

- **California And Local Ballot Measures**
 - **What do they mean?**



- November 5, 2024
- General Election

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A little bit about the League



The League of Women Voters does not support, oppose or endorse candidates or political parties. There are two separate organizations under the League umbrella.

The Education Fund supports voter education, registering to vote, casting a ballot, candidate forums, and the Pros & Cons about ballot propositions.

The Advocacy side focuses on influencing policy by studying issues and recommending legislation on education, water quality, civil rights, climate change, *etc.* The League makes recommendations solely on ballot measures that have been vetted and approved by the State League.



Make sure your vote gets counted

When you register at “Where’s My Ballot,” you will be notified at each stage from receiving your ballot to the date it is counted. You choose email, text or phone message notifications. Just search Where’s My Ballot in your browser.

Chico Voter Assistance Centers at Masonic Family Center in Chico, Hall of Records in Oroville, and Veterans Memorial Hall in Paradise open October 26 (9am-5pm, 7am-8pm election day). Elks Lodge, Silver Dollar Fairgrounds, CSU Chico Bell Memorial Union open November 4 (9am-5pm, 7am-8pm election day).

Definitions of ballot measures

A Referendum asks voters to overturn an act passed by the Legislature.

If citizens think a bad law has been passed, they can launch a petition drive to put the question to the voters to overturn the law. Requires signatures of 5% of voters that voted for governor in the last election.

An Initiative means the measure is on the ballot by petition. It also Requires 5% for signatures. Initiatives can be brought by citizens or groups of large companies. These interests spend millions to get the 600,000 signatures. Because they use paid signature collectors, the per signature costs in election continue to grow.

More definitions

A Constitutional Amendment needs 8% of voter signatures to qualify for the ballot. Another vote is required to remove it.

California Constitution has about 523 amendments – WAY more than any other state. ACA means Assembly Constitutional Amendment.

A Statute adds to the California Code but not the Constitution.

About Bonds

A General obligation bond is the most common type of bond. Bonds are issued by the state and add to state debt. They are repaid with interest by the state until the bond is retired. Voters must approve General Obligation Bonds. A simple majority vote passes a bond. Generally, it takes 30 years to retire the debt. Interest paid, over the life of the bond, will be around 60 - 70% of the approved amount.

A Revenue Bond has a dedicated revenue stream so does not add to state debt. For example, tolls repay a bridge building bond. Because the voters do not incur any debt, revenue bonds are not put before the voters and are approved by the Legislature and signed by the Governor.

Evaluating Ballot Measures



- Does the question make sense? Wording can be confusing.
- Do you understand what the proposition will do if passed.
- Is there only one question?
- Who are the supporters and opponents?
- How will it be funded?
- If the information is in a TV commercial, be skeptical.

Prop 13 in a nutshell

Prop 13, approved by voters in 1978, applies equally to all real estate whether owned by individuals or corporations. The assessed value of real property cannot not exceed one percent (1%) of the full cash value of the property as assessed in 1976. Annual increases are capped at 2%.

Reassessment occurs with a change in ownership or new construction.

A two-thirds vote by both legislative houses is required for future increases of any state tax rates or amounts of revenue collected, including income tax rates.

A two-thirds vote is required in local elections for local governments wishing to increase special taxes limited to a specific use (road repair, homelessness) rather than a general fund.

Proposition 2 *Authorizes bonds for public schools and community colleges*

Legislative Statute

This is a state general obligation bond act that would provide \$10 billion to construct and modernize education facilities, including \$8.5 billion for elementary and secondary educational facilities and \$1.5 billion for community college facilities, as specified.

To receive bond money, districts must raise a local bond and apply to the state for funding, up to 65% for renovations and 55% for new construction.

Proposition 2 (cont.)

The specifications are as follows:

- \$3.3 billion for new construction
- \$4 billion for modernization
- *\$115 million for lead remediation
- \$600 million for charter schools
- \$600 million for career tech education
- \$1.5 billion for community college

All previous bond money (\$43 billion since 1998) has been depleted.

The K-12 system serves over 6 million students at 10,000 schools.

Routine maintenance is not funded by bond money and must be paid from district sources.

No official opposition.

