit and compliance staff.

(b) The education and information program shall include all of the following:

(1) A program of written communication with newly registered taxpayers explaining in simplified terms their duties and responsibilities.

(2) Participation in seminars and similar programs organized by federal, state, and local agencies.

(3) Revision of taxpayer educational materials currently produced by the board that explain the most common areas of taxpayer nonconformance in simplified terms.

(4) Implementation of a continuing education program for audit and compliance personnel to include the application of new legislation to taxpayer activities and areas of recurrent taxpayer noncompliance or inconsistency of administration.

(c) Electronic media used pursuant to this section shall not represent the voice, picture, or name of members of the board or of the Controller.

SEC. 4. Section 8269 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

8269. (a) Every taxpayer is entitled to be reimbursed for any reasonable fees and expenses related to a hearing before the board if all of the following conditions are met:

(1) The taxpayer files a claim for the fee and expenses with the board within one year of the date the decision of the board becomes final.

(2) The board, in its sole discretion, finds that the action taken by the board staff was unreasonable.

(3) The board decides that the taxpayer be awarded a specific amount of fees and expenses related to the hearing, in an amount determined by the board in its sole discretion.

(b) To determine whether the board staff has been unreasonable, the board shall consider whether the board staff has established that its position was substantially justified.

(c) The amount of reimbursed fees and expenses shall be limited to the following:

(1) Fees and expenses incurred after the date of filing petitions for redetermination and claims for refund.



(2) If the board finds that the staff was unreasonable with respect to certain issues but reasonable with respect to other issues, the amount of reimbursed fees and expenses shall be limited to those that relate to the issues where the staff was unreasonable.

(d) Any proposed award by the board pursuant to subdivision (a) shall be available as a public record for at least 10 days prior to the effective date of the award.

(e) The amendments to this section by the act adding this subdivision shall be operative for claims filed on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 5. Section 8878.5 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

8878.5. (a) The board, in its discretion, may relieve all or any part of the interest imposed on a person by Sections 8803 and 8876 where the failure to pay tax is due in whole or in part to an unreasonable error or delay by an employee of the board acting in his or her official capacity.

(b) For purposes of this section, an error or delay shall be deemed to have occurred only if no significant aspect of the error or delay is attributable to an act of, or a failure to act by, the taxpayer.

(c) Any person seeking relief under this section shall file with the board a statement under penalty of perjury setting forth the facts on which the claim for relief is based and any other information which the board may require.

(d) The board may grant relief only for interest imposed on tax liabilities that arise during taxable periods commencing on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 6. Section 9033 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

9033. (a) The board may, in its discretion, enter into a written installment payment agreement with a person for the payment of any taxes due, together with interest thereon and any applicable penalties, in installments over an agreed period. With mutual consent, the board and the taxpayer may alter or modify the agreement.

(b) Upon failure of a person to fully comply with the terms of an installment payment agreement with the board, the board may terminate the agreement by mailing a notice of termination to the person. The notice shall include an explanation of the basis for the termination and inform the person of his or her right to request an administrative review of the termination. Fifteen days after the mailing of the notice, the installment payment agreement shall be void, and the total amount of the tax, interest, and penalties due shall be immediately payable.

(c) The board shall establish procedures for an administrative review for persons requesting that review whose installment payment agreements are terminated under subdivision (b). The



collection of taxes, interest, and penalties that are the subject of the terminated installment payment agreement may not be stayed during this administrative review process.

(d) Subdivision (b) shall not apply to any case where the board finds collection of the tax to be in jeopardy.

SEC. 7. Section 9184 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

9184. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this part, if the board finds that neither the person liable for payment of tax nor any party related to that person has in any way caused an erroneous refund for which an action for recovery is provided under Section 9181, no interest shall be imposed on the amount of that erroneous refund until 30 days after the date on which the board mails a notice of determination for repayment of the erroneous refund to the person. The act of filing a claim for refund shall not be considered as causing the erroneous refund.

(b) This section shall be operative for any action for recovery under Section 9181 on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 8. Section 9262 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

9262. (a) The board shall develop and implement an education and information program directed at, but not limited to, all of the following groups:

- (1) Taxpayers newly registered with the board.
- (2) Board audit and compliance staff.

(b) The education and information program shall include all of the following:

(1) A program of written communication with newly registered taxpayers explaining in simplified terms their duties and responsibilities.

(2) Participation in seminars and similar programs organized by federal, state, and local agencies.

(3) Revision of taxpayer educational materials currently produced by the board that explain the most common areas of taxpayer nonconformance in simplified terms.

(4) Implementation of a continuing education program for audit and compliance personnel to include the application of new legislation to taxpayer activities and areas of recurrent taxpayer noncompliance or inconsistency of administration.

(c) Electronic media used pursuant to this section shall not represent the voice, picture, or name of members of the board or of the Controller.

SEC. 9. Section 9269 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

9269. (a) Every taxpayer is entitled to be reimbursed for any reasonable fees and expenses related to a hearing before the board if all of the following conditions are met:



(1) The taxpayer files a claim for the fee and expenses with the board within one year of the date the decision of the board becomes final.

(2) The board, in its sole discretion, finds that the action taken by the board staff was unreasonable.

(3) The board decides that the taxpayer be awarded a specific amount of fees and expenses related to the hearing, in an amount determined by the board in its sole discretion.

(b) To determine whether the board staff has been unreasonable, the board shall consider whether the board staff has established that its position was substantially justified.

(c) The amount of reimbursed fees and expenses shall be limited to the following:

(1) Fees and expenses incurred after the date of filing petitions for redetermination and claims for refund.

(2) If the board finds that the staff was unreasonable with respect to certain issues but reasonable with respect to other issues, the amount of reimbursed fees and expenses shall be limited to those that relate to the issues where the staff was unreasonable.

(d) Any proposed award by the board pursuant to subdivision (a) shall be available as a public record for at least 10 days prior to the effective date of the award.

(e) The amendments to this section by the act adding this subdivision shall be operative for claims filed on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 10. Section 9272.1 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

9272.1. (a) Except in any case where the board finds collection of the tax to be in jeopardy, if any property has been levied upon, the property or the proceeds from the sale of the property shall be returned to the taxpayer if the board determines any one of the following:

(1) The levy on the property was not in accordance with the law.

(2) The taxpayer has entered into and is in compliance with an installment payment agreement pursuant to Section 9033 to satisfy the tax liability for which the levy was imposed, unless that or another agreement allows for the levy.

(3) The return of the property will facilitate the collection of the tax liability or will be in the best interest of the state and the taxpayer.

(b) Property returned under paragraphs (1) and (2) of subdivision (a) is subject to the provisions of Section 9274.

SEC. 11. Section 9275 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

9275. (a) At least 30 days prior to the filing or recording of liens under Chapter 14 (commencing with Section 7150) or Chapter 14.5 (commencing with Section 7220) of Division 7 of Title 1 of the Government Code, the board shall mail to the taxpayer a preliminary



notice. The notice shall specify the statutory authority of the board for filing or recording the lien, indicate the earliest date on which the lien may be filed or recorded, and state the remedies available to the taxpayer to prevent the filing or recording of the lien. In the event tax liens are filed for the same liability in multiple counties, only one preliminary notice shall be sent.

(b) The preliminary notice required by this section shall not apply to jeopardy determinations issued under Article 4 (commencing with Section 8826) of Chapter 4.

(c) If the board determines that filing a lien was in error, it shall mail a release to the taxpayer and the entity recording the lien as soon as possible, but no later than seven days, after this determination and receipt of lien recording information. The release shall contain a statement that the lien was filed in error. In the event the erroneous lien is obstructing a lawful transaction, the board shall immediately issue a release of lien to the taxpayer and the entity recording the lien.

(d) When the board releases a lien erroneously filed, notice of that fact shall be mailed to the taxpayer and, upon the request of the taxpayer, a copy of the release shall be mailed to the major credit reporting companies in the county where the lien was filed.

(e) The board may release or subordinate a lien if the board determines that the release or subordination will facilitate the collection of the tax liability or will be in the best interest of the state and the taxpayer.

SEC. 12. Section 11253 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

11253. (a) The board may, in its discretion, enter into a written installment payment agreement with a person for the payment of any taxes due, together with interest thereon and any applicable penalties, in installments over an agreed period. With mutual consent, the board and the taxpayer may alter or modify the agreement.

(b) Upon failure of a person to fully comply with the terms of an installment payment agreement with the board, the board may terminate the agreement by mailing a notice of termination to the person. The notice shall include an explanation of the basis for the termination and inform the person of his or her right to request an administrative review of the termination. Fifteen days after the mailing of the notice, the installment payment agreement shall be void, and the total amount of the tax, interest, and penalties due shall be immediately payable.

(c) The board shall establish procedures for an administrative review for persons requesting that review whose installment payment agreements are terminated under subdivision (b). The collection of taxes, interest, and penalties that are the subject of the terminated installment payment agreement may not be stayed during this administrative review process.



(d) Subdivision (b) shall not apply to any case where the board finds collection of the tax to be in jeopardy.

SEC. 13. Section 11254 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

11254. Except in any case where the board finds collection of the tax to be in jeopardy, if any property has been levied upon, the property or the proceeds from the sale of the property shall be returned to the taxpayer if the board determines any one of the following:

(a) The levy on the property was not in accordance with the law.

(b) The taxpayer has entered into and is in compliance with an installment payment agreement pursuant to Section 11253 to satisfy the tax liability for which the levy was imposed, unless that or another agreement allows for the levy.

(c) The return of the property will facilitate the collection of the tax liability or will be in the best interest of the state and the taxpayer.

