

Prop. 22 battle reaches fever pitch

Newstex Blogs

CalMatters

October 23, 2020 Friday 2:35 PM EST

Copyright 2020 Newstex LLC All Rights Reserved

Length: 2182 words

Byline: Emily Hoeven

Body

Oct 23, 2020(CalMatters: <https://calmatters.org> Delivered by Newstex) ;;; Good morning, California. It's Friday, October 23. Court rules against Uber, LyftImage via iStock The stakes in the battle over Prop. 22[1] just got a lot higher.Uber and Lyft must reclassify their independent contractor drivers as full-fledged employees by late January[2], a California appeals court ruled Thursday[3] — a decision voters could throw into question in less than two weeks if they pass Prop. 22. One of the most controversial measures on the ballot — and the most expensive in state history[4] — it would exempt the gig-economy companies from a new labor law entitling former contract workers to benefits like unemployment insurance and paid sick leave.Uber and Lyft, who previously threatened to leave California[5] if forced to comply with the law, have funneled \$190 million[6] into the Yes on 22 campaign.

The unions opposing the measure have raised \$18 million[7]. Gig Workers Rising, part of the No on 22 campaign: 'In response to this decision, Uber and Lyft may well announce an extreme change in order to extort voters into voting yes on Prop. 22 — such as a threat to temporarily suspend services.'Uber[8]:'Today's ruling means that if the voters don't say yes on Prop. 22, (ride-hail) drivers will be prevented from continuing to work as independent contractors, putting hundreds of thousands of Californians out of work and likely shutting down (rides) throughout much of the state.' Also Thursday, a group of Uber drivers filed a class-action lawsuit[9] against the gig-economy giant, alleging it pressured them to support Prop. 22 via continuous in-app messaging.Prop. 22 is far from the only industry fight[10] on the California ballot. Whether voters actually want to decide the outcome of these battles is another matter altogether.Around 63% of likely voters say that special interest groups exercise a lot of control over the initiative process that determines which measures end up on the ballot, according to a Wednesday poll from the Public Policy Institute of California[11]. Another 55% think there are too many propositions on the ballot, and 82% find the ballot language too complicated and confusing, the poll found[12].Lest you think ballot language is free from legal battles, consider this: Attorney General Xavier Becerra was sued at least six times[13] for how he labeled and summarized some of November's ballot measures, including Prop. 22, Prop. 23[14] and Prop. 15[15]._____The coronavirus bottom line:As of 9 p.m. Thursday night, California had880,724 confirmed coronavirus casesand17,189 deathsfrom the virus, according toaCalMatters tracker[16].Also:CalMatters regularly updates this pandemic timeline tracking thestate's daily actions[17]. And we'retracking the state's coronavirus hospitalizations by county[18].Democratic Assemblymember Lorena Gonzalez was shocked to find a postcard in her mailbox endorsing her reelection campaign, along with at least one Republican and the ballot proposition she's spent months fighting. It also inspired her to write a new law, CalMatters' Ben Christopher reports[19]. Advertisementhttps://mattressrecyclingcouncil.org/programs/california/ Other stories you should know 1. LAUSD to reopen some schools without union support Image via iStock In a sign that the desire to reopen schools is reaching a tipping point, Los Angeles County officials announced Thursday[20] that elementary schools can apply for reopening waivers without letters of support from unions or parent groups to serve students in transitional

kindergarten through second grade. The decision at California's largest school district, which could reopen classrooms to thousands of children, is likely to spark intense pushback from teachers unions that have long demanded improved safety measures[21] as a condition for returning to campus. It could also push other school districts — many of which have been tussling with unions[22] in increasingly tense reopening negotiations — to consider adopting similar policies. Pressure to reopen schools is likely to grow even stronger as California's coronavirus picture improves. Even as other states experience deadly surges in cases, a national public health expert says the Golden State 'holds a lesson for all of us,' as CalMatters' Barbara Feder Ostrov reports[23].

