



**Fig. S1** ECs formed by mutant E.coli RNAPs are stable at the conditions of transcription assays.

ECs obtained with  $\beta \Delta^{1250-1259}$  (lanes 1-6) and  $\beta' \Delta^{252-263}$  (lanes 7-12) mutant RNAPs were immobilized on Ni-agarose beads, incubated for 5-80 min in the transcription buffer, washed and analyzed in 20% PAGE electrophoresis.