SEC. 14. Section 11409 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

11409. (a) The board, in its discretion, may relieve all or any part of the interest imposed on a person by Section 11319 where the failure to pay tax is due in whole or in part to an unreasonable error or delay by an employee of the board acting in his or her official capacity.

(b) For purposes of this section, an error or delay shall be deemed to have occurred only if the person filed a timely report and no significant aspect of the error or delay is attributable to an act of, or a failure to act by, the taxpayer.

(c) Any person seeking relief under this section shall file with the board a statement under penalty of perjury setting forth the facts on which the claim for relief is based and any other information which the board may require.

(d) The board may grant relief only for interest imposed on tax liabilities that arise during taxable periods commencing on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 15. Section 30283.5 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

30283.5. (a) The board, in its discretion, may relieve all or any part of the interest imposed on a person by Sections 30171, 30223, and 30281 where the failure to pay tax is due in whole or in part to an unreasonable error or delay by an employee of the board acting in his or her official capacity.

(b) For purposes of this section, an error or delay shall be deemed to have occurred only if no significant aspect of the error or delay is attributable to an act of, or a failure to act by, the taxpayer.

(c) Any person seeking relief under this section shall file with the board a statement under penalty of perjury setting forth the facts on which the claim for relief is based and any other information which the board may require.



(d) The board may grant relief only for interest imposed on tax liabilities that arise during taxable periods commencing on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 16. Section 30354 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

30354. (a) The board may, in its discretion, enter into a written installment payment agreement with a person for the payment of any taxes due, together with interest thereon and any applicable penalties, in installments over an agreed period. With mutual consent, the board and the taxpayer may alter or modify the agreement.

(b) Upon failure of a person to fully comply with the terms of an installment payment agreement with the board, the board may terminate the agreement by mailing a notice of termination to the person. The notice shall include an explanation of the basis for the termination and inform the person of his or her right to request an administrative review of the termination. Fifteen days after the mailing of the notice, the installment payment agreement shall be void, and the total amount of the tax, interest, and penalties due shall be immediately payable.

(c) The board shall establish procedures for an administrative review for persons requesting that review whose installment payment agreements are terminated under subdivision (b). The collection of taxes, interest, and penalties that are the subject of the terminated installment payment agreement may not be stayed during this administrative review process.

(d) Subdivision (b) shall not apply to any case where the board finds collection of the tax to be in jeopardy.

SEC. 17. Section 30384 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

30384. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this part, if the board finds that neither the person liable for payment of tax nor any party related to that person has in any way caused an erroneous refund for which an action for recovery is provided under Section 30381, no interest shall be imposed on the amount of that erroneous refund until 30 days after the date on which the board mails a notice of determination for repayment of the erroneous refund to the person. The act of filing a claim for refund shall not be considered as causing the erroneous refund.

(b) This section shall be operative for any action for recovery under Section 30381 on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 18. Section 30458.2 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

30458.2. (a) The board shall develop and implement an education and information program directed at, but not limited to, all of the following groups:

- (1) Taxpayers newly registered with the board.



(2) Board audit and compliance staff.

(b) The education and information program shall include all of the following:

(1) A program of written communication with newly registered taxpayers explaining in simplified terms their duties and responsibilities.

(2) Participation in seminars and similar programs organized by federal, state, and local agencies.

(3) Revision of taxpayer educational materials currently produced by the board that explain the most common areas of taxpayer nonconformance in simplified terms.

(4) Implementation of a continuing education program for audit and compliance personnel to include the application of new legislation to taxpayer activities and areas of recurrent taxpayer noncompliance or inconsistency of administration.

(c) Electronic media used pursuant to this section shall not represent the voice, picture, or name of members of the board or of the Controller.

SEC. 19. Section 30458.9 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

30458.9. (a) Every taxpayer is entitled to be reimbursed for any reasonable fees and expenses related to a hearing before the board if all of the following conditions are met:

(1) The taxpayer files a claim for the fees and expenses with the board within one year of the date the decision of the board becomes final.

(2) The board, in its sole discretion, finds that the action taken by the board staff was unreasonable.

(3) The board decides that the taxpayer be awarded a specific amount of fees and expenses related to the hearing, in an amount determined by the board in its sole discretion.

(b) To determine whether the board staff has been unreasonable, the board shall consider whether the board staff has established that its position was substantially justified.

(c) The amount of reimbursed fees and expenses shall be limited to the following:

(1) Fees and expenses incurred after the date of filing petitions for redetermination and claims for refund.

(2) If the board finds that the staff was unreasonable with respect to certain issues but reasonable with respect to other issues, the amount of reimbursed fees and expenses shall be limited to those that relate to the issues where the state was unreasonable.

(d) Any proposed award by the board pursuant to subdivision (a) shall be available as a public record for at least 10 days prior to the effective date of the award.



(e) The amendments to this section by the act adding this subdivision shall be operative for claims filed on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 20. Section 30459.2A is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

30459.2A. (a) Except in any case where the board finds collection of the tax to be in jeopardy, if any property has been levied upon, the property or the proceeds from the sale of the property shall be returned to the taxpayer if the board determines any one of the following:

(1) The levy on the property was not in accordance with the law.

(2) The taxpayer has entered into and is in compliance with an installment payment agreement pursuant to Section 30354 to satisfy the tax liability for which the levy was imposed, unless that or another agreement allows for the levy.

(3) The return of the property will facilitate the collection of the tax liability or will be in the best interest of the state and the taxpayer.

(b) Property returned under paragraphs (1) and (2) of subdivision (a) shall be subject to the provisions of Section 30459.4.

SEC. 21. Section 30459.5 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

30459.5. (a) At least 30 days prior to the filing or recording of liens under Chapter 14 (commencing with Section 7150) or Chapter 14.5 (commencing with Section 7220) of Division 7 of Title 1 of the Government Code, the board shall mail to the taxpayer a preliminary notice. The notice shall specify the statutory authority of the board for filing or recording the lien, indicate the earliest date on which the lien may be filed or recorded, and state the remedies available to the taxpayer to prevent the filing or recording of the lien. In the event tax liens are filed for the same liability in multiple counties, only one preliminary notice shall be sent.

(b) The preliminary notice required by this section shall not apply to jeopardy determinations issued under Article 4 (commencing with Section 30241) of Chapter 4.

(c) If the board determines that filing a lien was in error, it shall mail a release to the taxpayer and the entity recording the lien as soon as possible, but no later than seven days, after this determination and receipt of lien recording information. The release shall contain a statement that the lien was filed in error. In the event the erroneous lien is obstructing a lawful transaction, the board shall immediately issue a release of lien to the taxpayer and the entity recording the lien.

(d) When the board releases a lien erroneously filed, notice of that fact shall be mailed to the taxpayer and, upon the request of the taxpayer, a copy of the release shall be mailed to the major credit reporting companies in the county where the lien was filed.

(e) The board may release or subordinate a lien if the board determines that the release or subordination will facilitate the



collection of the tax liability or will be in the best interest of the state and the taxpayer.

SEC. 22. Section 32256.5 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

32256.5. (a) The board, in its discretion, may relieve all or any part of the interest imposed on a person by Sections 32254 and 32291 where the failure to pay tax is due in whole or in part to an unreasonable error or delay by an employee of the board acting in his or her official capacity.

(b) For purposes of this section, an error or delay shall be deemed to have occurred only if no significant aspect of the error or delay is attributable to an act of, or a failure to act by, the taxpayer.

(c) Any person seeking relief under this section shall file with the board a statement under penalty of perjury setting forth the facts on which the claim for relief is based and any other information which the board may require.

(d) The board may grant relief only for interest imposed on tax liabilities that arise during taxable periods commencing on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 23. Section 32389 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

32389. (a) The board may, in its discretion, enter into a written installment payment agreement with a person for the payment of any taxes due, together with interest thereon and any applicable penalties, in installments over an agreed period. With mutual consent, the board and the taxpayer may alter or modify the agreement.

(b) Upon failure of a person to fully comply with the terms of an installment payment agreement with the board, the board may terminate the agreement by mailing a notice of termination to the person. The notice shall include an explanation of the basis for the termination and inform the person of his or her right to request an administrative review of the termination. Fifteen days after the mailing of the notice, the installment payment agreement shall be void, and the total amount of the tax, interest, and penalties due shall be immediately payable.

(c) The board shall establish procedures for an administrative review for persons requesting that review whose installment payment agreements are terminated under subdivision (b). The collection of taxes, interest, and penalties that are the subject of the terminated installment payment agreement may not be stayed during this administrative review process.

(d) Subdivision (b) shall not apply to any case where the board finds collection of the tax to be in jeopardy.

SEC. 24. Section 32432 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

32432. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this part, if the board finds that neither the person liable for payment of tax nor any party related to that person has in any way caused an erroneous refund for which an action for recovery is provided under Section 32431, no interest shall be imposed on the amount of that erroneous refund until 30 days after the date on which the board mails a notice of determination for repayment of the erroneous refund to the person. The act of filing a claim for refund shall not be considered as causing the erroneous refund.

(b) This section shall be operative for any action for recovery under Section 32431 on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 25. Section 32462 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

32462. (a) The board shall develop and implement an education and information program directed at, but not limited to, all of the following groups:

- (1) Taxpayers newly registered with the board.
- (2) Board audit and compliance staff.

(b) The education and information program shall include all of the following:

(1) A program of written communication with newly registered taxpayers explaining in simplified terms their duties and responsibilities.

(2) Participation in seminars and similar programs organized by federal, state, and local agencies.

(3) Revision of taxpayer educational materials currently produced by the board that explain the most common areas of taxpayer nonconformance in simplified terms.

