

2020 Election: Netflix s Billionaire Cofounder And His Wife Nearly Double Their Giving To California Ballot Measures Vs. 2016

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Highlight: Streaming pioneer Reed Hastings and his wife Patty Quillin have shelled out millions of dollars to support five different ballot props.

Body

<figure class="embed-base image-embed embed-2">

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Patty Quillin and Reed Hastings.

Drew Altizer Photography.

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Reed Hastings, the billionaire cofounder of Netflix, and his spouse, Patty Quillin, have become two of California s biggest donors to state propositions. Their political giving to the Golden State s propositions have nearly doubled when compared to the 2016 election cycle. What s more: while all the political donations were given by Hastings four years ago, for this election, nearly all of the gifts have been made under Quillin s name.

In total, Hastings and Quillin have given \$4.5 million to various fundraising committees for new California propositions up for a vote this November. In 2016, they gave \$2.5 million. Of the 12 statewide propositions up for a vote, the couple has given towards five of them. The couple has also given \$399,450 in 2019 and 2020 to political candidates up for election in the California State Legislature.

Hastings and Quillin s political giving at a state level so far surpasses their federal giving ahead of the 2020 election. At a national level, they have given at least \$1.7 million in the last year, with the majority of it going to SMP, a super-PAC that supports Senate Democrats. Hastings has given at least \$2,800 to Joe Biden, the Democrat presidential candidate.

A spokesperson for the couple declined to comment on the political donations. Hastings, who cofounded Netflix in 1997 and is chairman and co-CEO, is currently worth \$5 billion, **Forbes** calculates.

Under Quillin s name, the couple gave \$2 million to oppose Proposition 20, which if approved would increase penalties for some property crimes like shoplifting items more than \$250 in value or car theft and for repeated parole violations, thus making it more difficult for convicted felons to qualify for early parole. The Chan Zuckerberg

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Initiative, the philanthropic and political advocacy organization of Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg and his wife Priscilla Chan, also gave \$2 million to oppose the passage of Prop. 20. Those are the largest donors in opposition to the ballot measure.

Quillin is also listed as the fourth largest donor to two other state propositions that are up for a vote this November. She gave \$1 million to support the passage of Proposition 16, which would reinstate affirmative action in state universities and government agencies, and \$1 million to support Proposition 25, which would get rid of the cash bail system for individuals and instead replace it with a risk-based algorithm.

Other state committees they've given to this year include \$250,000 each to support Proposition 17, which would allow parolees to vote, and Proposition 18, which would allow 17 year olds to vote in state primaries and special elections if they turn 18 before the general election.

The only political gift to a statewide proposition that Hastings made under his name this year is a \$200,000 donation to support Proposition 13, which was up for a vote during the primary elections in March. If it passed, it would have authorized the state to issue \$15 billion worth of bonds to modernize and build out public schools, community colleges and universities. But it failed to garner enough votes to pass.

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