

CALIFORNIA

BY
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BAY B



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HOW TO BALLOT

A NONPARTISAN & NONBORING VOTER GUIDE
FOR THE 2018 MIDTERM ELECTION

CALIFORNIA

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SF VOTER GUIDE AT:

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CALIFORNIA



CALIFORNIA

You can check if you're registered to vote at Vote.org. CA's deadline is October 22nd, but if you miss it, no worries, you can still vote. Ask for a provisional ballot on Election Day, Tuesday, November 6th.

Stateswomen and statesmen –

We know you're super busy. Road trips to Big Sur don't drive themselves. We made this voter guide to make your election cram session easier.

It summarizes local ballot propositions and races in a nonpartisan way. We made this because it's an important midterm election year and we believe local issues matter. Even though we live in a blue state nationally, our vote has a huge impact on what happens locally. Housing, rent control, and how much floor space an egg-laying hen should legally have are topics that weigh heavily on us.

So, go vote.

This guide is not a website

You can try swiping down to refresh, but it won't work. This guide is not a webpage, which is great because it's one less glowing rectangle you have to stare at, but it also means that more up-to-date information probably exists. Luckily, we made a couple of websites for your glowing rectangle. It includes citations and interactive graphics. Check it out for more in-depth reading and links.

LIVE IN SF OR SAN JOSE?

bythebay.cool

LIVE ELSEWHERE IN CA?

ballot.fyi

Yo, tell me how I should vote.

I dunno.

Are you texting me from a voting booth right now? It's 7pm you only have an hour left.

I know that's why I'm asking.

Rent control is a good thing, right?
Cheaper rent = affordable housing.

It's complicated. It might mean less available apartments and drive up rent across the board. It depends on how a city implements it.

Ugh, just tell me how you voted.

I'm in the booth next to you! Read bythebay.cool

Prop 1 issues \$4 billion for housing

THIS SEEMS PRETTY CUT & DRY

Word. The proposition is straightforward, but how you should vote, not so much. Essentially, Prop 1 would issue \$4B in general obligation bonds to fund housing programs, loans, grants, and projects.

General obligation bonds are loans from investors that are repaid by the state over time with interest. The first \$1B would fund housing loans for military veterans, which are of no cost to the state, while the other \$3B would cost \$5.9B (plus interest), or \$170M annually, to repay.

IS THERE A SUPER COMPLICATED BACKSTORY?

Nope! Prop 1 is part of a package of bills that intends to increase housing production and lower housing costs for residents. By law, every resident has to approve, aka vote, on bonds that cost more than \$300K.

Opponents argue that with high taxes and a state budget surplus of \$16B, legislators should make structural reforms rather than create more debt. They claim Prop 1 is another band-aid, not a solution. Critics argue that CEQA, rent control, and labor wages are examples of regulation that have driven up construction costs and contributed to CA's housing shortage.

Almost everyone agrees that housing affordability in CA is a critical issue, but how we resolve it remains contentious.



CA doesn't need to add more debt. We already pay some of the highest taxes in the country.

Prop 1 doesn't necessarily mean higher taxes. It depends on how much we tax and spend on other stuff.

We have a budget surplus so why don't we spend it on building more housing instead of loans?

Recessions are real and we should save our extra \$\$ for a rainy day.

Prop 1 would help 30K families + 7.5K farmworkers afford their homes, and 15K people and 3K veterans buy new homes.

But CA needs 180K homes a year and Prop 1 falls short of that. Voting NO tells pols that we need more than a temporary fix.

We can debate housing forever. People need homes now. Prop 1 is the fastest way to help them.

Prop 2 changes how we spend the Millionaire's tax

A MILLIONAIRE'S TAX, EH?

It was new to us too. Prop 2 would allow the state to use money from the “Millionaire’s tax” – a 1% income tax for those earning \$1M or more a year – to pay for housing for homeless people who are mentally ill.

WHAT'S THE DEBATE?