(4) Implementation of a continuing education program for audit and compliance personnel to include the application of new legislation to taxpayer activities and areas of recurrent taxpayer noncompliance or inconsistency of administration.

(c) Electronic media used pursuant to this section shall not represent the voice, picture, or name of members of the board or of the Controller.

SEC. 26. Section 32469 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

32469. (a) Every taxpayer is entitled to be reimbursed for any reasonable fees and expenses related to a hearing before the board if all of the following conditions are met:

(1) The taxpayer files a claim for the fee and expenses with the board within one year of the date the decision of the board becomes final.

(2) The board, in its sole discretion, finds that the action taken by the board staff was unreasonable.



(3) The board decides that the taxpayer be awarded a specific amount of fees and expenses related to the hearing, in an amount determined by the board in its sole discretion.

(b) To determine whether the board staff has been unreasonable, the board shall consider whether the board staff has established that its position was substantially justified.

(c) The amount of reimbursed fees and expenses shall be limited to the following:

(1) Fees and expenses incurred after the date of filing petitions for redetermination and claims for refund.

(2) If the board finds that the staff was unreasonable with respect to certain issues but reasonable with respect to other issues, the amount of reimbursed fees and expenses shall be limited to those that relate to the issues where the staff was unreasonable.

(d) Any proposed award by the board pursuant to subdivision (a) shall be available as a public record for at least 10 days prior to the effective date of the award.

(e) The amendments to this section by the act adding this subdivision shall be operative for claims filed on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 27. Section 32472.1 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

32472.1. (a) Except in any case where the board finds collection of the tax to be in jeopardy, if any property has been levied upon, the property or the proceeds from the sale of the property shall be returned to the taxpayer if the board determines any one of the following:

(1) The levy on the property was not in accordance with the law.

(2) The taxpayer has entered into and is in compliance with an installment payment agreement pursuant to Section 32389 to satisfy the tax liability for which the levy was imposed, unless that or another agreement allows for the levy.

(3) The return of the property will facilitate the collection of the tax liability or will be in the best interest of the state and the taxpayer.

(b) Property returned under paragraphs (1) and (2) of subdivision (a) is subject to the provisions of Section 32474.

SEC. 28. Section 32475 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

32475. (a) At least 30 days prior to the filing or recording of liens under Chapter 14 (commencing with Section 7150) or Chapter 14.5 (commencing with Section 7220) of Division 7 of Title 1 of the Government Code, the board shall mail to the taxpayer a preliminary notice. The notice shall specify the statutory authority of the board for filing or recording the lien, indicate the earliest date on which the lien may be filed or recorded, and state the remedies available to the taxpayer to prevent the filing or recording of the lien. In the event



tax liens are filed for the same liability in multiple counties, only one preliminary notice shall be sent.

(b) The preliminary notice required by this section shall not apply to jeopardy determinations issued under Article 5 (commencing with Section 32311) of Chapter 6.

(c) If the board determines that filing a lien was in error, it shall mail a release to the taxpayer and the entity recording the lien as soon possible, but no later than seven days, after this determination and receipt of lien recording information. The release shall contain a statement that the lien was filed in error. In the event the erroneous lien is obstructing a lawful transaction, the board shall immediately issue a release of lien to the taxpayer and the entity recording the lien.

(d) When the board releases a lien erroneously filed, notice of that fact shall be mailed to the taxpayer and, upon the request of the taxpayer, a copy of the release shall be mailed to the major credit reporting companies in the county where the lien was filed.

(e) The board may release or subordinate a lien if the board determines that the release or subordination will facilitate the collection of the tax liability or will be in the best interest of the state and the taxpayer.

SEC. 29. Section 38455 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

38455. (a) The board, in its discretion, may relieve all or any part of the interest imposed on a person by Sections 38412, 38423, 38432, and 38451 where the failure to pay tax is due in whole or in part to an unreasonable error or delay by an employee of the board acting in his or her official capacity.

(b) For purposes of this section, an error or delay shall be deemed to have occurred only if the person filed a timely report and no significant aspect of the error or delay is attributable to an act of, or a failure to act by, the taxpayer.

(c) Any person seeking relief under this section shall file with the board a statement under penalty of perjury setting forth the facts on which the claim for relief is based and any other information which the board may require.

(d) The board may grant relief only for interest imposed on tax liabilities that arise during taxable periods commencing on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 30. Section 38504 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

38504. (a) The board may, in its discretion, enter into a written installment payment agreement with a person for the payment of any taxes due, together with interest thereon and any applicable penalties, in installments over an agreed period. With mutual consent, the board and the taxpayer may alter or modify the agreement.



(b) Upon failure of a person to fully comply with the terms of an installment payment agreement with the board, the board may terminate the agreement by mailing a notice of termination to the person. The notice shall include an explanation of the basis for the termination and inform the person of his or her right to request an administrative review of the termination. Fifteen days after the mailing of the notice, the installment payment agreement shall be void, and the total amount of the tax, interest, and penalties due shall be immediately payable.

(c) The board shall establish procedures for an administrative review for persons requesting that review whose installment payment agreements are terminated under subdivision (b). The collection of taxes, interest, and penalties that are the subject of the terminated installment payment agreement may not be stayed during this administrative review process.

(d) Subdivision (b) shall not apply to any case where the board finds collection of the tax to be in jeopardy.

SEC. 31. Section 38505 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

38505. Except in any case where the board finds collection of the tax to be in jeopardy, if any property has been levied upon, the property or the proceeds from the sale of the property shall be returned to the taxpayer if the board determines any one of the following:

(a) The levy on the property was not in accordance with the law.

(b) The taxpayer has entered into and is in compliance with an installment payment agreement pursuant to Section 38504 to satisfy the tax liability for which the levy was imposed, unless that or another agreement allows for the levy.

(c) The return of the property will facilitate the collection of the tax liability or will be in the best interest of the state and the taxpayer.

SEC. 32. Section 38621 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

38621. (a) The Controller may recover any refund or part thereof that is erroneously made and any credit or part thereof that is erroneously allowed in an action brought in a court of competent jurisdiction in the County of Sacramento in the name of the people of the State of California.

(b) As an alternative to subdivision (a), the board may recover any refund or part thereof that is erroneously made and any credit or part thereof that is erroneously allowed pursuant to this part. In recovering any erroneous refunds or credits, the board, in its discretion, may issue a deficiency determination in accordance with Article 2 (commencing with Section 38411) or Article 4 (commencing with Section 38431) of Chapter 5. Except in the case of fraud, the determination shall be made within three years from the date of the Controller's warrant or date of credit.



SEC. 32.5. Section 38624 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

38624. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this part, if the board finds that neither the person liable for payment of tax nor any party related to that person has in any way caused an erroneous refund for which an action for recovery is provided under Section 38621, no interest shall be imposed on the amount of that erroneous refund until 30 days after the date on which the board mails a notice of determination for repayment of the erroneous refund to the person. The act of filing a claim for refund shall not be considered as causing the erroneous refund.

(b) This section shall be operative for any action for recovery under Section 38621 on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 33. Section 40103.5 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

40103.5. (a) The board, in its discretion, may relieve all or any part of the interest imposed on a person by Sections 40083 and 40101 where the failure to pay the surcharge is due in whole or in part to an unreasonable error or delay by an employee of the board acting in his or her official capacity.

(b) For purposes of this section, an error or delay shall be deemed to have occurred only if no significant aspect of the error or delay is attributable to an act of, or a failure to act by, the person liable for the surcharge.

(c) Any person seeking relief under this section shall file with the board a statement under penalty of perjury setting forth the facts on which the claim for relief is based and any other information which the board may require.

(d) The board may grant relief only for interest imposed on surcharge liabilities that arise during taxable periods commencing on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 34. Section 40167 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

40167. (a) The board may, in its discretion, enter into a written installment payment agreement with a person for the payment of any surcharges due, together with interest thereon and any applicable penalties, in installments over an agreed period. With mutual consent, the board and the person liable for the surcharge may alter or modify the agreement.

(b) Upon failure of a person to fully comply with the terms of an installment payment agreement with the board, the board may terminate the agreement by mailing a notice of termination to the person. The notice shall include an explanation of the basis for the termination and inform the person of his or her right to request an administrative review of the termination. Fifteen days after the mailing of the notice, the installment payment agreement shall be



void, and the total amount of the surcharge, interest, and penalties due shall be immediately payable.

(c) The board shall establish procedures for an administrative review for persons requesting that review whose installment payment agreements are terminated under subdivision (b). The collection of surcharge, interest, and penalties that are the subject of the terminated installment payment agreement may not be stayed during this administrative review process.

SEC. 35. Section 40202 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

40202. (a) The board shall develop and implement an education and information program directed at, but not limited to, all of the following groups:

- (1) Taxpayers newly registered with the board.
- (2) Board audit and compliance staff.

(b) The education and information program shall include all of the following:

(1) A program of written communication with newly registered taxpayers explaining in simplified terms their duties and responsibilities.

(2) Participation in seminars and similar programs organized by federal, state, and local agencies.

(3) Revision of taxpayer education materials currently produced by the board that explain the most common areas of taxpayer nonconformance in simplified terms.

(4) Implementation of a continuing education program for audit and compliance personnel to include the application of new legislation to taxpayer activities and areas of recurrent taxpayer noncompliance or inconsistency of administration.

(c) Electronic media used pursuant to this section shall not represent the voice, picture, or name of members of the board or of the Controller.

SEC. 36. Section 40209 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

40209. (a) Every taxpayer is entitled to be reimbursed for any reasonable fees and expenses related to a hearing before the board if all of the following conditions are met:

(1) The taxpayer files a claim for the fee and expenses with the board within one year of the date the decision of the board becomes final.

