



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CA Choices cuts through noise, provides nonpartisan information and third party endorsements as voters consider game-changing propositions on water, crime, health care & gaming
Recent polls show voter support for some initiatives, but will voters turn out?

San Francisco — Californians planning to vote by mail are beginning to read through their November ballots, assessing six important propositions. The newly updated nonpartisan California Choices (www.californiachoices.org)— a clearinghouse for state voter information including endorsements, polling data, pro and con arguments, video clips from supporters and opponents, recent press coverage, and in-depth background information — is now available to help voters cut through the noise and the clutter to figure out their positions on the various propositions.

“Voters can consult California Choices for clear and concise information about funding for water infrastructure projects, making changes to the state’s “rainy day fund”, and they can learn about changing low-level criminal sentences, along with health care, insurance and gaming ballot initiatives,” said F. Noel Perry, the founder of the nonpartisan nonprofit organization, Next 10 (www.next10.org), which presents California Choices in partnership with the Institute of Governmental Studies at the University of California, Berkeley (www.igs.berkeley.edu). “A strong California depends on an informed and active electorate.”

Each election season, California Choices provides a wealth of information about statewide propositions. Voters can access the popular California Choices “[Endorsements](#)” page to see how more than 30 groups from across the political spectrum — including Chambers of Commerce, labor unions, political parties, environmental organizations, and newspaper editorial boards — would vote on each of these ballot initiatives.

Ballot Endorsements for November 4, 2014			
Non-profits	Prop. 1 Water Bond	Prop. 2 Budget Stabilization	Prop. 43 Health Insurance Rates
ACLU (Northern California)			
American Academy of Pediatrics			
American Nurses Association - California	Yes	Yes	No
Association of California Water Agencies	Yes	Yes	No
Suburban Chamber of Commerce	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
California Chamber of Commerce	Yes	Yes	No
California Farm Bureau	Yes	Yes	No

“Voters want to see the positions of organizations they trust—this information helps inform their vote,” said Perry. “The ‘Endorsements Table’, which lists the positions on more than 30 organizations, is the most visited page on our website.”

Voters can also access arguments for and against the ballot measures, multimedia including TV commercials and radio ads, and recent polling from a variety of organizations. The interactive site allows users to save their voting preferences using the



“Save My Votes” feature, which lets users access those preferences at any time from mobile phones or other devices.

On the ballot this year:

- **Proposition 1** would authorize \$7.5 billion in bonds for water infrastructure projects in the state, which is suffering through one of the worst droughts in its history. The bonds would finance improvements in drinking water quality, watershed and restoration projects, water management plans, storage projects, water recycling and treatment projects, ground water cleanup, flood management and more.
- **Proposition 2** would change the requirements for the state’s “rainy day fund,” putting more dollars toward repaying state debts and limiting the use of funds for emergencies and budget deficits.
- **Proposition 45** would give the state’s Insurance Commissioner the power to regulate health insurance rate increases for Californians who have individual and small-business policies.
- **Proposition 46** would increase the state’s cap on medical negligence lawsuits from \$250,000 to over \$1 million, and mandate that doctors receive drug and alcohol testing under certain circumstances.
- **Proposition 47** would reclassify some nonviolent lower-level crimes from felonies to misdemeanors.
- **Proposition 48 would** ratify gaming compacts between California and two Native American tribes.

A recent Field Poll found that by a margin of nearly 2 to 1 (52 percent to 27 percent), voters support Proposition 1—the water bond backed by Governor Brown. However, the same poll found voters report being unfamiliar with the details of the water initiative.

Voter support is not as strong for Propositions 45 and 46, the two health-related ballot initiatives. A mid-September poll by Field Research Corporation found 41 percent of likely voters support Prop. 45, while 26 percent would vote no and 33 percent are undecided. Proposition 46 enjoys 37 percent support, with 34 percent opposed and 29 percent of likely voters undecided.

Adding to the uncertainty: voter turnout hit record lows in the recent June primary election.

“The impact of California’s ballot initiative process on both state and local issues is unprecedented across the country—it essentially allows all voters to decide what is law,” said Jack Citrin, Director of the Institute of Governmental Studies at UC Berkeley. “Interest groups and elected officials pour millions of dollars into these ballot races to convince voters — and sometimes, to confuse them. We’re here to give Californians the facts so that the voters understand the issues and that they, rather than money alone, determine whether a ballot initiative is adopted.”

California Choices was created in 2010 to educate Californians about government reform. Since then, more than 200,000 voters have used the site at home and at the polls.



Visit the updated site today at www.californiachoices.org and explore the “Save My Votes” feature. Once you’ve figured out how you plan to vote in November, you can invite friends and family to view California Choices via email and Facebook.

***WEB PRODUCERS: A California Choices graphic is available online and upon request.**

About Next 10

Next 10 is an independent, nonpartisan organization that educates, engages and empowers Californians to improve the state’s future. Next 10 is focused on innovation and the intersection between the economy, the environment, and quality of life issues for all Californians. Next 10 employs research from leading experts on complex state issues and creates a portfolio of nonpartisan educational materials to foster a deeper understanding of the critical issues affecting our state.

About the Institute of Governmental Studies at the University of California, Berkeley

The Institute of Governmental Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, is California’s oldest public policy research institution. Founded in 1919, IGS and its affiliated centers conduct research, education, and public service in the fields of politics and public policy, which a strong focus on national and California politics. Current IGS research includes institutional policy and design, political reform, term limits, campaign finance, redistricting, direct democracy, presidential and gubernatorial politics, representative government, immigration, globalization, and the politics of race and ethnicity.