

Prop. 16 will level the playing field for women and communities of color

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Body

Oct 14, 2020(CalMatters: <https://calmatters.org> Delivered by Newstex) ;; In summary Prop. 16 takes us one step closer to a state of equity by giving us the tools to fight racial and gender discrimination without quotas. By Jodi Hicks, Special to CalMatters Jodi Hicks is the president and CEO of Planned Parenthood Affiliates of California, info@voteyesonprop16.org [1].;As a leading provider of sexual and reproductive health care, Planned Parenthood fights for reproductive freedom to ensure everyone - regardless of race, zip code, income or immigration status - has access to the high quality, affordable care they need and deserve. But we know there is no reproductive freedom while discriminatory barriers to health care, education and employment still exist; while systemic racism and sexism continue to run deep within our national and statewide institutions. We see that clearly in the fact that in 2020, women are still paid 80 cents for every dollar a white man earns - Black women 61 cents and Latinas just 42 cents.

At our current rate, it would take a century [2]for women to be paid equally. We can't wait that long. Fortunately this November, the fight for racial and gender equality is on the ballot, and we can take a major step toward dismantling these barriers. Keep tabs on the latest California policy and politics news By passing Proposition 16[3], Californians have the power to level the playing field for women and communities of color in our state. Prop. 16 would restore programs that hire women and people of color, invest in women and minority-owned businesses, and ensure women and people of color have access to education and the resources they need to succeed. For too long, we as a country have under-invested and under-resourced Black, Latino and Indigenous communities - leading to less access to health care and dramatic health care disparities. We see these effects in the ravages of COVID-19: economic inequality, structural racism and public health failures have translated to exponentially higher infection and death rates in the Black, Latino and Indigenous communities. We see it too in the fact that women - especially women of color - are losing their jobs at higher rates[4] than men. And the latest federal jobs report indicates an even more troubling trend, in staggering numbers, women are dropping out[5] of the workforce entirely - particularly women of color. With so many children attending school remotely, women have taken on additional care work at home to help their families, while in many cases, continuing to juggle a full-time job where they're paid less. But for hundreds of thousands of women, going back to work isn't an option, as their jobs have been eliminated altogether. As their jobs have disappeared, so has their ability to pay for health care and other essential services. But California cannot help those hardest hit by COVID-19 because our state leaders cannot take active measures to root out systemic racism and promote equal opportunity. Despite our progressive values, California is one of only nine states that outlaw policies promoting equal opportunity like affirmative action. But this November, we have the power to do something about it. By voting Yes on Prop. 16, we can end the ban on affirmative action and start knocking down the barriers all women face. In states that allow affirmative action, women and people of color compete on equal footing for jobs, promotions and contracts. While Prop. 16 doesn't eradicate California's history of gender and

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racial discrimination, it does take us one step closer to a state of equity by giving us the tools to fight racial and gender discrimination without quotas so that we can all thrive together. That's why Planned Parenthood Affiliates of California is proud to join U.S. Sen. Kamala Harris, Gov. Gavin Newsom, the ACLU, the California Teachers Association, founders of Black Lives Matter, and so many more in supporting Prop. 16. We fully support Prop. 16 because we stand with, and work to listen to and uplift, the voices of those who have been systematically discriminated against. This November, the fight for racial and gender equity is on the ballot in California. Join me, and Planned Parenthood in California, in voting Yes on Prop. 16. _____ CalMatters Guide to the propositions: Proposition 16: Restoring affirmative action [6] Support in-depth reporting that matters As a nonprofit newsroom, we rely on the generosity of Californians like you to cover the issues that matter. If you value our reporting, support our journalism with a donation. [1]: info@voteyesonprop16.org [2]: <https://www.cnn.com/2019/10/24/it-will-take-100-years-for-women-to-earn-the-same-as-men-at-this-rate.html> [3]: [https://ballotpedia.org/California_Proposition_16,_Repeal_Proposition_209_Affirmative_Action_Amendment_\(2020\)](https://ballotpedia.org/California_Proposition_16,_Repeal_Proposition_209_Affirmative_Action_Amendment_(2020)) [4]: <https://econofact.org/impact-of-the-covid-19-crisis-on-womens-employment> [5]: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/03/us/jobs-women-dropping-out-workforce-wage-gap-gender.html> [6]: <https://calmatters.org/election-2020-guide/proposition-16-affirmative-action/>

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