(2) The board, in its sole discretion, finds that the action taken by the board staff was unreasonable.

(3) The board decides that the taxpayer be awarded a specific amount of fees and expenses related to the hearing, in an amount determined by the board in its sole discretion.



(b) To determine whether the board staff has been unreasonable, the board shall consider whether the board staff has established that its position was substantially justified.

(c) The amount of reimbursed fees and expenses shall be limited to the following:

(1) Fees and expenses incurred after the date of filing petitions for redetermination and claims for refund.

(2) If the board finds that the staff was unreasonable with respect to certain issues but reasonable with respect to other issues, the amount of reimbursed fees and expenses shall be limited to those that relate to the issues where the staff was unreasonable.

(d) Any proposed award by the board pursuant to subdivision (a) shall be available as a public record for at least 10 days prior to the effective date of the award.

(e) The amendments to this section by the act adding this subdivision shall be operative for claims filed on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 37. Section 40212.5 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

40212.5. (a) Except in any case where the board finds collection of the tax to be in jeopardy, if any property has been levied upon, the property or the proceeds from the sale of the property shall be returned to the taxpayer if the board determines any one of the following:

(1) The levy on the property was not in accordance with the law.

(2) The taxpayer has entered into and is in compliance with an installment payment agreement pursuant to Section 40167 to satisfy the tax liability for which the levy was imposed, unless that or another agreement allows for the levy.

(3) The return of the property will facilitate the collection of the tax liability or will be in the best interest of the state and the taxpayer.

(b) Property returned under paragraphs (1) and (2) of subdivision (a) is subject to the provisions of Section 40214.

SEC. 38. Section 40215 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

40215. (a) At least 30 days prior to the filing or recording of liens under Chapter 14 (commencing with Section 7150) or Chapter 14.5 (commencing with Section 7220) of Division 7 of Title 1 of the Government Code, the board shall mail to the taxpayer a preliminary notice. The notice shall specify the statutory authority of the board for filing or recording the lien, indicate the earliest date on which the lien may be filed or recorded, and state the remedies available to the taxpayer to prevent the filing or recording of the lien. In the event tax liens are filed for the same liability in multiple counties, only one preliminary notice shall be sent.

(b) If the board determines that filing a lien was in error, it shall mail a release to the taxpayer and the entity recording the lien as soon



as possible, but no later than seven days, after this determination and receipt of lien recording information. The release shall contain a statement that the lien was filed in error. In the event the erroneous lien is obstructing a lawful transaction, the board shall immediately issue a release of lien to the taxpayer and the entity recording the lien.

(c) When the board releases a lien erroneously filed, notice of that fact shall be mailed to the taxpayer and, upon the request of the taxpayer, a copy of the release shall be mailed to the major credit reporting companies in the county where the lien was filed.

(d) The board may release or subordinate a lien if the board determines that the release or subordination will facilitate the collection of the tax liability or will be in the best interest of the state and the taxpayer.

SEC. 39. Section 41097.5 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

41097.5. (a) The board, in its discretion, may relieve all or any part of the interest imposed on a person by Sections 41082 and 41095 where the failure to pay tax is due in whole or in part to an unreasonable error or delay by an employee of the board acting in his or her official capacity.

(b) For purposes of this section, an error or delay shall be deemed to have occurred only if no significant aspect of the error or delay is attributable to an act of, or a failure to act by, the taxpayer.

(c) Any person seeking relief under this section shall file with the board a statement under penalty of perjury setting forth the facts on which the claim for relief is based and any other information which the board may require.

(d) The board may grant relief only for interest imposed on tax liabilities that arise during taxable periods commencing on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 40. Section 41127.6 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

41127.6. (a) The board may, in its discretion, enter into a written installment payment agreement with a person for the payment of any taxes due, together with interest thereon and any applicable penalties, in installments over an agreed period. With mutual consent, the board and the taxpayer may alter or modify the agreement.

(b) Upon failure of a person to fully comply with the terms of an installment payment agreement with the board, the board may terminate the agreement by mailing a notice of termination to the person. The notice shall include an explanation of the basis for the termination and inform the person of his or her right to request an administrative review of the termination. Fifteen days after the mailing of the notice, the installment payment agreement shall be void, and the total amount of the tax, interest, and penalties due shall be immediately payable.



(c) The board shall establish procedures for an administrative review for persons requesting that review whose installment payment agreements are terminated under subdivision (b). The collection of taxes, interest, and penalties that are the subject of the terminated installment payment agreement may not be stayed during this administrative review process.

(d) Subdivision (b) shall not apply to any case where the board finds collection of the tax to be in jeopardy.

SEC. 41. Section 41162 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

41162. (a) The board shall develop and implement an education and information program directed at, but not limited to, all of the following groups:

- (1) Taxpayers newly registered with the board.
- (2) Board audit and compliance staff.

(b) The education and information program shall include all of the following:

(1) A program of written communication with newly registered taxpayers explaining in simplified terms their duties and responsibilities.

(2) Participation in seminars and similar programs organized by federal, state, and local agencies.

(3) Revision of taxpayer educational materials currently produced by the board that explain the most common areas of taxpayer nonconformance in simplified terms.

(4) Implementation of a continuing education program for audit and compliance personnel to include the application of new legislation to taxpayer activities and areas of recurrent taxpayer noncompliance or inconsistency of administration.

(c) Electronic media used pursuant to this section shall not represent the voice, picture, or name of members of the board or the Controller.

SEC. 42. Section 41169 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

41169. (a) Every taxpayer is entitled to be reimbursed for any reasonable fees and expenses related to a hearing before the board if all of the following conditions are met:

(1) The taxpayer files a claim for the fee and expenses with the board within one year of the date the decision of the board becomes final.

(2) The board, in its sole discretion, finds that the action taken by the board staff was unreasonable.

(3) The board decides that the taxpayer be awarded a specific amount of fees and expenses related to the hearing, in an amount determined by the board in its sole discretion.



(b) To determine whether the board staff has been unreasonable, the board shall consider whether the board staff has established that its position was substantially justified.

(c) The amount of reimbursed fees and expenses shall be limited to the following:

(1) Fees and expenses incurred after the date of filing petitions for redetermination and claims for refund.

(2) If the board finds that the staff was unreasonable with respect to certain issues but reasonable with respect to other issues, the amount of reimbursed fees and expenses shall be limited to those that relate to the issues where the staff was unreasonable.

(d) Any proposed award by the board pursuant to subdivision (a) shall be available as a public record for at least 10 days prior to the effective date of the award.

(e) The amendments to this section by the act adding this subdivision shall be operative for claims filed on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 43. Section 41172.5 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

41172.5. (a) If any property has been levied upon, the property or the proceeds from the sale of the property shall be returned to the taxpayer if the board determines any one of the following:

(1) The levy on the property was not in accordance with the law.

(2) The taxpayer has entered into and is in compliance with an installment payment agreement pursuant to Section 41127.5 to satisfy the tax liability for which the levy was imposed, unless that or another agreement allows for the levy.

(3) The return of the property will facilitate the collection of the tax liability or will be in the best interest of the state and the taxpayer.

(b) Property returned under paragraphs (1) and (2) of subdivision (a) is subject to the provisions of Section 41174.

SEC. 44. Section 41175 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

41175. (a) At least 30 days prior to the filing or recording of liens under Chapter 14 (commencing with Section 7150) or Chapter 14.5 (commencing with Section 7220) of Division 7 of Title 1 of the Government Code, the board shall mail to the taxpayer a preliminary notice. The notice shall specify the statutory authority of the board for filing or recording the lien, indicate the earliest date on which the lien may be filed or recorded, and state the remedies available to the taxpayer to prevent the filing or recording of the lien. In the event tax liens are filed for the same liability in multiple counties, only one preliminary notice shall be sent.

(b) If the board determines that filing a lien was in error, it shall mail a release to the taxpayer and the entity recording the lien as soon as possible, but no later than seven days, after this determination and receipt of lien recording information. The release shall contain a



statement that the lien was filed in error. In the event the erroneous lien is obstructing a lawful transaction, the board shall immediately issue a release of lien to the taxpayer and the entity recording the lien.

(c) When the board releases a lien erroneously filed, notice of that fact shall be mailed to the taxpayer and, upon the request of the taxpayer, a copy of the release shall be mailed to the major credit reporting companies in the county where the lien was filed.

(d) The board may release or subordinate a lien if the board determines that the release or subordination will facilitate the collection of the tax liability or will be in the best interest of the state and the taxpayer.

SEC. 45. Section 43158.5 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

43158.5. (a) The board, in its discretion, may relieve all or any part of the interest imposed on a person by Section 43156 and may relieve all or any part of the interest imposed on a person by Section 43201 where the deficiency determination is made because no return was filed or payment of the fee was not made timely, where the failure to pay fees is due in whole or in part to an unreasonable error or delay by an employee of the board acting in his or her official capacity.

(b) For purposes of this section, an error or delay shall be deemed to have occurred only if no significant aspect of the error or delay is attributable to an act of, or a failure to act by, the taxpayer.

(c) Any person seeking relief under this section shall file with the board a statement under penalty of perjury setting forth the facts on which the claim for relief is based and any other information which the board may require.

(d) The board may grant relief only for interest imposed on tax liabilities that arise during taxable periods commencing on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 46. Section 43448 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

43448. (a) The board may, in its discretion, enter into a written installment payment agreement with a person for the payment of any taxes due, together with interest thereon and any applicable penalties, in installments over an agreed period. With mutual consent, the board and the taxpayer may alter or modify the agreement.

