

A close race for Prop. 15

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Body

Oct 22, 2020(CalMatters: <https://calmatters.org> Delivered by Newstex) ;; Good morning, California. It's Thursday, October 22. Affirmative action unlikely to passImage via iStock Will Californians decide to raise taxes on commercial properties — approving the biggest change to the state's property tax structure in more than 40 years — or won't they? With less than two weeks before the election, the Prop. 15[1] race is shaping up to be a nail-biter.

Around 49% of likely voters support the measure, compared to 45% opposed and 6% undecided, according to a Public Policy Institute of California poll released late Wednesday night[2]. That marks a slight decline from the 51% of likely voters who supported the measure in September[3]. The campaigns supporting and opposing Prop. 15 have together raised more than \$124 million[4], making it the second-most expensive ballot measure. At stake is a major component of Prop. 13, the landmark 1978 measure that capped property taxes and forever altered the politics of taxation in California, as CalMatters' Ben Christopher shows with a sprawling graphic of the Prop. 13 family tree[5]. (Another measure on the November ballot, Prop. 19[6], would also amend Prop. 13.) Meanwhile, things aren't looking so good for Prop. 16[7], which would overturn California's affirmative action ban. Around 50% of likely voters oppose it, compared to 37% in favor and 12% undecided, the PPIC survey shows[8]. In September[9], 47% opposed and 31% supported it. CalMatters' Mikhail Zinshteyn takes a look[10] at why Prop. 16 is lagging in the polls even after a summer of protests against racism and a slew of high-profile endorsements, including from the California Democratic Party and Gov. Gavin Newsom[11]. Steve Miller, an Orange County independent: 'I don't see that much difference between Donald Trump saying 'he's a Mexican' about a judge[12] 'rather than viewing him as an individual American, and the UC Regents looking at a student saying he's a Chinese student.' Andy Wong, campaign manager for Yes on 16: 'We've said from the beginning that our biggest hurdle is the intentionally misleading language that the architects of California's ban on affirmative action put in our state Constitution.' Time to convince voters is running out. More than 4.5 million Californians have already cast their ballots[13], representing nearly 20% of active registered voters. _____ The coronavirus bottom line: As of 9 p.m. Wednesday night, California had 877,784 confirmed coronavirus cases and 17,027 deaths from the virus, according to a CalMatters tracker[14]. Also: CalMatters regularly updates this pandemic timeline tracking the state's daily actions[15]. And we're tracking the state's coronavirus hospitalizations by county[16]. Advertisement <https://mattressrecyclingcouncil.org/programs/california/> Other stories you should know 1. Court hands down unprecedented prison decision Prisoners are walked to another area in San Quentin State Prison. Photo by Penni Gladstone for CalMatters California must transfer or release at least half of the inmates in San Quentin State Prison in order to meet safety standards amid the coronavirus pandemic, a state appeals court ruled Tuesday[17] in an unprecedented and dramatic decision that will likely wend its way to the California Supreme Court. The First District Court of Appeal in San Francisco found that state officials acted with 'deliberate indifference' to inmates' health at an institution that at one point was home to the nation's worst coronavirus