Well, the Millionaire’s tax was originally passed as Prop 63 in 2004, and it was intended to help counties create and expand mental health services with a “treatment-first” approach. In 2016, however, the state legislature took a “housing-first” approach and passed a program called *No Place Like Home* to build permanent supportive housing for homeless people suffering from mental illness. The one-time \$2B program would have re-purposed funds from Prop 63, but a lawsuit claimed Prop 63 didn’t specify housing costs. State legislators couldn’t change the policy and the program was stalled.

Now it's being thrown back to voters. If Prop 2 passes, the *No Place Like Home* program would receive \$120M a year from the \$2B generated annually by the Millionaire’s tax.



HOUSING-FIRST OR TREATMENT-FIRST?

Homelessness and mental illness aren't separate issues. We need to tackle both.

Agreed, but everyone already cares about housing. Prop 2 would be stealing \$\$ from treating the mentally ill.

But we're building housing for the mentally ill.

Plus, counties have hardly been using their money on treatment. They've been stashing it.

They can't spend it all. They're providing a social service that's paid for as long as the economy is good. That might not last.

Don't forget that cities are often reluctant to approve housing for the homeless. We might end up with fewer new homes than you think.

But you agree we need more housing? Prop 2 does that without adding debt!

The \$120M a year will pay for interest and a lot of administrative fees. There are better ways to solve housing if that's your goal.

Prop 3 issues \$8.9B for water projects



HAVE WE MET BEFORE?

Kind of! In June, we passed Prop 68, a \$4.1B bond measure that funds water and environmental projects in CA. Prop 3 is another \$8.9B general obligation bond measure that funds water-related improvements across the state. Both measures add up to a grand total of about \$13B.

WOW, WE REALLY CARE ABOUT WATER

Oh definitely, and especially farmers and agricultural water suppliers. Prop 3 would specifically improve the conditions of:

The Legislative Analyst's Office estimates that repaying Prop 3 would cost about \$430M a year for the next 40 years, totaling \$17.3B with interest, which is about 1/3 of one percent of CA's General Fund budget.

STILL SOUNDS LIKE A LOT OF MONEY

Critics of Prop 3 agree. Unlike Prop 68, which was put on the ballot by the state legislature, Prop 3 is on the ballot because the authors gathered enough signatures. Opponents say Prop 3 is a "pay-to-play" ballot measure that not only lacks administrative oversight, but also funds projects that directly benefit those who backed the campaign.

Prop 3 has raised about \$3.4M from notable donors, including Land O' Lakes and Wonderful Orchards (the producers of POM juice and FIJI water). The owners of Wonderful Orchards, for instance, have farmland that sits in Kern County, of which \$750M of Prop 3 would go towards fixing a damaged canal that waters the region. On the other hand, supporters argue that Prop 3 is a bipartisan initiative that doesn't just focus on urban, coastal water problems like Prop 68, but commits significant funding and resources to inland California. Local water authorities along with agriculture and conservation groups also support Prop 3 saying it's a critical step to upgrading CA's water system.

Drought, wildfires, earthquakes, CA has got so many issues, man.

Chilllll. Did you read about Prop 3?

Yea, who paid for it?

Lots of people in agribusinesses
(Yes, that's a word).

Some are calling it "pay to play," like farmers paying for Prop 3 to get their canal fixed. Did you see that it doesn't go through CA's annual budgetary process either? Kinda sketchy.

Yea, but the prop does require an independent spending audit every three years. And yes Friant-Kern canal need fixing. Oroville dam def needs some love too.

Why do I have to pay for a canal in central valley?

People pay for things that don't directly affect them all the time. I mean, clean drinking water is important

Prop 3 authors: "Typically, in polling usually what polls well is safe drinking water, clean water in rivers and streams and water supply that's resistant to drought".

Fine. You know what else is important?

In n' Out. Wanna grab a double-double?

I see you, girl.

