

# Voting

## 15th Amendment

- No voting discrimination based on race

## 19th Amendment

- No voting discrimination based on sex

## 26th Amendment

- Reduce voting age to 18
- Happened around time of Vietnam war
  - They could be sent to military at 18

## 1965 Voting Rights Act

- First major legislation to protect voting rights especially for black Americans
  - Outlawed literacy tests

## Factors of Voter Turnout

- Socioeconomic status
- Income
- Education
- Race/ethnicity
- Age
- Strong party identification
- Voting barriers
- Mobilization to participate in elections
- Social involvement (years in a community, homeowners)
- High internal and external efficacy

## The calculus of voting

- $R = PB - C + D$
- Ways to lower voting costs (C)
  - Motor voter
    - Register to vote when you go to DMV
  - Same-day registration
  - Automatic registration
    - Any interaction with the DMV causes you to automatically be registered to vote

- You have to opt out
- Online registration
- “Preregistration”
- Vote by mail (VBM)
- “Souls to the polls” and other efforts
- Probability of your vote counting (P)
- “The value of doing one’s duty as a citizen, as well as an array of other values such as expressing support for the country and the political system” (D)
  - Civic duty

## Voting in California

- Who can vote
  - US citizen
  - Resident of California
  - 18 years or older on election day
  - Not currently serving in state or federal prison for a felony conviction
  - Not prohibited from voting by a court because of mental incompetency
- Pre-registration
  - Must be 16 or 17
  - Meet all other voting requirements
  - You will automatically be registered to vote on your 18th birthday
- Registration
  - In person
    - ROV office
    - At a vote center (conditional or “same day” registration)
  - By mail
  - Online
    - Recommended
    - Requirements
      - California driver license or id card
      - The last 4 digits of your ssn
      - Date of birth
      - Address (you don’t need a physical address, you can just describe where you live)
    - Political party
    - Presidential primaries
      - Primaries held by the parties
    - Crossover ballot
      - You can ask for this if you are politically independent (no party preference)

- Only these three can allow for crossover ballot (LAD)
  - Libertarian
  - American independent
  - Democrat
- Top two primary
  - Nonpartisan blanket primary
  - Doesn't apply to presidential primaries or local elections
  - Top two vote earners in the primary election move on to the general election (regardless of party)
    - More competition within two major parties
    - Weakens smaller political parties
  - Voter-nominated offices
    - Governor
    - State attorney general
    - US Senate and House of Representatives
    - California state senate
  - Independently elected
    - Appointed by president and confirmed by senate in federal elections
- Local elections are nonpartisan
  - They do not run with party labels
- Voters choice act (2016)
  - Implemented VBM ballot for all registered voters
    - Mailed to voters up to 29 days before the election
  - Expands in person early voting and same day registration
    - Vote centers v precinct
- Track your ballot
  - Enter first and last name, birthdate, and zip code to receive automated notifications about your ballot

## Direct Democracy in CA

- Initiative - two types
  - Citizen-made laws
  - Both below percentages are only for getting the law on the ballot
  - Statutory (make/change a state law)
    - Requires signatures (of registered voters) equal to 5% of the number of people who voted in the last gubernatorial (governor's) election
  - Constitutional (amend the state constitution)
    - That number is 8%
- Criticisms of the initiatives in CA

- Only rich people and corporations and rich groups can afford to get these initiatives on the ballot
- Many complex initiatives - most people don't have the expertise for it
  - This is why elect representatives - we are electing someone with expertise to make these decisions
- Competing measures can be confusing
- Referendum
  - Voters can approve or reject acts of the state legislature
    - 5% signature requirement
    - These are pretty rare
- Recall
  - Ability to recall elected representatives
  - 12% signature requirement
    - Maybe should be higher amount
    - Expensive to run recall elections
  - Most prominent (and recent) - Governor Gray Davis (2003) recalled, recall of Governor Gavin Newson failed