Proposition 3 *Constitutional right to marriage*

Legislative Constitutional Amendment

Repeal the language of Prop 8 that defines marriage as between a man and a woman. Declares that marriage is a fundamental right. Constitutional provisions in California's constitution have strong anti-discriminatory laws, but current U.S. Supreme Court decisions have made California's provision on same sex marriage unenforceable, hence the need to remove Prop 8 language from the state constitution.

PROPOSITION 3 (CONT.)

YES

The amendment received a 67-0 vote in the state Senate. "California leads the way in LGBTQ+ protections and cutting-edge pro-equality legislation and our constitution should reflect those values."

NO

California Capitol Connection, an alliance of independent Baptist ministers and churches, came out in opposition to the amendment during the legislative process.

No committees registered in support or opposition to the measure and no money has been raised in support or opposition.

Proposition 4: *Authorizes bonds for safe drinking water, wildlife protection, and protecting communities and natural lands from climate risks* *Legislative statute*

Two years ago, a \$54.3 billion California Climate Commitment was passed, but budget shortfalls caused cuts. This bond measure is intended to close part of that gap.

The Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act issues \$10B in General Obligation bonds for safe drinking water; drought, flood, and water resilience, wildfire and forest resilience; coastal resilience; extreme heat mitigation, and other climate friendly projects.

Proposition 4 (cont.)

- **\$3.8B** Water
- **\$1.5B** Wildfires and Forests
- **\$1.2B** Coastal Resilience
- **\$1.2B** Biodiversity Protection
- **\$850M** Clean Air
- **\$700M** Parks
- **\$450M** Extreme Heat Mitigation
- **\$300M** Agricultural Lands

PROPOSITION 4 (CONT.)

- YES** Supporters argue that the threats facing the state like drought, wildfires, water pollution, and extreme heat, the need for more spending is urgent.
- NO** Opponents argue that bonds are the most expensive way for the government to pay for things, and some of the money would go to unproven technologies. We should pay for such projects without taking on debt.
- YES** Save the Redwoods League \$250K and other environmental groups
- NO** No reported contributions

Proposition 5: Allows local bonds for affordable housing and public infrastructure with 55% voter approval

Constitutional
Amendment

Allows local bonds for affordable housing for low- and middle-income Californians, or for public infrastructure including roads, water, and fire protection to be approved by 55% of voters rather than the current two-thirds approval requirement.

No reported contributions

Proposition 5 (cont.)

YES

The CA Democratic Party, CA Building and Construction Trades Council of California, AIDS Healthcare Foundation, and California State Association of Counties say this proposition will level the playing field and create parity between school districts and cities, counties, and special districts, so that all local governments can address community needs.

NO

The California Association of Realtors, CA Chamber of Commerce, CA Taxpayer Association, Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Assn, and National Federation of Independent Businesses say it will sharply lower Proposition 13's two-thirds voter threshold to 55% for local special taxes to fund 'infrastructure' so vaguely defined that virtually anything could qualify.

PROPOSITION 6: Eliminates constitutional provision allowing involuntary servitude for incarcerated persons

Constitutional Amendment

Changes definition of slavery/involuntary servitude to delete the exception for punishment for crime. The companion bill AB 628 sets conditions for voluntary labor.

A companion bill authorizes regulated voluntary work by inmates.

Proposition 6 (cont.)

This proposition would ban the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation from punishing inmates for refusing a work assignment. A companion bill created a voluntary work program in the prison system and is contingent on the passage of Prop 6. If approved, the state may have to pay minimum wage to inmates with voluntary work assignments depending on how courts rule.

PROPOSITION 6 (CONT.)

YES

Involuntary servitude is an extension of slavery. There's no room for slavery in our constitution. Incarcerated people should be able to choose jobs and shifts that allow them to continue their education, use the law library, get counseling, and participate in other rehabilitative programs that facilitate growth and transformation.

NO

There has been no campaign in against the proposition and no money raised by either side.

Fiscal Impact: Potential increase or decrease in state and local costs, depending on how work for people in state prison and county jail changes. Any effect likely would not exceed the tens of millions of dollars annually.¹

Proposition 32: Raises minimum wage

Legislative Initiative Statute

Existing law required annual increases to California's minimum wage until it reached \$15.00 per hour for all businesses on January 1, 2023. This measure extends these annual increase (\$1.00 per year) until minimum wage reaches \$18.00 per hour. Thereafter, the minimum wage will annually increase for inflation. In periods of decreased economic activity or General Fund deficit, the governor may suspend annual increase two times, thereby extending timeline for reaching \$18.00 per hour.

