



Los Angeles Times

Times Endorsements

L.A. TIMES ARCHIVES

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The Times endorses selectively, on a case-by-case basis. Here are recommendations for Tuesday's election.

Measures and Propositions

Los Angeles County Measure A: Yes. This would hike the Los Angeles County sales tax by half a cent to hire 5,000 police officers and sheriff's deputies, putting the L.A. area more in line with other major cities such as New York and Chicago.

Los Angeles City Measure O: Yes. This \$500-million bond would fund cleanups of storm-sewer runoff, a large and vague category but an urgent problem. Spending the funds would require tough oversight.

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Proposition 1A: Yes. A compromise among cities, counties, special districts, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and the legislative leadership, this restricts the state's ability to raid local treasuries but does not shackle state government in any real fiscal emergency. Not perfect, but the right direction.

Proposition 59: Yes. There's not even a ballot argument against amending the state Constitution to guarantee more public access to government meetings and decisions.

Proposition 60: No. Democratic and Republican party leaders wrote this in an attempt to block the primary election reforms of Proposition 62. It would lock the current primary system into the state Constitution and assure more paralysis in Sacramento.

Proposition 60A: No. If micromanaging money from the sale of state property sounds like a crazy thing to write into the Constitution, it is. Legislators wrote this as part of Proposition 60, to make it sound more like a good thing. A judge rightly ordered it separated. Now it's just trivial.

Proposition 61: No. This "trust us" measure asks for \$750 million in bonds to build, remodel and furnish 13 children's hospitals. The hospitals could then charge more for use of their new facilities, but the bond doesn't guarantee more medical care to anyone.

Proposition 62: Yes. Anything to get more moderates into state office. By establishing an open primary in which all voters select candidates from a single list with the top two facing each other in the general election, this measure would help offset the "safe" districts that have turned legislators into partisan battlers.

Proposition 63: No. Sticking it to millionaires may be popular with voters, but it's bad public policy. This proposed 1% tax on incomes reported at more than \$1 million a year would be dedicated to mental health services, vaguely defined. Confining revenue to a narrow purpose contorts state government. More seriously, it hobbles the state's ability to adjust income tax rates.

Proposition 64: Yes. The Legislature failed for a decade to pass reforms ending shakedown lawsuits against businesses by private lawyers alleging consumer protection violations. This measure does the job, requiring those who sue to show harm to a client. It also won't do the damage to environmental lawsuits that opponents allege.

Proposition 65: No. Put on the ballot by the League of California Cities before the deal that resulted in Proposition 1A, this measure has been disowned by its original sponsors. It would fiscally tie the hands of state government.

Proposition 66: Yes. When voters passed the three-strikes law in 1994, they probably didn't envision putting people away for life for such offenses as petty theft. This measure corrects a costly, unevenly applied law by limiting third strikes to serious felonies.

Proposition 67: No. It addresses a real need -- reimbursing doctors and hospitals that treat uninsured patients -- but this measure is too narrow and its funding is simply goofy. It would increase the 911 telephone surcharge by 3%, but only a tiny fraction would go to the 911 system.

Proposition 68: No. Supporters claim this would force casino-owning Indian tribes to agree to pay 25% of their revenues to the state. Their real aim is to allow nontribal card rooms and racetracks to join the casino-gambling ranks. So few would-be voters believed the ruse that supporters have already conceded defeat.

Proposition 69: No. So broadly written that it would turn thousands of Californians not convicted of a crime into perpetual suspects, this measure would require the state to collect a DNA sample from everyone arrested on a felony charge. It clouds the presumption of innocence until proved guilty.

Proposition 70: No. Would grant Indian tribes 99-year compacts allowing them to operate casinos with no limits on slot machines and games, in exchange for paying 8.25% on net income to the state. Tribal gambling has expanded far more than voters envisioned, and this would compound the problem.

Proposition 71: Yes. Bond measures are typically used to pay for infrastructure improvements, not things like medical research. But by generating \$3 billion for research into embryonic stem cells, this measure could lead not just to cures but biotech innovations that would bolster the state's economy.

Proposition 72: No. The wrong solution to a very complex problem, this measure would force more California employers to provide healthcare to their workers. It's a desirable goal, but the measure would prompt some businesses to leave the state, while others would lay off workers or hire part-timers who wouldn't qualify for coverage.

U.S. Senate

Barbara Boxer. She is in tune with the majority of Californians on key issues such as the environment, a woman's choice on abortion and gun control. Her seniority also benefits the state.

Judicial Races

Office No. 18: Mildred Escobedo. Her experience as a Superior Court referee gives her a leg up.

Office No. 29: Lori Jones. As a deputy district attorney, she has more courtroom experience than her opponent.

Office No. 52: Laura Priver. A prosecutor, she is rated "well qualified" by her peers.

Office No. 53: Daniel Zeidler. The Superior Court referee is rated "well qualified."

Office No. 69: Donna Groman. This race pits two "well qualified" candidates against each other. We choose Groman for her experience as a court commissioner, but urge prosecutor Judith Levey Meyer to run again.

For more detailed recommendations, see www.latimes.com/endorsements.

To find your polling place: www.MyPollingPlace.com or www.ss.ca.gov/elections. Los Angeles County voters can also call (800) 815-2666.

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