Prop 4 issues \$1.5B for hospitals

WHAT'S GOING ON?

CA children's hospitals receive a majority of their funding from Medi-Cal, the state's insurance program for low-income residents, which means they often lack the funds to keep up with their infrastructure costs. Prop 4 would issue \$1.5B in general obligation bonds to renovate and upgrade CA's children's hospitals, specifically eight private, nonprofit hospitals (\$135M each), five University of California medical centers (\$54M each), and other hospitals that specialize in treating children (\$150M).

General obligation bonds are loans from investors that are repaid by the state over time with interest. The \$1.5B would cost us \$2.9B over 35 years, or \$80M annually (roughly 0.1% of our annual budget).



DO WE ALWAYS FUND PRIVATE HOSPITALS?

Critics say we shouldn't. Opponents argue private hospitals should be primarily funded by private donations or pre-existing state funds. Since state funding for hospital infrastructure has been cut over the years, hospitals have successfully relied on bond measures to fund their operations. So far, the state's eight private hospitals have contributed a total of more than \$10M in support of Prop 4.

Prop 5 gives old folks a property tax discount when they move

ANOTHER PERK FOR SENIORS?

Yes, but it doesn't just impact the elderly. Prop 5 would give homeowners who are over 55 or severely disabled a discounted property tax rate when they decide to move to a new home. The measure matters because it incentivizes homeowners to move, potentially increasing the number of houses available for sale, but it also reduces the state's property tax revenue by an estimated \$1B, which is mostly used to fund public education.

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

Prop 5 is an amendment to Prop 13. As a homeowner, you pay property taxes every year, but under Prop 13, your property tax is capped at 1% of the home's purchase price, adjusted up to 2% each year for inflation. It's nice for you, but since Prop 13 was passed in 1978, the state has lost billions of dollars in lost property tax revenue, and because homeowners are disincentivized from moving, CA's housing supply has been stunted.

HOW DOES THIS HAPPEN?

Say your 56-year-old neighbor bought her home in 1980 for \$110K, and you just bought the place next door for \$1M (aka a steal in SF). Even though you live in very similar homes, she'll pay \$2,200 in taxes this year while you pay \$11,000. Also under Prop 13, your neighbor is allowed to transfer her old property tax assessment to a cheaper home, but restrictions apply. For instance, she can only do it once in her lifetime and she has to move within the same county. If she moves across county lines, there are only 11 counties that recognize her former property tax assessment.

Now, put yourself in your neighbor's shoes. Would you move? Even though everyone's gone to college and you have way too much space, you have a strong financial incentive to stay put, pay a lower property tax rate, and save money.

OKAY, TAKE ME BACK TO PROP 5.

Prop 5 basically gets rid of the previous restrictions and lets Californians over 55 pay a discounted property tax regardless of where they move in California, how many times they move, or whether it's into a more or less expensive home. Supporters argue the measure would incentivize long-time homeowners to move out and free up CA's limited housing supply.

But critics claim CA's housing shortage won't be solved by simply making more homes available. Elderly property owners already benefit from a tax break when they want to move to a cheaper home, Prop 5 would be another property tax discount that would burden local governments.

If Prop 5 passes, the nonpartisan Legislative Analyst's Office estimates that CA schools and local governments would lose a total of over \$100M a year in property taxes for the first few years and eventually lose up to \$1B a year.



Prop 6 repeals last year's gas tax

Prop 6 would repeal the Road Repair and Accountability Act (RRAA), a gas tax and vehicle fee that generates over \$5B annually for transportation projects. Prop 6 would also require all future gas tax increases to be approved by voters (via ballot propositions).

WHAT'S THE DEBATE?

Prop 6 is predictably split along party lines. In 2017, RRAA narrowly passed, with two Dems voting no and one Republican voting yes (thanks to some side deals). Since its passage, Republicans have used the gas tax to recall a state senator and put Prop 6 on the ballot, with the specific goal of increasing Republican voter turnout.