(b) Upon failure of a person to fully comply with the terms of an installment payment agreement with the board, the board may terminate the agreement by mailing a notice of termination to the person. The notice shall include an explanation of the basis for the termination and inform the person of his or her right to request an administrative review of the termination. Fifteen days after the mailing of the notice, the installment payment agreement shall be



void, and the total amount of the tax, interest, and penalties due shall be immediately payable.

(c) The board shall establish procedures for an administrative review for persons requesting that review whose installment payment agreements are terminated under subdivision (b). The collection of taxes, interest, and penalties that are the subject of the terminated installment payment agreement may not be stayed during this administrative review process.

(d) Subdivision (b) shall not apply to any case where the board finds collection of the tax to be in jeopardy.

SEC. 47. Section 43484 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

43484. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this part, if the board finds that neither the person liable for payment of tax nor any party related to that person has in any way caused an erroneous refund for which an action for recovery is provided under Section 43481, no interest shall be imposed on the amount of that erroneous refund until 30 days after the date on which the board mails a notice of determination for repayment of the erroneous refund to the person. The act of filing a claim for refund shall not be considered as causing the erroneous refund.

(b) This section shall be operative for any action for recovery under Section 43481 on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 48. Section 43513 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

43513. (a) The board shall develop and implement an education and information program directed at, but not limited to, all of the following groups:

(1) Taxpayers newly registered with the board.

(2) Board audit and compliance staff.

(b) The education and information program shall include all of the following:

(1) A program of written communication with newly registered taxpayers explaining in simplified terms their duties and responsibilities.

(2) Participation in seminars and similar programs organized by federal, state, and local agencies.

(3) Revision of taxpayer educational materials currently produced by the board that explain the most common areas of taxpayer nonconformance in simplified terms.

(4) Implementation of a continuing education program for audit and compliance personnel to include the application of new legislation to taxpayer activities and areas of recurrent taxpayer noncompliance or inconsistency of administration.

(c) Electronic media used pursuant to this section shall not represent the voice, picture, or name of members of the board or of the Controller.



SEC. 49. Section 43520 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

43520. (a) Every taxpayer is entitled to be reimbursed for any reasonable fees and expenses related to a hearing before the board if all of the following conditions are met:

(1) The taxpayer files a claim for the fees and expenses with the board within one year of the date the decision of the board becomes final.

(2) The board, in its sole discretion, finds that the action taken by the board staff was unreasonable.

(3) The board decides that the taxpayer be awarded a specific amount of fees and expenses related to the hearing, in an amount determined by the board in its sole discretion.

(b) To determine whether the board staff has been unreasonable, the board shall consider whether the board staff has established that its position was substantially justified.

(c) The amount of reimbursed fees and expenses shall be limited to the following:

(1) Fees and expenses incurred after the date of filing petitions for redetermination and claims for refund.

(2) If the board finds that the staff was unreasonable with respect to certain issues but reasonable with respect to other issues, the amount of reimbursed fees and expenses shall be limited to those that relate to the issues where the staff was unreasonable.

(d) Any proposed award by the board pursuant to subdivision (a) shall be available as a public record for at least 10 days prior to the effective date of the award.

(e) The amendments to this section by the act adding this subdivision shall be operative for claims filed on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 50. Section 43523.5 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

43523.5. (a) Except in any case where the board finds collection of the tax to be in jeopardy, if any property has been levied upon, the property or the proceeds from the sale of the property shall be returned to the taxpayer if the board determines any one of the following:

(1) The levy on the property was not in accordance with the law.

(2) The taxpayer has entered into and is in compliance with an installment payment agreement pursuant to Section 43448 to satisfy the tax liability for which the levy was imposed, unless that or another agreement allows for the levy.

(3) The return of the property will facilitate the collection of the tax liability or will be in the best interest of the state and the taxpayer.

(b) Property returned under paragraphs (1) and (2) of subdivision (a) is subject to the provisions of Section 43525.



SEC. 51. Section 43526 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

43526. (a) At least 30 days prior to the filing or recording of liens under Chapter 14 (commencing with Section 7150) or Chapter 14.5 (commencing with Section 7220) of Division 7 of Title 1 of the Government Code, the board shall mail to the taxpayer a preliminary notice. The notice shall specify the statutory authority of the board for filing or recording the lien, indicate the earliest date on which the lien may be filed or recorded, and state the remedies available to the taxpayer to prevent the filing or recording of the lien. In the event tax liens are filed for the same liability in multiple counties, only one preliminary notice shall be sent.

(b) The preliminary notice required by this section shall not apply to jeopardy determinations issued under Article 5 (commencing with Section 43350) of Chapter 3.

(c) If the board determines that filing a lien was in error, it shall mail a release to the taxpayer and the entity recording the lien as soon as possible, but no later than seven days, after this determination and receipt of lien recording information. The release shall contain a statement that the lien was filed in error. In the event the erroneous lien is obstructing a lawful transaction, the board shall immediately issue a release of lien to the taxpayer and the entity recording the lien.

(d) When the board releases a lien erroneously filed, notice of that fact shall be mailed to the taxpayer and, upon the request of the taxpayer, a copy of the release shall be mailed to the major credit reporting companies in the county where the lien was filed.

(e) The board may release or subordinate a lien if the board determines that the release or subordination will facilitate the collection of the tax liability or will be in the best interest of the state and the taxpayer.

SEC. 52. Section 45156.5 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

45156.5. (a) The board, in its discretion, may relieve all or any part of the interest imposed on a person by Section 45154 and may relieve all or any part of the interest imposed on a person by Section 45201 where the deficiency determination is made because no return was filed or payment of the fee was not made timely, or where the failure to pay fees is due in whole or in part to an unreasonable error or delay by an employee of the board acting in his or her official capacity.

(b) For purposes of this section, an error or delay shall be deemed to have occurred only if no significant aspect of the error or delay is attributable to an act of, or a failure to act by, the fee payer.

(c) Any person seeking relief under this section shall file with the board a statement under penalty of perjury setting forth the facts on which the claim for relief is based and any other information which the board may require.



(d) The board may grant relief only for interest imposed on fee liabilities that arise during taxable periods commencing on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 53. Section 45609 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

45609. (a) The board may, in its discretion, enter into a written installment payment agreement with a person for the payment of any fees due, together with interest thereon and any applicable penalties, in installments over an agreed period. With mutual consent, the board and the fee payer may alter or modify the agreement.

(b) Upon failure of a person to fully comply with the terms of an installment payment agreement with the board, the board may terminate the agreement by mailing a notice of termination to the person. The notice shall include an explanation of the basis for the termination and inform the person of his or her right to request an administrative review of the termination. Fifteen days after the mailing of the notice, the installment payment agreement shall be void, and the total amount of the fee, interest, and penalties due shall be immediately payable.

(c) The board shall establish procedures for an administrative review for persons requesting that review whose installment payment agreements are terminated under subdivision (b). The collection of fees, interest, and penalties that are the subject of the terminated installment payment agreement may not be stayed during this administrative review process.

(d) Subdivision (b) shall not apply to any case where the board finds collection of the fee to be in jeopardy.

SEC. 54. Section 45752 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

45752. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this part, if the board finds that neither the person liable for payment of fee nor any party related to that person has in any way caused an erroneous refund for which an action for recovery is provided under Section 45751, no interest shall be imposed on the amount of that erroneous refund until 30 days after the date on which the board mails a notice of determination for repayment of the erroneous refund to the person. The act of filing a claim for refund shall not be considered as causing the erroneous refund.

(b) This section shall be operative for any action for recovery under Section 45751 on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 55. Section 45858 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

45858. (a) The board shall develop and implement an education and information program directed at, but not limited to, all of the following groups:

- (1) Fee payers newly registered with the board.



(2) Board audit and compliance staff.

(b) The education and information program shall include all of the following:

(1) A program of written communication with newly registered fee payers explaining in simplified terms their duties and responsibilities.

(2) Participation in seminars and similar programs organized by federal, state, and local agencies.

(3) Revision of fee payer educational materials currently produced by the board that explain the most common areas of fee payer nonconformance in simplified terms.

(4) Implementation of a continuing education program for audit and compliance personnel to include the application of new legislation to fee payer activities and areas of recurrent fee payer noncompliance or inconsistency of administration.

(c) Electronic media used pursuant to this section shall not represent the voice, picture, or name of members of the board or of the Controller.

SEC. 56. Section 45865 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

45865. (a) Every fee payer is entitled to be reimbursed for any reasonable fees and expenses related to a hearing before the board if all of the following conditions are met:

(1) The fee payer files a claim for the fee and expenses with the board within one year of the date the decision of the board becomes final.

(2) The board, in its sole discretion, finds that the action taken by the board staff was unreasonable.

(3) The board decides that the fee payer be awarded a specific amount of fees and expenses related to the hearing, in an amount determined by the board in its sole discretion.

(b) To determine whether the board staff has been unreasonable, the board shall consider whether the board staff has established that its position was substantially justified.

(c) The amount of reimbursed fees and expenses shall be limited to the following:

(1) Fees and expenses incurred after the date of filing petitions for redetermination and claims for refund.

(2) If the board finds that the staff was unreasonable with respect to certain issues but reasonable with respect to other issues, the amount of reimbursed fees and expenses shall be limited to those that relate to the issues where the staff was unreasonable.

(d) Any proposed award by the board pursuant to subdivision (a) shall be available as a public record for at least 10 days prior to the effective date of the award.



(e) The amendments to this section by the act adding this subdivision shall be operative for claims filed on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 57. Section 45868.5 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

45868.5. (a) Except in any case where the board finds collection of the tax to be in jeopardy, if any property has been levied upon, the property or the proceeds from the sale of the property shall be returned to the taxpayer if the board determines any one of the following:

(1) The levy on the property was not in accordance with the law.