outbreak[18]. Around 75% of San Quentin inmates have tested positive for COVID-19 and 28 have died following officials' May transfer of inmates from a Chino facility hard-hit by the virus. Still, some are concerned that transferring or releasing inmates could exacerbate the very problem it aims to solve. 2. Inside Newsom's juvenile justice overhaul Wards from the sex offender treatment program exercise at the O.H. Close Youth Correctional Facility in Stockton on March 15, 2007. Photo by Steve Yeater, AP Photo Under a controversial new law recently signed by Newsom, the state juvenile justice system will stop accepting youth inmates after July 2021 — meaning counties have less than a year to figure out where to house California's most serious young offenders, CalMatters' Elizabeth Aguilera reports[19]. Critics and even some proponents say the plan was passed rapidly, lacks critical information — including funding details — and could result in more youth being sent to adult prisons due to an uneven distribution of resources across counties. Some, like Los Angeles, already have sprawling juvenile justice systems, while others, like Alpine, don't have a juvenile hall — or even an adult prison. Still, some advocates say keeping young offenders close to home will allow them to benefit from family and community support. Karen Pank of the Probation Chiefs of California: 'We were caught off guard when the administration put this policy into the works. This is the first time I've seen something so big get through like it did, so quickly.' Chet Hewitt of the Sierra Health Foundation: 'Oversight of the local programs is going to be important now. There should be no difference whether you are in San Francisco or Fresno County.' 3. Cash or computer? The Bail Boys bail bonds displays a 'No on Prop 25' poster in downtown Los Angeles on Oct. 21, 2020. Photo by Tash Kimmell for CalMatters To round out this newsletter's focus on criminal justice, here's a look at Prop. 25[20], which would eliminate cash bail in California and allow each county to choose its own algorithm to assess whether a person should remain free while awaiting trial. Supporters argue that cash bail is an inherently unfair system, allowing rich defendants to buy freedom before their trial while poor defendants in the exact same legal situation are forced to remain in jail. Opponents say an algorithm will give more people the opportunity to commit more crimes. But some proponents have begun to walk back their support, citing concerns that algorithms will only deepen existing racial and socioeconomic inequities by unnecessarily keeping poor minorities behind bars, CalMatters' Nigel Duara reports[21]. A group of 27 academics that recently rescinded their support: 'When tools conflate the likelihood of arrest for any reason with risk of violence, a large number of people will be labeled a threat to public safety without sufficient justification.' Advertisement <https://www.chcf.org/collection/modernizing-payment-californias-community-health-centers/> CalMatters columnist Dan Walters[22]: All kids need to return to the classroom as soon as safely possible, but, as usual in education issues, children are caught up in adult political games. False choice: San Joaquin Valley residents should not have to choose between a healthy environment and a strong economy with good jobs, argues Cynthia Pinto-Cabrera of the Central Valley Air Quality Coalition[23]. Act on affordable housing: The state and federal governments must protect California's hundreds of thousands of nonprofit affordable housing units, writes Robert Jimenez, CEO of Mutual Housing California[24]. Other things worth your time PG&E reduces shutoffs to 37,000 customers as more winds are predicted for Bay Area. // San Francisco Chronicle[25] How to vote when you've lost your home in a wildfire. // CalMatters[26] Judge rejects California attorney general's effort to investigate GOP ballot boxes. // Los Angeles Times[27] Cash pours into California House races where GOP and Democrats are neck and neck. // San Francisco Chronicle[28] Why Sonoma is the only Bay Area county stuck in the strictest reopening tier. // San Francisco Chronicle[29] Newsom appoints new leader of the California Highway Patrol. // Sacramento Bee[30] Police chief predicts LA will top 300 homicides this year, the first time since 2009. // Los Angeles Times[31] From Detroit to Oakland, pandemic threatens urban renewal. // Associated Press[32] California Community Colleges receive \$100 million donation to help students facing financial hardships. // EdSource[33] Laboratory tags record number of sharks off California coast. // Associated Press[34] See you tomorrow. 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[1]: <https://calmatters.org/election-2020-guide/proposition-15-property-tax-big-business/> [2]: <https://www.ppic.org/publication/ppic-statewide-survey-californians-and-their-government-october-2020/> [3]: <https://calmatters.org/newsletters/whatmatters/2020/09/will-californians-amend-prop-13/> [4]: <https://calmatters.org/politics/post-it/2020/10/biggest-spenders-california-props-campaigns-ballot-measures/> [5]: <https://calmatters.org/politics/2020/10/prop-13-family-tree/> [6]: <https://calmatters.org/election-2020-guide/proposition-19-property-tax-break/> [7]: <https://calmatters.org/election-2020-guide/proposition-16-affirmative-action/> [8]: <https://www.ppic.org/publication/ppic-statewide-survey-californians-and-their-government-october-2020/> [9]: <https://calmatters.org/newsletters/whatmatters/2020/09/will-californians-amend-prop-13/> [10]:

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