Conservatives argue that the gas tax is regressive, and CA already has the second-highest gas taxes in the country. They also point to the state's \$16B surplus, even though about \$14B is for weathering the next recession.

Democrats point to our lacking transportation infrastructure. CA ranks 11th in bridge quality, but 49th in road quality, according to US News & World Report. They also say that a gas tax that improves transportation infrastructure is like a usage fee. Those who pay the most are also the most frequent users.



TAXES BROUGHT TO YOU BY RRAA

GAS TAX RRAA raised the gas tax from \$0.28/gal to \$0.30/gal, and will raise it again in 2019 to \$0.47/gal to raise \$2.4B in revenue.

DIESEL TAX RRAA raised the diesel tax from \$0.16/gal to \$0.36/gal and increases the diesel fuel sales tax to 5.75% to generate \$1.1B.

VEHICLE REGISTRATION FEES Depending on the value of your car, a transportation improvement fee of \$25 to \$175 will be added to your vehicle registration costs. Rakes in \$1.6B.

ZERO-EMISSION VEHICLE FEE RRAA introduced a new \$100 fee for ZEVs, which is expected to raise \$20M.

AND WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO?

CA's gas tax would generate about \$3.2B a year in revenue, and here's how we'd spend it:

\$200M

COUNTIES WITH LOCAL TRANSPORTATION TAXES

\$25M

SERVICING FREEWAYS

\$7M

TRANSPORTATION-RELATED RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

\$400M

STATE BRIDGES AND CULVERTS

\$100M

BIKING AND WALKING IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

\$25M

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY GRANTS

\$5M

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

With the remaining \$2.5B, half would go to Caltrans for highway maintenance and repair and the other half would fund local transportation infrastructure projects.

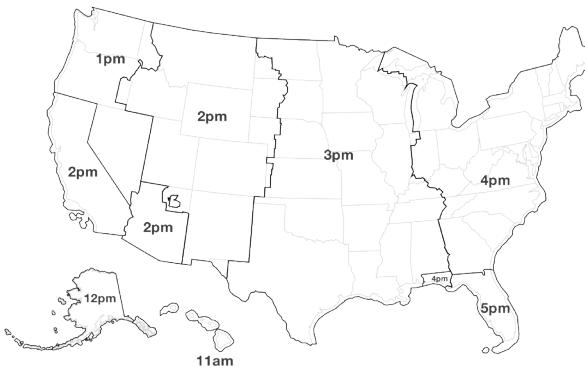
Prop 7 helps make Daylight Saving permanent

IS THIS REALLY POSSIBLE?

Okay, there are a few caveats. CA can only change Daylight Saving Time (DST) if two-thirds of the state legislature approve it and if it's cool with the federal government. Currently, the national Uniform Time Act of 1966 allows states to follow DST (you know – "Spring forward, November back" – something like that) or opt-out (like Arizona and Hawaii). If we want to move to DST year-round, which is what's being discussed in light of Prop 7, CA needs Congress to amend federal law.

WHAT WOULD DST ALL YEAR LOOK LIKE?

If Congress allowed us to have our own time zone, the time difference between CA and NY would be two hours during the winter and three hours during the summer (presuming other states observe DST). Coincidentally, CA and AZ would share the same time, all the time. Since FL just passed legislation to make DST permanent, we'd always be three hours difference from Florida Man.



TIMEZONES DURING THE WINTER (NOV-MAR)

What the country would look like if CA and FL remain on DST while other states are on Standard Time.