(2) The taxpayer has entered into and is in compliance with an installment payment agreement pursuant to Section 45609 to satisfy the tax liability for which the levy was imposed, unless that or another agreement allows for the levy.

(3) The return of the property will facilitate the collection of the tax liability or will be in the best interest of the state and the taxpayer.

(b) Property returned under paragraphs (1) and (2) of subdivision (a) is subject to the provisions of Section 45870.

SEC. 58. Section 45871 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

45871. (a) At least 30 days prior to the filing or recording of liens under Chapter 14 (commencing with Section 7150) or Chapter 14.5 (commencing with Section 7220) of Division 7 of Title 1 of the Government Code, the board shall mail to the fee payer a preliminary notice. The notice shall specify the statutory authority of the board for filing or recording the lien, indicate the earliest date on which the lien may be filed or recorded, and state the remedies available to the fee payer to prevent the filing or recording of the lien. In the event fee liens are filed for the same liability in multiple counties, only one preliminary notice shall be sent.

(b) The preliminary notice required by this section shall not be required with respect to jeopardy determinations issued under Article 4 (commencing with Section 45351) of Chapter 3.

(c) If the board determines that the filing of a lien was in error, it shall mail a release to the fee payer and the entity recording the lien as soon as possible, but no later than seven days, after this determination and receipt of lien recording information. The release shall contain a statement that the lien was filed in error. In the event the erroneous lien is obstructing a lawful transaction, the board shall immediately issue a release of lien to the fee payer and the entity recording the lien.

(d) When the board releases a lien that has been erroneously filed, notice of that release shall be mailed to the fee payer and, upon the request of the fee payer, a copy of the release shall be mailed to the major credit reporting companies in the county where the lien was filed.



(e) The board may release or subordinate a lien if the board determines that the release or subordination will facilitate the collection of the fee liability or will be in the best interest of the state and the fee payer.

SEC. 59. Section 46157.5 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

46157.5. (a) The board, in its discretion, may relieve all or any part of the interest imposed on a person by Sections 46155 and 46253 where the failure to pay fees is due in whole or in part to an unreasonable error or delay by an employee of the board acting in his or her official capacity.

(b) For purposes of this section, an error or delay shall be deemed to have occurred only if no significant aspect of the error or delay is attributable to an act of, or a failure to act by, the fee payer.

(c) Any person seeking relief under this section shall file with the board a statement under penalty of perjury setting forth the facts on which the claim for relief is based and any other information which the board may require.

(d) The board may grant relief only for interest imposed on fee liabilities that arise during fee periods commencing on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 60. Section 46464 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

46464. (a) The board may, in its discretion, enter into a written installment payment agreement with a person for the payment of any fees due, together with interest thereon and any applicable penalties, in installments over an agreed period. With mutual consent, the board and the fee payer may alter or modify the agreement.

(b) Upon failure of a person to fully comply with the terms of an installment payment agreement with the board, the board may terminate the agreement by mailing a notice of termination to the person. The notice shall include an explanation of the basis for the termination and inform the person of his or her right to request an administrative review of the termination. Fifteen days after the mailing of the notice, the installment payment agreement shall be void, and the total amount of the fees, interest, and penalties due shall be immediately payable.

(c) The board shall establish procedures for an administrative review for persons requesting that review whose installment payment agreements are terminated under subdivision (b). The collection of fees, interest, and penalties that are the subject of the terminated installment payment agreement may not be stayed during this administrative review process.

(d) Subdivision (b) shall not apply to any case where the board finds collection of the fee to be in jeopardy.



SEC. 61. Section 46544 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

46544. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this part, if the board finds that neither the person liable for payment of fees nor any party related to that person has in any way caused an erroneous refund for which an action for recovery is provided under Section 46541, no interest shall be imposed on the amount of that erroneous refund until 30 days after the date on which the board mails a notice of determination for repayment of the erroneous refund to the person. The act of filing a claim for refund shall not be considered as causing the erroneous refund.

(b) This section shall be operative for any action for recovery under Section 46541 on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 62. Section 46613 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

46613. (a) The board shall develop and implement an education and information program directed at, but not limited to, all of the following groups:

- (1) Fee payers newly registered with the board.
- (2) Board audit and compliance staff.

(b) The education and information program shall include all of the following:

(1) A program of written communication with newly registered fee payers explaining in simplified terms their duties and responsibilities.

(2) Participation in seminars and similar programs organized by federal, state, and local agencies.

(3) Revision of fee payer educational materials currently produced by the board that explain the most common areas of fee payer nonconformance in simplified terms.

(4) Implementation of a continuing education program for audit and compliance personnel to include the application of new legislation to fee payer activities and areas of recurrent fee payer noncompliance or inconsistency of administration.

(c) Electronic media used pursuant to this section shall not represent the voice, picture, or name of members of the board or of the Controller.

SEC. 63. Section 46620 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

46620. (a) Every fee payer is entitled to be reimbursed for any reasonable fees and expenses related to a hearing before the board if all of the following conditions are met:

(1) The fee payer files a claim for the fee and expenses with the board within one year of the date the decision of the board becomes final.

(2) The board, in its sole discretion, finds that the action taken by the board staff was unreasonable.



(3) The board decides that the fee payer be awarded a specific amount of fees and expenses related to the hearing, in an amount determined by the board in its sole discretion.

(b) To determine whether the board staff has been unreasonable, the board shall consider whether the board staff has established that its position was substantially justified.

(c) The amount of reimbursed fees and expenses shall be limited to the following:

(1) Fees and expenses incurred after the date of filing petitions for redetermination and claims for refund.

(2) If the board finds that the staff was unreasonable with respect to certain issues but reasonable with respect to other issues, the amount of reimbursed fees and expenses shall be limited to those that relate to the issues where the staff was unreasonable.

(d) Any proposed award by the board pursuant to this section shall be available as a public record for at least 10 days prior to the effective date of the award.

(e) The amendments to this section by the act adding this subdivision shall be operative for claims filed on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 64. Section 46623.5 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

46623.5. (a) Except in any case where the board finds collection of the fee to be in jeopardy, if any property has been levied upon, the property or the proceeds from the sale of the property shall be returned to the fee payer if the board determines any one of the following:

(1) The levy on the property was not in accordance with the law.

(2) The fee payer has entered into and is in compliance with an installment payment agreement pursuant to Section 46464 to satisfy the fee liability for which the levy was imposed, unless that or another agreement allows for the levy.

(3) The return of the property will facilitate the collection of the fee liability or will be in the best interest of the state and the fee payer.

(b) Property returned under paragraphs (1) and (2) of subdivision (a) is subject to the provisions of Section 46625.

SEC. 65. Section 46626 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

46626. (a) At least 30 days prior to the filing or recording of a lien pursuant to either Chapter 14 (commencing with Section 7150) or Chapter 14.5 (commencing with Section 7220) of Division 7 of Title 1 of the Government Code, the board shall mail to the fee payer a preliminary notice of lien. The notice shall specify the board's statutory authority for filing or recording the lien, the earliest date on which the lien may be filed or recorded, and the remedies available to the fee payer to prevent the filing or recording of the lien.



In the event liens are filed for the same liability in multiple counties, only one preliminary notice shall be sent.

(b) The preliminary notice required by this section shall not apply to jeopardy determinations issued under Article 4 (commencing with Section 46301) of Chapter 3.

(c) If the board determines that a lien was recorded in error, it shall mail a release to the fee payer and the entity that recorded the lien as soon as possible, but in no event later than seven days after this determination and the receipt of lien recording information. The release shall contain a statement that the lien was filed in error. In the event the erroneously recorded lien is obstructing a lawful transaction, the board shall immediately issue a release of lien to the fee payer and the entity that recorded the lien.

(d) Upon issuing a release pursuant to subdivision (c), notice of that release shall be mailed to the taxpayer. Upon the request of the taxpayer, a copy of the release shall be mailed to the major credit reporting companies in the county where the lien was recorded.

(e) The board may release or subordinate a lien if the board determines that the release or subordination will facilitate the collection of the fee liability or will be in the best interest of the state and the fee payer.

SEC. 66. Section 50112.2 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

50112.2. (a) If the board finds that a person's failure to make a timely report or payment is due to reasonable cause and circumstances beyond the person's control, and occurred notwithstanding the exercise of ordinary care and the absence of willful neglect, the person may be relieved of the penalty provided by Sections 50112 and 50119.

(b) Any person seeking to be relieved of the penalty shall file with the board a statement, under penalty of perjury, setting forth the facts upon which he or she bases his or her claim for relief.

SEC. 67. Section 50112.4 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

50112.4. (a) The board, in its discretion, may relieve all or any part of the interest imposed on a person by Section 50112.1 and may relieve all or any part of the interest imposed on a person by Section 50113 when the deficiency determination is made because no return was filed or payment of the fee was not made timely, or where the failure to pay fees is due in whole or in part to an unreasonable error or delay by an employee of the board acting in his or her official capacity.

(b) For purposes of this section, an error or delay shall be deemed to have occurred only if no significant aspect of the error or delay is attributable to an act of, or a failure to act by, the fee payer.

(c) Any person seeking relief under this section shall file with the board a statement under penalty of perjury setting forth the facts on



which the claim for relief is based and any other information which the board may require.

(d) The board may grant relief only for interest imposed on fee liabilities that arise during taxable periods commencing on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 68. Section 50138.6 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

50138.6. (a) The board may, in its discretion, enter into a written installment payment agreement with a person for the payment of any fees due, together with interest thereon and any applicable penalties, in installments over an agreed period. With mutual consent, the board and the fee payer may alter or modify the agreement.

