

Poll: California voters don't want racial preferences reinstated

Power Line

September 23, 2020

Copyright 2020 by Power Line All Rights Reserved

Length: 337 words

Dateline: New Delhi, 2020-09-23 22:58:19

Body

September 23 -- In 1996, voters in California passed Proposition 209, which amended the state's constitution to prohibit public institutions from discriminating on the basis of race, sex, or ethnicity. I wrote about the beneficial effects of Prop 209, including higher graduation rates for Blacks and Latinos, in this post.

This year, Californians will vote on Proposition 16, an attempt to remove the ban on racial preferences from the state's constitution. Prop 16 has the support of governor Gavin Newsom, Kamala Harris, the entire state Democratic establishment, the teachers unions, Hollywood, and woke athletes. Its backers enjoy a massive financial advantage over its opponents.

However, a new poll finds that Prop 16 lacks the support of one very important group - California voters. According to the poll, only 31 percent of likely voters say they will vote for it. 47 percent say they will vote against it.

Forty-six percent of Democratic likely voters say they support Proposition 16, compared with 26 percent of independents and 9 percent of Republicans. The San Francisco Bay Area (40 percent of likely voters) and Los Angeles (37 percent) are the only regions where more than one-third of voters support Prop 16.

However, we should keep in mind that, according to this poll, there are an awful lot of voters who are undecided about Prop 16. Given their financial advantage and backing from the establishment, supporters of racial preferences will make a strong run at winning over the undecideds and bringing Democrats into the fold en masse. Nonetheless, I'm very encouraged by this poll. Frankly, I didn't expect opponents of preferences to have a 16 point edge in California.

The vote on Proposition 16 will be extremely consequential. If deep-blue California defeats it, then it's hard to imagine any state going the other way on racial preferences.

There are times when identity politics can seem almost unstoppable as a corrupting political and cultural force. Defeating Proposition 16 would show that it isn't.

Load-Date: September 24, 2020