BYTHEBAY.COOL



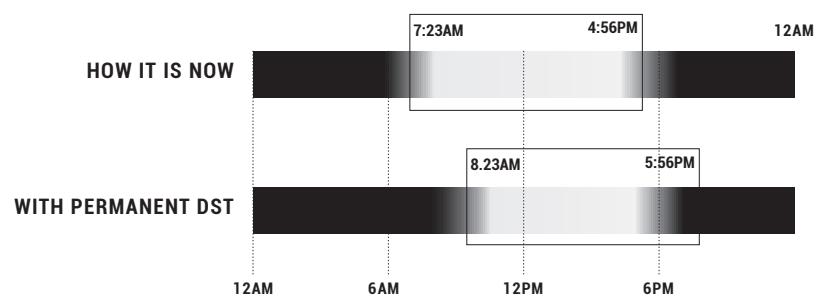
BRIGHTER MORNINGS OR LONGER AFTERNOONS?

Moving to DST year-round would be the most noticeable during winter. On Christmas day in SF, for instance, the sun would rise at 8:23 AM rather than 7:23 AM. Prop 7 critics argue that children would be going to school in the dark and more traffic accidents would happen during rush hour.

On the bright side, the earliest the sun would set in SF would be 5:50 PM rather than current record of 4:50 PM. Prop 7 supporters say later sunsets would result in electricity savings, less traffic accidents and crime. DST and not switching our clocks twice a year also seems to reduce heart attacks. For real. Google it.

Some people simply want brighter mornings; others want longer afternoons. Luckily, everyone has an opinion.

SUNRISE AND SUNSET TIMES ON CHRISTMAS DAY IN CA



Prop 8 caps dialysis clinics' profits



WAIT, WHAT'S DIALYSIS?

Every month about 80K Californians living with kidney disease go to a dialysis clinic for treatment. Dialysis performs what a healthy kidney would do, and for three times a week, patients sit in a chair for four-hour sessions while a machine filters their blood.

GOT IT. WHAT'S PROP 8?

Prop 8 would limit dialysis clinics' revenue to 115% of "direct patient care service costs" and "health care quality improvement costs," and require clinics to issue refunds for anything exceeding that amount. Really, Prop 8 is a roundabout way to legislatively compel these businesses to invest in staff wages, benefits, training and development, and other costs that fall under these two categories.

SEEMS KINDA OBSCURE TO BE VOTING ON THIS

No kidding. Prop 8 is the result of ongoing disputes between a labor organization, SEIU-UHW West, and CA's two largest dialysis businesses, DaVita and Fresenius Medical Care. SEIU-UHW West has been trying to unionize dialysis healthcare workers since 2016, but have been unsuccessful. In the past, they've used CA's ballot initiative process to gain leverage in negotiations, and Prop 8 is their latest effort.

SEIU-UHW say they want to improve the quality of patient care in these highly-profitable clinics, while opponents claim they're simply trying to recruit more union members. Both sides have already spent tens of millions of dollars campaigning over Prop 8.

WHAT'S THE IMPACT ON CLINICS?

It's unclear. Prop 8's revenue cap could cause clinics to increase spending on "direct patient care services" and "healthcare improvements," but critics argue that these categories don't include spending on medical directors, clinic coordinators, regulatory compliance, or other costs, which could force some clinics to shutdown, endangering patients' lives. The Legislative Analyst's Office reports that the financial impact on dialysis clinics is generally unclear.

Prop 10 legalizes rent control

WHAT'S THE DEALIO?

Prop 10 would repeal the *Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act*, a state law passed in 1995 that prohibits cities from regulating rent on housing built after that year. Some cities, like LA, SF, and San Jose, already have local rent control laws, but Costa-Hawkins prevents them from regulating rents on more housing after 1995.

ISN'T RENT CONTROL A GOOD THING?

Not necessarily. Prop 10 critics say rent control is problematic for CA's housing shortage because:

- It's not means-tested. Residents who live in rent-controlled apartments aren't necessarily the people who need it most.
- It disincentivizes landlords from maintaining or improving their properties.
- It discourages developers from building housing because it limits rental prices and potential profits.

On the other hand, Prop 10 supporters say the lack of affordable housing has led to more evictions, displacement, and homelessness across the state. Rent controlled apartments help residents afford to live in increasingly expensive cities. Plus, local governments are the best advocates for their residents. Passing Prop 10 would empower cities and counties to decide how much rent control they need and give them the flexibility to respond to local housing needs.