(b) Upon failure of a person to fully comply with the terms of an installment payment agreement with the board, the board may terminate the agreement by mailing a notice of termination to the person. The notice shall include an explanation of the basis for the termination and inform the person of his or her right to request an administrative review of the termination. Fifteen days after the mailing of the notice, the installment payment agreement shall be void, and the total amount of the fees, interest, and penalties due shall be immediately payable.

(c) The board shall establish procedures for an administrative review for persons requesting that review whose installment payment agreements are terminated under subdivision (b). The collection of fees, interest, and penalties that are the subject of the terminated installment payment agreement may not be stayed during this administrative review process.

(d) Subdivision (b) shall not apply to any case where the board finds collection of the fee to be in jeopardy.

SEC. 69. Section 50150.5 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

50150.5. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this part, if the board finds that neither the person liable for payment of fees nor any party related to that person has in any way caused an erroneous refund for which an action for recovery is provided under Section 50150, no interest shall be imposed on the amount of that erroneous refund until 30 days after the date on which the board mails a notice of determination for repayment of the erroneous refund to the person. The act of filing a claim for refund shall not be considered as causing the erroneous refund.

(b) This section shall be operative for any action for recovery under Section 50150 on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 70. Section 50156.2 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:



50156.2. (a) The board shall develop and implement an education and information program directed at, but not limited to, all of the following groups:

- (1) Fee payers newly registered with the board.
- (2) Board audit and compliance staff.

(b) The education and information program shall include all of the following:

(1) A program of written communication with newly registered fee payers explaining in simplified terms their duties and responsibilities.

(2) Participation in seminars and similar programs organized by federal, state, and local agencies.

(3) Revision of fee payer educational materials currently produced by the board that explain the most common areas of fee payer nonconformance in simplified terms.

(4) Implementation of a continuing education program for audit and compliance personnel to include the application of new legislation to fee payer activities, and areas of recurrent fee payer noncompliance or inconsistency of administration.

(c) Electronic media used to comply with this section shall not represent the voice, picture, or name of members of the board or the Controller.

SEC. 71. Section 50156.9 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

50156.9. (a) Every fee payer is entitled to be reimbursed for any reasonable fees and expenses related to a hearing before the board if all of the following conditions are met:

(1) The fee payer files a claim for the fee and expenses with the board within one year of the date the decision of the board becomes final.

(2) The board, in its sole discretion, finds that the action taken by the board staff was unreasonable.

(3) The board decides that the fee payer be awarded a specific amount of fees and expenses related to the hearing, in an amount determined by the board in its sole discretion.

(b) To determine whether the board staff has been unreasonable, the board shall consider whether the board staff has established that its position was substantially justified.

(c) The amount of reimbursed fees and expenses shall be limited to the following:

(1) Fees and expenses incurred after the date of filing petitions for redetermination and claims for refund.

(2) If the board finds that the staff was unreasonable with respect to certain issues but reasonable with respect to other issues, the amount of reimbursed fees and expenses shall be limited to those that relate to the issues where the staff was unreasonable.



(d) Any proposed award by the board pursuant to subdivision (a) shall be available as a public record for at least 10 days prior to the effective date of the award.

(e) The amendments to this section by the act adding this subdivision shall be operative for claims filed on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 72. Section 50156.15 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

50156.15. (a) At least 30 days prior to the filing or recording of liens under Chapter 14 (commencing with Section 7150) or Chapter 14.5 (commencing with Section 7220) of Division 7 of Title 1 of the Government Code, the board shall mail to the fee payer a preliminary notice. The notice shall specify the statutory authority of the board for filing or recording the lien, indicate the earliest date on which the lien may be filed or recorded, and state the remedies available to the fee payer to prevent the filing or recording of the lien. In the event fee liens are filed for the same liability in multiple counties, only one preliminary notice shall be sent.

(b) The preliminary notice required by this section shall not be required with respect to jeopardy determinations issued under Article 4 (commencing with Section 50120.1) of Chapter 3.

(c) If the board determines that the filing of a lien was in error, it shall mail a release to the fee payer and the entity recording the lien as soon as possible, but no later than seven days, after this determination and receipt of lien recording information. The release shall contain a statement that the lien was filed in error. In the event the erroneous lien is obstructing a lawful transaction, the board shall immediately issue a release of lien to the fee payer and the entity recording the lien.

(d) When the board releases a lien that has been erroneously filed, notice of that release shall be mailed to the fee payer and, upon the request of the fee payer, a copy of the release shall be mailed to the major credit reporting companies in the county where the lien was filed.

(e) The board may release or subordinate a lien if the board determines that the release or subordination will facilitate the collection of the fee liability or will be in the best interest of the state and the fee payer.

SEC. 73. Section 50156.17 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

50156.17. (a) Except in any case where the board finds collection of the fee to be in jeopardy, if any property has been levied upon, the property or the proceeds from the sale of the property shall be returned to the fee payer if the board determines any one of the following:

- (1) The levy on the property was not in accordance with the law.



(2) The fee payer has entered into and is in compliance with an installment payment agreement pursuant to Section 50138.6 to satisfy the fee liability for which the levy was imposed, unless that or another agreement allows for the levy.

(3) The return of the property will facilitate the collection of the fee liability or will be in the best interest of the state and the fee payer.

(b) Property returned under paragraphs (1) and (2) of subdivision (a) is subject to the provisions of Section 50156.14.

SEC. 74. Section 55046 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

55046. (a) The board, in its discretion, may relieve all or any part of the interest imposed on a person by Section 55043 and may relieve all or any part of the interest imposed on a person by Section 55061 when the deficiency determination is made because no return was filed or payment of the fee was not made timely, or where the failure to pay fees is due in whole or in part to an unreasonable error or delay by an employee of the board acting in his or her official capacity.

(b) For purposes of this section, an error or delay shall be deemed to have occurred only if no significant aspect of the error or delay is attributable to an act of, or a failure to act by, the fee payer.

(c) Any person seeking relief under this section shall file with the board a statement under penalty of perjury setting forth the facts on which the claim for relief is based and any other information which the board may require.

(d) The board may grant relief only for interest imposed on fee liabilities that arise during taxable periods commencing on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 75. Section 55209 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

55209. (a) The board may, in its discretion, enter into a written installment payment agreement with a person for the payment of any fees due, together with interest thereon and any applicable penalties, in installments over an agreed period. With mutual consent, the board and the fee payer may alter or modify the agreement.

(b) Upon failure of a person to fully comply with the terms of an installment payment agreement with the board, the board may terminate the agreement by mailing a notice of termination to the person. The notice shall include an explanation of the basis for the termination and inform the person of his or her right to request an administrative review of the termination. Fifteen days after the mailing of the notice, the installment payment agreement shall be void, and the total amount of the fees, interest, and penalties due shall be immediately payable.

(c) The board shall establish procedures for an administrative review for persons requesting that review whose installment payment agreements are terminated under subdivision (b). The



collection of fees, interest, and penalties that are the subject of the terminated installment payment agreement may not be stayed during this administrative review process.

(d) Subdivision (b) shall not apply to any case where the board finds collection of the fee to be in jeopardy.

SEC. 76. Section 55262 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

55262. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this part, if the board finds that neither the person liable for payment of fees nor any party related to that person has in any way caused an erroneous refund for which an action for recovery is provided under Section 55261, no interest shall be imposed on the amount of that erroneous refund until 30 days after the date on which the board mails a notice of determination for repayment of the erroneous refund to the person. The act of filing a claim for refund shall not be considered as causing the erroneous refund.

(b) This section shall be operative for any action for recovery under Section 55261 on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 77. Section 55323 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

55323. (a) The board shall develop and implement an education and information program directed at, but not limited to, all of the following groups:

- (1) Taxpayers newly registered with the board.
- (2) Board audit and compliance staff.

(b) The education and information program shall include all of the following:

(1) A program of written communication with newly registered taxpayers explaining in simplified terms their duties and responsibilities.

(2) Participation in seminars and similar programs organized by federal, state, and local agencies.

(3) Revision of taxpayer educational materials currently produced by the board that explain the most common areas of taxpayer nonconformance in simplified terms.

(4) Implementation of a continuing education program for audit and compliance personnel to include the application of new legislation to taxpayer activities and areas of recurrent taxpayer noncompliance of inconsistency of administration.

(c) Electronic media used pursuant to this section shall not represent the voice, picture, or name of members of the board or of the Controller.

SEC. 78. Section 55330 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

55330. (a) Every taxpayer is entitled to be reimbursed for any reasonable fees and expenses related to a hearing before the board if all of the following conditions are met:



(1) The taxpayer files a claim for the fees and expenses with the board within one year of the date the decision of the board becomes final.

(2) The board, in its sole discretion, finds that the action taken by the board staff was unreasonable.

(3) The board decides that the taxpayer be awarded a specific amount of fees and expenses related to the hearing, in an amount determined by the board in its sole discretion.

(b) To determine whether the board staff has been unreasonable, the board shall consider whether the board staff has established that its position was substantially justified.

(c) The amount of reimbursed fees and expenses shall be limited to the following:

(1) Fees and expenses incurred after the date of filing petitions for redetermination and claims for refund.

(2) If the board finds that the staff was unreasonable with respect to certain issues but reasonable with respect to other issues, the amount of reimbursed fees and expenses shall be limited to those that relate to the issues where the staff was found unreasonable.

(d) Any proposed award by the board pursuant to this section shall be available as a public record for at least 10 days prior to the effective date of the award.