Proposition 32 (cont.)

YES California has a high cost of living and our current \$16 minimum wage is below a living wage. This proposition is likely to raise salaries across the board and increase consumer spending, creating more jobs.

NO National Federation of Independent Business says the market ought to be dictating the financial growth and success of workers in California.

YES Donors: \$610M from Joe Sandburg \$10M*, CA Labor Federation

NO Donors: \$55K from CA Chamber of Commerce, CA Restaurant Assn,
National Federation of Independent Business

Fiscal Impact: Unclear

Proposition 33: Expands local governments' authority to enact rent control on residential property

Citizen
Initiative
Statute

Current state law (the Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act of 1995) generally prevents cities and counties from limiting the initial rental rate that landlords may charge to new tenants in all types of housing, and from limiting rent increases for existing tenants in residential properties that were first occupied after February 1, 1995; single-family homes; and condominiums. This measure would repeal that state law and would prohibit the state from limiting the right of cities and counties to maintain, enact, or expand residential rent-control ordinances.

Proposition 33 (cont.)

YES

Prop 33 protects renters from large increases in rent by empowering local governments to impose rent control on more types of housing, including houses and condos; this would be especially beneficial in high-cost areas, where low- and moderate-income families are priced out.

NO

Rent control will discourage building new housing units, thus increasing the housing shortage.

YES

Donors for: AIDS Healthcare Foundation \$16M

NO

Donors against: CA Assn of Realtors, CA Apartment Assn \$38M

Fiscal Impact: potential reduction in state and local revenues in the high tens of millions of dollars per year over time.

Proposition 34: Restricts spending of prescription
drug revenues by certain care providers

Citizen Initiative

State Statute

Requires certain health care providers to spend 98% of revenues from federal discount prescription drug program on direct patient care. Applies only to health care providers that spent over \$100,000,000 in any ten-year period on anything other than direct patient care; and operated multifamily housing with over 500 high-severity health and safety violations. Penalizes noncompliance by revoking health care licenses and tax-exempt status. Permanently authorizes state to negotiate Medi-Cal drug prices on statewide basis.

Proposition 34 (cont.)

YES

Prop 34 will force the worst abusers of the drug discount program, like Michael Weinstein's AIDS Healthcare Foundation, back to the program's original mission to provide healthcare to low-income patients.

NO

Prop 34 targets one organization, the AIDS Healthcare Association, the leading organization working to expand rent control for low-income seniors, veterans, and patients with HIV-AIDS.

Proposition 34 (cont.)

Fiscal Impact: Increased costs to state government, potentially up to the millions of dollars annually, to review entities' compliance with the measure and enforce the measure's provisions. These costs would be paid for by fees created under the measure. Uncertain fiscal impacts to state and local government health programs, depending on how the affected entities respond to the measure's requirements.

YES

Donors: CA Apartment Assn \$14.9M, Republican Party

NO

Donors: AIDS Healthcare Assn \$120K

Proposition 35: provides permanent funding for Medi-Cal health care services

Initiative State
Statute

Makes permanent the existing tax on managed health care insurance plans (MCOs), currently set to expire in 2026, that the state uses to pay for health care services for low-income families with children, seniors, people with disabilities, and other groups in the program. Requires revenues to be used only for specified Medi-Cal services like primary and specialty care, emergency care, mental health, and prescription drugs. Prohibits revenues from being used to replace other existing Medi-Cal funding. Caps administrative expenses and requires independent audits of programs receiving funding.

Proposition 35 (cont.)

YES

The CA Democratic Party, CA Republican Party, SEIU, CA Hospital Association, and CA Medical Association endorse the initiative, saying it will provide more and stable funding for Medi-Cal and improve reimbursement rates for medical providers by making the temporary tax that helps fund Medi-Cal a permanent tax on Managed Care organizations (MCOs) and require the proceeds to support only Medi-Cal.

NO

Prop 35 is “ballot-box budgeting,” making the money unavailable for other needs and difficult to respond to changes to Medi-Cal that might be mandated by the federal government.