Yo, how much is your one BR again?

1200, rent controlled.

WTF don't you make six figures?

That's barely surviving in SF.

So you're voting yes on Prop 10?

Maybe. My landlord almost bought me out last year to convert this bldg into condos.

You complained about him before. He's been sloppy about the dishwasher, right?

Basically unresponsive. He knows he can make a lot more \$\$\$ off of condos.

I'd love to pay your rent.

Yea, well you can try your luck in LA and Oakland. There are some rent controlled apts there.

Prop 10 FTW.

I'm never going to leave SF now. Or get my dishwasher fixed.



Prop 11 requires EMTs be on-call during breaks

WHAT'S THE LATEST WITH EMTS?

Well, if emergency medical technicians (EMTs) are eating lunch and a 911 call comes in, they have to put down their avocado sandos and respond to the call. For private ambulance companies, it's become common practice for their workers to be on duty during their meals and breaks. Prop 11 would make it a legal standard.

REALTALK. WHY ARE WE VOTING ON THIS?

Okay, here's the predictably political backstory:



In 2016, the CA Supreme Court ruled that security workers were no longer required to keep their radios on during their scheduled breaks. Suddenly, on-call breaks became illegal, and it prompted EMTs to file similar lawsuits against ambulance companies.



The following year, labor unions started promoting legislation requiring employers to provide breaks or pay employees for their interrupted breaks. The legislation didn't pan out, but ambulance companies started to worry. In an attempt to stave off more lawsuits and labor union policies, American Medical Response, the country's largest ambulance company, spent \$2.8M to put Prop 11 on the ballot. AMR has since poured another \$5M to promote the ballot initiative.

Prop 11 also absolves private ambulance companies from any liability they might have incurred since the CA Supreme Court ruling, like not having to pay EMTs for their previously interrupted breaks.

WHY NOT GIVE EMTS REAL BREAKS?

It'd be too expensive. The US Department of Health mandates that ambulance service reach 75% of life-threatening calls within eight minutes. Ambulance companies would have to hire about 25% more EMTs to match their current coverage and response times. The Legislative Analyst's Office estimates that these increased costs – about \$100M – would likely fall on local governments.

WHAT DO EMTS THINK?

The EMT labor union spoke out against Prop 11, but other than that, it's been kind of quiet. No one even submitted an official ballot argument against Prop 11.

Prop 12 sets floor space requirements for farmed animals

Prop 12 would set minimum space requirements for egg-laying hens, pigs, and baby cows, and ban the sales of meat and eggs from animals that aren't in compliance, even if they're raised outside of California. Prop 12 would also require all egg-laying hens to be literally cage-free by 2022.

It's a lot to take in, but we want to make sure you're eggstra knowledgeable on this meaty proposition so you'll be able to eggsplain it too all of your segsy friends.

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

The origins of Prop 12 began a decade ago with Prop 2. In 2008, we passed Prop 2 which said animals sold for meat and eggs must be able "to lie down, stand up, fully extend their limbs and turn around." The policy was later expanded to include all eggs sold in CA, regardless of where they were laid. Farmers were pissed, and some of the reasons they fought Prop 2 are still relevant to Prop 12. They claimed Prop 2 was:

UNCONSTITUTIONAL It required out-of-state farmers selling eggs in CA to comply with its policies. Just last year, 13 states filed a lawsuit to repeal Prop 2 with the US Supreme Court.

TOO VAGUE Farmers complained Prop 2 was too broad and therefore unenforceable.

EXPENSIVE It cost CA farmers several hundred million dollars to convert their hen housing systems, but it's likely they would have done that anyway because of salmonella fears and shifting public opinion.

HURTFUL TO PRODUCTION By July 2016, academics estimated CA egg production had declined by 35% and consumer egg prices rose by 33%.