(e) The amendments to this section by the act adding this subdivision shall be operative for claims filed on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 79. Section 55333.5 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

55333.5. (a) Except in any case where the board finds collection of the fee to be in jeopardy, if any property has been levied upon, the property or the proceeds from the sale of the property shall be returned to the fee payer if the board determines any one of the following:

(1) The levy on the property was not in accordance with the law.

(2) The fee payer has entered into and is in compliance with an installment payment agreement pursuant to Section 55209 to satisfy the fee liability for which the levy was imposed, unless that or another agreement allows for the levy.

(3) The return of the property will facilitate the collection of the fee liability or will be in the best interest of the state and the fee payer.

(b) Property returned under paragraphs (1) and (2) of subdivision (a) is subject to the provisions of Section 55335.

SEC. 80. Section 55336 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

55336. (a) At least 30 days prior to the filing or recording of liens under Chapter 14 (commencing with Section 7150) or Chapter 14.5 (commencing with Section 7220) of Division 7 of Title 1 of the Government Code, the board shall mail to the taxpayer a preliminary



notice. The notice shall specify the statutory authority of the board for filing or recording the lien, indicate the earliest date on which the lien may be filed or recorded, and state the remedies available to the taxpayer to prevent the filing or recording of the lien. In the event tax liens are filed for the same liability in multiple counties, only one preliminary notice shall be sent.

(b) The preliminary notice required by this section shall not apply to jeopardy determinations issued under Article 4 (commencing with Section 55101) of Chapter 3.

(c) If the board determines that filing a lien was in error, it shall mail a release to the taxpayer and the entity recording the lien as soon as possible, but not later than seven days, after this determination and receipt of lien recording information. The release shall contain a statement that the lien was filed in error. In the event the erroneous lien is obstructing a lawful transaction, the board shall immediately issue a release of lien to the taxpayer and the entity recording the lien.

(d) When the board releases a lien erroneously filed, notice of that fact shall be mailed to the taxpayer and, upon the request of the taxpayer, a copy of the release shall be mailed to the major credit reporting companies in the county where the lien was filed.

(e) The board may release or subordinate a lien if the board determines that the release or subordination will facilitate the collection of the tax liability or will be in the best interest of the state and the taxpayer.

SEC. 81. Section 60212 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

60212. (a) The board, in its discretion, may relieve all or any part of the interest imposed on a person by Sections 60207 and 60302 where the failure to pay tax is due in whole or in part to an unreasonable error or delay by an employee of the board acting in his or her official capacity.

(b) For purposes of this section, an error or delay shall be deemed to have occurred only if no significant aspect of the error or delay is attributable to an act of, or a failure to act by, the taxpayer.

(c) Any person seeking relief under this section shall file with the board a statement under penalty of perjury setting forth the facts on which the claim for relief is based and any other information which the board may require.

(d) The board may grant relief only for interest imposed on tax liabilities that arise during taxable periods commencing on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 82. Section 60493 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

60493. (a) The board may, in its discretion, enter into a written installment payment agreement with a person for the payment of any taxes due, together with interest thereon and any applicable penalties, in installments over an agreed period. With mutual



consent, the board and the taxpayer may alter or modify the agreement.

(b) Upon failure of a person to fully comply with the terms of an installment payment agreement with the board, the board may terminate the agreement by mailing a notice of termination to the person. The notice shall include an explanation of the basis for the termination and inform the person of his or her right to request an administrative review of the termination. Fifteen days after the mailing of the notice, the installment payment agreement shall be void, and the total amount of the tax, interest, and penalties due shall be immediately payable.

(c) The board shall establish procedures for an administrative review for persons requesting that review whose installment payment agreements are terminated under subdivision (b). The collection of taxes, interest, and penalties that are the subject of the terminated installment payment agreement may not be stayed during this administrative review process.

(d) Subdivision (b) shall not apply to any case where the board finds collection of the tax to be in jeopardy.

SEC. 83. Section 60564 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

60564. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this part, if the board finds that neither the person liable for payment of tax nor any party related to that person has in any way caused an erroneous refund for which an action for recovery is provided under Section 60561, no interest shall be imposed on the amount of that erroneous refund until 30 days after the date on which the board mails a notice of determination for repayment of the erroneous refund to the person. The act of filing a claim for refund shall not be considered as causing the erroneous refund.

(b) This section shall be operative for any action for recovery under Section 60561 on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 84. Section 60623 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

60623. (a) The board shall develop and implement an education and information program directed at, but not limited to, all of the following groups:

- (1) Taxpayers newly registered with the board.
- (2) Board audit and compliance staff.

(b) The education and information program shall include all of the following:

(1) A program of written communication with newly registered taxpayers explaining in simplified terms their duties and responsibilities.

(2) Participation in seminars and similar programs organized by federal, state, and local agencies.



(3) Revision of taxpayer educational materials currently produced by the board that explain the most common areas of taxpayer nonconformance in simplified terms.

(4) Implementation of a continuing education program for audit and compliance personnel to include the application of new legislation to taxpayer activities and areas of recurrent taxpayer noncompliance or inconsistency of administration.

(c) Electronic media used pursuant to this section shall not represent the voice, picture, or name of members of the board or of the Controller.

SEC. 85. Section 60630 of the Revenue and Taxation Code is amended to read:

60630. (a) Every taxpayer is entitled to be reimbursed for any reasonable fees and expenses related to a hearing before the board if all of the following conditions are met:

(1) The taxpayer files a claim for the fee and expenses with the board within one year of the date the decision of the board becomes final.

(2) The board, in its sole discretion, finds that the action taken by the board staff was unreasonable.

(3) The board decides that the taxpayer shall be awarded a specific amount of fees and expenses related to the hearing, in an amount determined by the board in its sole discretion.

(b) To determine whether the board staff has been unreasonable, the board shall consider whether the board staff has established that its position was substantially justified.

(c) The amount of reimbursed fees and expenses shall be limited to the following:

(1) Fees and expenses incurred after the date of filing petitions for redetermination and claims for refund.

(2) If the board finds that the staff was unreasonable with respect to certain issues but reasonable with respect to other issues, the amount of reimbursed fees and expenses shall be limited to those that relate to the issues where the staff was unreasonable.

(d) The board's proposed award under this section shall be available as a public record for at least 10 days prior to the effective date of the award.

(e) The amendments to this section by the act adding this subdivision shall be operative for claims filed on or after January 1, 2000.

SEC. 86. Section 60632.1 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

60632.1. (a) Except in any case where the board finds collection of the tax to be in jeopardy, if any property has been levied upon, the property or the proceeds from the sale of the property shall be returned to the taxpayer if the board determines any one of the following:



(1) The levy on the property was not in accordance with the law.

(2) The taxpayer has entered into and is in compliance with an installment payment agreement pursuant to Section 60493 to satisfy the tax liability for which the levy was imposed, unless that or another agreement allows for the levy.

(3) The return of the property will facilitate the collection of the tax liability or will be in the best interest of the state and the taxpayer.

(b) Property returned under paragraphs (1) and (2) of subdivision (a) is subject to the provisions of Section 60633.1.

SEC. 87. Section 60633.1 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

60633.1. (a) A taxpayer may file a claim with the board for reimbursement of bank charges incurred by the taxpayer as the direct result of an erroneous levy or notice to withhold by the board. Bank charges include a financial institution's customary charge for complying with the levy or notice to withhold instructions and reasonable charges for overdrafts that are a direct consequence of the erroneous levy or notice to withhold. The charges are those paid by the taxpayer and not waived for reimbursement by the financial institution. Each claimant applying for reimbursement shall file a claim with the board that shall be in a form as may be prescribed by the board. In order for the board to grant a claim, the board shall determine that both of the following conditions have been satisfied:

(1) The erroneous levy or notice to withhold was caused by board error.

(2) Prior to the levy or notice to withhold, the taxpayer responded to all contacts by the board and provided the board with any requested information or documentation sufficient to establish the taxpayer's position. This provision may be waived by the board for reasonable cause.

(b) Claims pursuant to this section shall be filed within 90 days from the date of the levy or notice to withhold. Within 30 days from the date the claim is received, the board shall respond to the claim. If the board denies the claim, the taxpayer shall be notified in writing of the reason or reasons for the denial of the claim.

SEC. 88. Section 60633.2 is added to the Revenue and Taxation Code, to read:

60633.2. (a) At least 30 days prior to the filing or recording of liens under Chapter 14 (commencing with Section 7150) or Chapter 14.5 (commencing with Section 7220) of Division 7 of Title 1 of the Government Code, the board shall mail to the taxpayer a preliminary notice. The notice shall specify the statutory authority of the board for filing or recording the lien, indicate the earliest date on which the lien may be filed or recorded, and state the remedies available to the taxpayer to prevent the filing or recording of the lien. In the event the tax liens are filed for the same liability in multiple counties, only one preliminary notice shall be sent.



(b) The preliminary notice required by this action shall not apply to jeopardy determinations issued under Article 4 (commencing with Section 60330) of Chapter 6.

(c) If the board determines that filing a lien was in error, it shall mail a release to the taxpayer and the entity recording the lien as soon as possible, but no later than seven days, after this determination and receipt of lien recording information. The release shall contain a statement that the lien was filed in error. In the event the erroneous lien is obstructing a lawful transaction, the board shall immediately issue a release of lien to the taxpayer and the entity recording the lien.

(d) When the board releases a lien erroneously filed, notice of that fact shall be mailed to the taxpayer and, upon the request of the taxpayer, a copy of the release shall be mailed to the major credit reporting companies in the county where the lien was filed.

(e) The board may release or subordinate a lien if the board determines that the release or subordination will facilitate the collection of the tax liability or will be in the best interest of the state and the taxpayer.