2. Unemployment claims fall to pandemic low Image via iStock In a spot of bright news, California unemployment claims fell to their lowest level since the onset of business closures in March, clocking at 158,900 first-time claims for the week ending Oct. 17, according to federal data released Thursday[24]. But that's still more than three times the amount of weekly claims filed pre-pandemic, signaling just how far the Golden State has to go when it comes to rejuvenating the economy and addressing an 11% overall unemployment rate[25] — one that reflects a small but persistent gender gap[26]. Meanwhile, just over 1.1 million claims remain backlogged at EDD, the state unemployment department announced Thursday[27]. The department has doled out a staggering \$105 billion in benefits since March[28] and processed 15.2 million claims — more than four times the amount processed in the worst year of the Great Recession. It has also frozen around 350,000 debit cards for potentially fraudulent claims[29].

3. How overturning the ACA could affect California Photo by Anda Chu, Bay Area News Group Millions of Californians could lose their health insurance and the state could lose \$25 billion in federal funding if the U.S. Supreme Court rules next month that the Affordable Care Act is unconstitutional, according to a Wednesday report from the nonpartisan Legislative Analyst's Office[30]. Under the ACA, the number of Californians enrolled in Medi-Cal — the state's health care program for the poor — grew from 7.9 million people to 13 million people, and other services, including mental health treatment, were expanded. (Many Californians with serious mental illness drop their private insurance[31] and jump through a series of hoops in order to access the more comprehensive services offered by Medi-Cal.) Overturning the ACA would also lead to a significant jump in premiums for Covered California, the state's health insurance marketplace, the report found.

Advertisement

<https://www.chcf.org/collection/modernizing-payment-californias-community-health-centers/> Prop. 25 is dangerous: It would make communities less safe while enhancing racial bias and costing taxpayers, argues Patricia Wenskunas, founder and CEO of Crime Survivors Inc[32]. Prop. 25 will build a better justice system: It would ensure liberty is decided by a system based on fairness rather than the size of someone's wallet, argues Stephanie Jeffcoat, policy fellow at A New Way of Life.[33] No post-prison plans: California lacks a comprehensive strategy to assist prisoners released during the pandemic, write Heather Harris and David Harding, co-authors of After Prison: Navigating Adulthood in the Shadow of the Justice System[34]. Other things worth your time PG&E outages possible Sunday to Tuesday as winds of up to 100 miles per hour bring extreme fire danger. // San Francisco Chronicle[35] Behind the wildfire that tore through Berry Creek. // Washington Post[36] California paid millions for backup batteries in vacation homes. The state voted today to end that. // Sacramento Bee[37] Amusement parks consider suing over California's 'unachievable' reopening guidelines. // Orange County Register[38] California tax revenue billions higher than expected, thanks in part to federal help. // Sacramento Bee[39] Proposed bill would remove DAs from police misconduct probes if they accept police union money. // San Francisco Chronicle[40] Marvel blockbuster shoots in SF as first major production in the city since the pandemic. // San Francisco Chronicle[41] See you Monday. Tips, insight or feedback? Email emily@calmatters.org [42].; Follow me on Twitter: [@emily_hoeven](https://twitter.com/emily_hoeven)[43] Subscribe to CalMatters newsletters here[44]. Follow CalMatters on Facebook[45] and Twitter[46]. CalMatters is now available in Spanish on Twitter[47], Facebook[48] and RSS[49].

[1]: <https://calmatters.org/election-2020-guide/proposition-22-gig-workers-ab-5/> [2]: <https://www.sfchronicle.com/business/article/Uber-Lyft-lose-appeal-in-California-court-case-15668885.php> [3]: <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/7275030-Certify.html> [4]: <https://calmatters.org/newsletters/whatmatters/2020/10/california-ballot-campaigns-record/> [5]: <https://calmatters.org/economy/2020/08/california-gig-work-ab5-prop-22/> [6]: <https://calmatters.org/politics/post-it/2020/10/biggest-spenders-california-props-campaigns-ballot-measures/> [7]: <https://calmatters.org/politics/post-it/2020/10/biggest-spenders-california-props-campaigns-ballot-measures/> [8]: <https://www.sfchronicle.com/business/article/Uber-Lyft-lose-appeal-in-California-court-case-15668885.php> [9]: <https://calmatters.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Complaint.pdf> [10]: <https://calmatters.org/politics/california-election-2020/2020/10/california-healthcare-union-proposition-23/> [11]: <https://www.ppic.org/wp-content/uploads/ppic-statewide-survey-californians-and-their-government-october-2020.pdf> [12]:

Prop. 22 battle reaches fever pitch

<https://www.ppic.org/wp-content/uploads/ppic-statewide-survey-californians-and-their-government-october-2020.pdf>
[13]: <https://calmatters.org/politics/california-election-2020/2020/08/california-proposition-descriptions-lawsuits-attorney-general/> [14]: <https://calmatters.org/election-2020-guide/proposition-22-gig-workers-ab-5/> [15]:
<https://calmatters.org/election-2020-guide/proposition-15-property-tax-big-business/> [16]:
<https://calmatters.org/health/coronavirus/2020/03/california-coronavirus-by-the-numbers-cases-testing-masks-hospital-beds/> [17]: <https://calmatters.org/health/coronavirus/2020/04/gavin-newsom-coronavirus-updates-timeline/>
[18]: <https://calmatters.org/health/coronavirus/2020/04/california-coronavirus-covid-patient-hospitalization-data-icu/>
[19]: <https://calmatters.org/politics/post-it/2020/10/slate-mailers-vote-california/> [20]:
<https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-10-22/la-eases-rules-schools-reopening-waivers> [21]:
<https://calmatters.org/newsletters/whatmatters/2020/10/california-prop-15-prop-20-prop-16/> [22]:
<https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/S-F-public-schools-don-t-have-a-timeline-for-15659806.php> [23]:
<https://calmatters.org/health/2020/10/california-praised-recent-handling-pandemic/> [24]:
<https://www.mercurynews.com/2020/10/22/coronavirus-california-unemployment-claims-fall-seven-month-low-jobs/>
[25]: <https://calmatters.org/newsletters/whatmatters/2020/10/california-prop-15-prop-20-prop-16/> [26]:
https://www.ppic.org/blog/gender-gaps-in-the-covid-19-labor-market/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=gender-gaps-in-the-covid-19-labor-market?utm_source=ppic&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=blog_subscriber [27]:
<https://www.edd.ca.gov/Newsroom/facts-and-stats/dashboard.htm> [28]:
https://www.edd.ca.gov/About_EDD/pdf/news-20-57.pdf [29]: <https://calmatters.org/california-divide/2020/10/unemployment-benefits-frozen-accounts-edd/> [30]:
<https://lao.ca.gov/handouts/Health/2020/Overturning-the-ACA-102120.pdf> [31]:
<https://calmatters.org/projects/california-mental-health-private-insurance-medi-cal/> [32]:
<https://calmatters.org/commentary/my-turn/2020/10/prop-25-is-dangerous-for-victims-and-communities/> [33]:
<https://calmatters.org/commentary/my-turn/2020/10/prop-25-will-help-build-a-justice-system-based-on-fairness/> [34]:
<https://calmatters.org/?p=145289> [35]: <https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/PG-E-says-outages-possible-Sunday-to-Tuesday-as-15668492.php> [36]: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2020/climate-environment/north-complex-fire-california-climate-change/> [37]:
<https://www.sacbee.com/news/california/fires/article246638533.html> [38]:
<https://www.ocregister.com/2020/10/21/disneyland-universal-studios-knotts-and-more-considering-legal-action-over-californias-unachievable-reopening-guidelines/> [39]: <https://www.sacbee.com/news/politics-government/capitol-alert/article246621628.html> [40]: <https://www.sfchronicle.com/crime/article/New-bill-would-remove-DAs-from-police-misconduct-15667589.php> [41]: <https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/Marvel-blockbusters-films-in-S-F-as-first-major-15665525.php> [42]: emily@calmatters.org [43]:
<https://calmatters.us11.list-manage.com/track/click?u=5f4af3af825368013c58e4547&id=fdbf3734c1&e=8df3ed9f4c> [44]:
<https://calmatters.us11.list-manage.com/track/click?u=5f4af3af825368013c58e4547&id=2a7ce24a72&e=8df3ed9f4c> [45]:
<https://calmatters.us11.list-manage.com/track/click?u=5f4af3af825368013c58e4547&id=9b9a39b357&e=8df3ed9f4c> [46]:
<https://calmatters.us11.list-manage.com/track/click?u=5f4af3af825368013c58e4547&id=ad27afd972&e=8df3ed9f4c> [47]:
https://twitter.com/calmatters_es [48]: <https://www.facebook.com/calmatterses> [49]:
<https://calmatters.org/category/calmatters-en-espanol/>

Load-Date: October 23, 2020