INEFFECTIVE Prop 2 didn't specify an enforcing authority so it fell on localities to enforce the law, and surprise(!), it didn't happen. The LA Times says two-thirds of hens are still in cages, just less cramped than before.

SO HOW'S PROP 12 DIFFERENT?

For starters, Prop 12 sets specific space requirements and actually deems the CA Department of Food and Agriculture responsible for enforcing the law. This additional oversight is estimated to cost the state \$10M annually.

Prop 12 also outlines that egg-laying hens must be legitimately cage-free by 2022. This means farmers have to allocate 1 to 1.5 square feet per hen, and allow hens to freely move around inside a building.

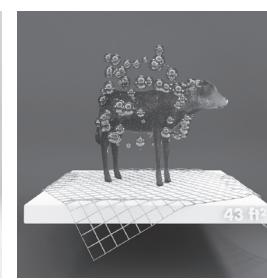
Prop 12 opponents, including PETA, argue Prop 2 never led to cage-free hens, and they criticize Prop 12 for enabling poor conditions to continue until 2022. Other critics say it's not enough time for farmers and sellers to transition, which will only increase costs for consumers.

PROP 12 WOULD BAN THE SALE OF...

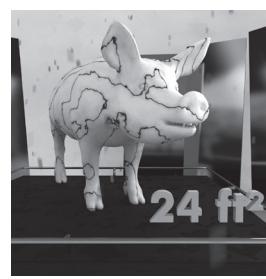
ARTWORK BY DAVID GOLIGORSKY



Eggs from hens raised in areas smaller than 1 square foot



Veal from cows raised in areas smaller than 43 square feet



Pork from pigs raised in areas smaller than 24 square feet

California Races



People who do stuff
at the state level

US SENATOR

THE ROLE

Whether it's immigration, taxes, or confirming judicial nominees, the US Senator is responsible for writing and voting on national bills. Vote wisely because it's a six-year term.

THE RACE

Longtime Democratic US Senator Dianne Feinstein is being challenged by fellow Democrat Kevin De León. While Dianne won the primary election with 44% of the vote, and Kevin with 11%, CA's Democratic Party officially endorsed Kevin over Dianne. Dianne has served as a Senator for more than 25 years and is a ranking member of the US Senate Judiciary Committee. Kevin is a progressive state senator from LA and was the former leader of the State Senate.

GOVERNOR

THE ROLE

The Governor of California is in charge of running the fifth largest economy in the world (woot!). He/she manages the state's budget, enforces laws, and proposes new policies to keep CA buzzing. It's a four-year term.

THE RACE

Democrat Gavin Newsom and Republican John Cox are facing off in this year's gubernatorial election. Gavin won the primary election with about 34% of the vote, and John with 25%, but CA's Lieutenant Governor has been facing tough competition from the Trump-backed candidate. While Gavin has been the frontrunner, some polls show his lead narrowing. Gavin's campaign is focused on national issues like healthcare, education, and climate change, whereas John is campaigning on high costs of living, including the gas tax repeal and an audit of the DMV.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

THE ROLE

The Lieutenant Governor is the Governor's second in command. The LG steps in when the Governor is out-of-state or out of commission, and serves as the President of the State Senate, casting any tie-breaking votes. The LG also sits on several state commissions and agencies, including important higher education boards. It's a four-year term.

THE RACE

Democrat and former US ambassador to Hungary Eleni Kounalakis is running against fellow Democratic candidate and state senator Ed Hernandez. Eleni led the primary election with 23% of the vote, while Ed garnered about 21%. Eleni, who would be the first woman LG to ever be elected, is running on affordable housing, climate change, and college tuition issues. Ed, who served a decade in the state senate and assembly, is focusing on healthcare and improving CA's K-12 education system.

SECRETARY OF STATE

THE ROLE

The Secretary of State is the chief clerk and elections officer. He/she oversees the state's voter database, tracks campaign and lobbyist disclosures, and processes business filings. It's a four-year term.

