



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CA Budget Surplus Prompts Tough Decisions: Spend or Prepare for a Rainy Day?**  
*State, international leaders & voters sound off on CA's priorities via the CA Budget Challenge*

SAN FRANCISCO – After being \$20 billion in the red in 2010, today Next 10 is releasing a newly updated version of the California Budget Challenge ([www.budgetchallenge.org](http://www.budgetchallenge.org)) that asks a question many thought unfathomable just a few short years ago:

**What should we do with California's budget surplus?**

In January, Governor Jerry Brown released his budget proposal for the 2014-15 fiscal year. Following the temporary tax increases passed by voters in Proposition 30, the Brown administration projects revenues will be higher than expenditures, allowing the state to invest in paying down debt and building up a rainy day fund.

But not everyone agrees how revenues should be spent (or if they should be spent at all) and there are still many choices to consider. The nonpartisan online California Budget Challenge presents users with the most updated look at some of the choices now being considered in Sacramento.

The online tool, used by more than 350,000 Californians, guides users through dozens of choices on state debt, spending, and revenues. For example, the Challenge asks: How much should the state invest in education? Should funding be restored for programs cut deeply during the recession? What level of a budget reserve should we build, and where should reserve funding come from? Users can engage directly with lawmakers by clicking the "Take Action" button on any policy option.

*State lawmakers use the California Budget Challenge*

State lawmakers and even international leaders are using Next 10's Challenge to learn more about California's budget. This evening Assemblyman Jim Frazier, representing portions of Solano, Contra Costa and Sacramento counties, will hold a [Next 10 California Budget Challenge workshop](#) from 7PM - 8:30PM at the Travis Credit Union in Vacaville. Participants will learn about the budget by working through the Challenge on a big screen and using automated clickers to vote for their favorite options. Frazier is one of dozens of lawmakers from both sides of the political aisle who have participated in activities to promote its use. Next 10 has held similar educational workshops for business and civic groups, local city and county government groups, community organizations, schools and others since the California Budget Challenge first launched in 2005.

*International leaders learn about budget tradeoffs via online tool*



Recently 14 representatives the Anhui Provincial People's Congress came to California to learn about American budget administration. To get a deeper understanding of the California budget, [the delegation turned to Next 10](#) where members got a preview of how the updated Budget Challenge tool will be used to engage and educate communities across the state about our budget choices.

As state leaders work to build this year's budget, don't miss your opportunity to weigh in via the newly updated online California Budget Challenge ([www.budgetchallenge.org](http://www.budgetchallenge.org)).

**Bloggers:**

**Need a colorful graphic/button to link to the new California Budget Challenge online?**  
Contact Roxanna Smith at 415.453.0430.

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Media interviews with Noel Perry and Sarah Henry of Next 10 may be arranged by contacting Cater Communications at 415.453.0430 (main office).

*Next 10 is an independent, nonpartisan organization focused on innovation and the intersection of the economy, the environment, and quality of life issues for all Californians. Next 10 funds research by leading experts on complex state issues.*