Proposition 35 (cont.)

Fiscal Impact:

Uncertain overall impact on state revenues and spending, including reduced legislative flexibility over the use of MCO tax funds. The extent of this impact depends on whether the measure would result in different state decisions around imposing, structuring, and spending proceeds from the managed care organization tax than if the measure failed.

Proposition 36: *Allows felony charges and increases sentences for certain drug and theft charges* *Citizen Initiative State Statute*

This amends 2014's Proposition 47 that states that criminal offenders who commit certain nonserious and nonviolent drug and property crimes will be sentenced to reduced penalties (such as shorter terms in jail).

Prop 36 would allow felony charges for possessing certain drugs, including fentanyl, and for thefts under \$950—both currently misdemeanors—if there have been two prior drug or theft convictions. Defendants who plead guilty to felony drug possession and complete treatment can have charges dismissed. It would also increase sentences for other specified drug and theft crimes.

Proposition 36 (cont.)

YES This initiative holds individuals accountable for repeat crimes of theft and serious drugs like fentanyl while making sure individuals receive and complete drug and mental health treatment they need.

Donors: Walmart, Home Depot, Target \$9M

NO Shifting money from treatment to prisons undermines treatment rehabilitation programs, detracts from humane criminal justice policies, and increases taxes without improving public safety. More incarceration, more recidivism, less mental health and substance abuse care, fewer victim services.

Donors: ACLU \$100K

PROPOSITION 36 (CONT.)

Fiscal Impact: Increased state criminal justice system costs potentially in the hundreds of millions of dollars annually, primarily due to an increase in the prison population. Some of these costs could be offset by reductions in state spending on local mental health and substance use services, truancy and dropout prevention, and victim services required in current law. Increased local criminal justice system costs potentially in the tens of millions of dollars annually, primarily due to increased court-related workload and a net increase in the number of people in county jail and under county community supervision.

Measure H

Butte County Board of Supervisors Proposal

Measure H, the Butte County Tax Measure, asks: Shall the measure funding Butte County services such as maintaining emergency 911 response times; preparing for/responding to and recovering from wildfires/natural disasters; protecting abused/neglected children; addressing homelessness, mental health challenges; retaining/attracting qualified firefighters/EMTs/sheriff's deputies; preventing thefts and property crimes; supporting libraries services and for general government use by establishing 1¢ sales tax providing \$44M annually until ended by voters; requiring audits/spending disclosure/funds locally controlled, be adopted?

Measure H (cont.)

YES

In Butte County, the current sales tax is 7.25 percent. That would increase to 8.25 percent if the increase is approved. Chico currently has an 8.25 percent sales tax, so the sales tax in Chico would become 9.25 percent. Paradise, currently at 7.75 percent, would be 8.75. Oroville, currently at 8.25 percent, would be 9.25, and Gridley and Biggs currently at 7.25 percent, would be 8.25.

Passage of Measure H requires approval of a simple majority of voters voting for the measure.

NO

No arguments against the measure have been filed.

More Information:

Official California Voters Guide <http://voterguide.sos.ca.gov> includes full Legislative Analyst non-partisan descriptions of measures with links to election resources.

Pros & Cons: <https://cavotes.org/vote/elections/ballot-measures>

VOTE411: State and Local Ballot information: <http://VOTE411.org>

- You can put in your address and get your ballot. Easy to use.

EZ Voter: <http://easyvoterguide.org/> The shortest version. Available in 5 languages.

Butte County Election Information Guide: <https://clerk-recorder.buttecounty.net/elections>

Ballotpedia: <https://ballotpedia.org/California> Compiled by researchers and journalists, may be easier to read this format. Ballotpedia is non-partisan and non-profit.

• *League of Women Voters Butte County:* <https://my.lwv.org/california/butte-county>

- Information about all the activities and programs of the League

Don't risk an invalid signature!!!

- **The signature on your mail-in ballot needs to be verified before your vote can be counted. Your signature may have changed over time.**
- **The Dept. of Motor Vehicles database is the first one consulted. Make sure your signature matches the signature on your driver's license. If your signature has changed contact the Butte County Elections Office.**

... and, don't forget to

 *vote*

Thank you

. . . for your interest and for wading through this!

LWW[®]