THE RACE

Democratic incumbent Alex Padilla is being challenged by Republican Mark Meuser. Alex won the primary election with 51% of the vote, followed by Mark with 32%. Alex, a former LA City Council member and state senator, promises to continue expanding voter access to the ballot and digitizing CA's corporate filings. Mark, a practicing lawyer, plans to tackle voter fraud, which includes cleaning up voter databases and increasing voter registration.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

THE ROLE

The AG is the ultimate enforcer of the law. He/she oversees the state's Department of Justice, which employs over 1,100 attorneys, and is the state's chief counsel. It's a four-year term.

THE RACE

Current Attorney General Democrat Xavier Becerra is taking on Republican candidate Steven Bailey. Xavier, CA's first Latino AG, won 45% of the primary election vote, while Steven, a superior court judge in El Dorado County, earned 25% of the vote. Xavier's platform includes fighting for accessible health care, immigrant rights, and environmental protection. Steven is a proponent of the death penalty, the "Three Strikes" law, and prosecuting drug and property crimes.

CONTROLLER

THE ROLE

The Controller is the chief financial officer. He/she tracks and manages how state funds are spent, and actually has more responsibilities than the state treasurer 😊. It's a four-year term.

THE RACE

Incumbent Democratic candidate Betty Yee is running against Republican Konstantinos Roditis. Betty won 62% of the vote in the primary election, with Konstantinos earning about 34% of the vote. Betty's platform includes comprehensive tax reform, creating a retirement savings program for private sector workers, and combating climate change. Konstantinos, a former city commissioner, is campaigning against additional taxes and supports the state gas tax repeal.

STATE TREASURER

THE ROLE

The Treasurer oversees CA's investments and finances. He/she deals with the state's budgets, financial planning, and serves on a number of state boards and commissions. It's a four-year term.

THE RACE

Democratic candidate Fiona Ma is running against Republican candidate Greg Conlon. Fiona won 43% of the vote during the primary election while Greg came in with 22%. Fiona, a public tax accountant and member of the board of equalization, also served as a member of the state assembly and SF's board of supervisors. Greg, also a CPA, was appointed to the CA Public Utilities Commission and CA Transportation Commission for several years.

INSURANCE COMMISSIONER

THE ROLE

The Insurance Commissioner oversees the Dept. of Insurance (surprise!), which licenses, regulates, and examines insurance companies. Fun fact: Insurers collect \$310B a year in premiums in CA making us the nation's largest insurance market. NBD.

THE RACE

Independent candidate and former CA Insurance Commissioner (2007-2011) Steve Poizner is running against Democratic State Senator Ricardo Lara. It was a close primary election with Steve winning with 41% of the vote followed by Ricardo with 40%. Steve, a former entrepreneur turned nonprofit director, is focused on issues like wildfires, health insurance fraud, and cyber security. Ricardo promises to stand up to Trump's federal policies on a variety of issues, including health care and immigrants' rights.

STATE ASSEMBLY MEMBER

THE ROLE

State assemblyfolk are responsible for passing state bills, setting budgets, raising and lowering taxes, and voting for or against gubernatorial vetoes. Because assembly members represent smaller districts than state senators and are elected every two years, they tend to be more approachable and responsive to public pressure.

THE RACE

You'll be electing a representative to the state assembly (CA's equivalent to the US of Representatives) so be sure to check who are the candidates in your district. There are a total of 80 members in the state assembly who serve two-year terms.

STATE SENATOR

THE ROLE

There are fewer state senators than state assembly members, but they essentially share the same responsibilities in representing your interests and governing the state. Because state senators represent bigger districts and are elected every four years, they tend to be more willing to take political risks and tackle longer-term issues.

THE RACE

You'll be electing a representative to the state senate (CA's equivalent to the US Senate) so be sure to check who are the candidates in your district. There are a total of 40 seats in the state senate and senators are elected for four-year terms.