Vote YES on Prop 16

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With the passing of Proposition 16, voters would be removing the 1996 ban on affirmative action, thus advancing equity and restoring equal opportunities in the public sectors. The pandemic has highlighted the disparities faced by marginalized communities, in vulnerabilities to disease due to lack of health care and economic hardship. Voting yes will assist those affected most by this crisis.

In 1996, voters amended the California constitution with Proposition 209, banning the government and public institutions from discriminating or granting preferential treatment to persons on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in public employment, public education and public contracting.

Women and communities of color are historically disenfranchised in the US, which is precisely why affirmative action was implemented in the 1960's; to combat racism, prejudice and bias.

Opponents argue that this proposition discriminates against whites, that the state should treat everyone equally and that it will ultimately divide Californians. But systemic racism does not negatively affect whites, to the contrary, it puts them at an advantage through the very preferential treatment they claim to be against.

Equity is a prerequisite to equality. After Prop 209 passed, women and people of color reported a $1 billion annual loss in contract awards, and campuses saw a 12% decrease in under-represented student populations. Therefore, affirmative action is necessary in the fight for equal opportunity.

"Proposition 16 is a step in the right direction toward civil rights and equity. As a college, we will continue our advocacy efforts to end systemic racism and discrimination," said Marisa Perez, president of the Cerritos College Board of Trustees.

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