

Propositions are proposed laws presented to the public to vote on. Propositions can make new laws, change existing laws, and sometimes they change California's Constitution. They can be placed on the ballot by people who collect enough voter signatures or by state lawmakers (the California Legislature). A proposition passes and becomes law if it receives more than 50 percent YES votes.

Propositions 14 through 24 are "initiatives." For an initiative:

- A YES vote means that you support the way the proposition would change things.
- A NO vote means that you want to leave things the way they are now.

Proposition 25 is a "referendum," which asks voters to decide on a law that was already passed. For a referendum:

- A YES vote means that you support the law and want to keep it.
- A NO vote means you do not want the law to go into effect.



**There are 12 state propositions in this election. *You do not have to vote on everything.* Learn about propositions that are important to you and make your choice, YES or NO.**

## 14 Stem Cell Research

*Initiative*

**The way it is now:** Stem cells are a special type of human cell that is used for medical research. They can grow into many different types of cells, such as brain cells or heart cells. Stem cells are used to find treatments for many kinds of diseases. In 2004, California voters approved \$3 billion in bonds to pay for research and medical studies using stem cells.

**What Prop 14 would do if it passes:** Prop 14 would allow the state to sell \$5.5 billion in new bonds to pay for more stem cell research and medical treatments. \$1.5 billion from the bonds would go to research and treatment for brain diseases, such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's.

**Effect on the state budget:** The total cost to repay the bonds plus interest would be around \$7.8 billion. The state would pay around \$260 million each year for the next 30 years. If the state's stem cell research leads to new medical treatments, the state could get some money to use for patients' treatments. The amount it might receive is not clear.

### **YES** People for Prop 14 say:

- Stem cell bonds have led to new medical treatments and important research that should be continued.
- Prop 14 provides money that will help fight many serious diseases, including cancer, diabetes and heart disease.

### **NO** People against Prop 14 say:

- We should not be spending billions of dollars on Prop 14 when so many people are out of work.
- The federal government and private groups are already helping pay for important stem cell research.

## WHAT IS A BOND?

Bonds are a way for governments to borrow money. The government sells bonds to get money now and pays them back with interest over many years.



# 15 Taxes on Commercial Property

Initiative Constitutional Amendment

**The way it is now:** Land used for businesses and shopping centers is called “commercial property.” Owners of commercial property pay taxes based on how much the property was worth at the time it was purchased. These taxes go up by a small percent each year. Money from property taxes goes to local governments. These include cities, counties, public schools and special districts, such as library and fire districts.

**What Prop 15 would do if it passes:** Prop 15 would change the rules for taxes on commercial property. Commercial property would be taxed based on what the property is worth now, instead of small increases each year based on its purchase price. The new rules would only apply to people and businesses that own more than \$3 million in commercial property. There would be no change to taxes on residential homes. Prop 15 would also lower taxes on business equipment, such as machines or computers.

**Effect on the state budget:** Local governments would get between \$6.5 billion and \$11.5 billion more in property taxes each year starting in 2025. The range is big because it is hard to estimate how much commercial property will be worth each year. Counties might need to spend more money collecting property taxes.

**YES People for Prop 15 say:**

- Wealthy companies and business property owners should pay property taxes based on what their holdings are really worth.
- Taxes from Prop 15 will help pay for important public services, such as schools and fire departments.

**NO People against Prop 15 say:**

- Raising taxes will increase the cost of everything that people buy, including food, gas and health care.
- Prop 15 will hurt small businesses that are struggling during the current pandemic.

# 16 Allow Public Agencies to Consider Diversity

Legislative Constitutional Amendment

**The way it is now:** In 1996, California voters passed a law that prevents public programs from using “affirmative action” when making decisions about public education and public employment. When deciding who gets into college or who to hire, public schools and agencies are usually not allowed to consider a person’s:

- Race
- Sex
- Color
- Ethnicity
- Or the country they come from

**What Prop 16 would do if it passes:** Prop 16 would allow public colleges, universities, and agencies to include race, sex, color, ethnicity, and country of origin as part of their decision-making. They would be allowed to create “affirmative action” programs to increase diversity or to help certain groups.

**Effect on the state budget:** Prop 16 would have no direct effect on state or local budgets. Costs would depend on choices made by state and local programs.

**YES People for Prop 16 say:**

- Prop 16 will help women and people of color, while fighting long-standing patterns of discrimination.
- All of us deserve equal opportunities and quality education.

**NO People against Prop 16 say:**

- The state should treat everyone equally.
- When deciding who gets into college or who gets a government job, we should not favor one racial or ethnic group over another.

## 17 Voting Rights for People on Parole

Legislative Constitutional Amendment

**The way it is now:** After someone ends their prison term for a serious crime, they may spend time “on parole” when they get out. People on parole must follow certain rules, such as meeting regularly with their parole officer. Parole usually lasts three years. Around 50,000 people are on parole in California. People on parole are not currently allowed to vote.

**What Prop 17 would do if it passes:** Prop 17 would allow people on parole to register to vote and vote in elections. Certain people on parole would be allowed to run for public office.

**Effect on the state budget:** Prop 17 would update the state’s voting system. This would cost the state a one-time payment in the hundreds of thousands of dollars. Counties might spend more money sending out voter information or counting ballots. This would cost counties in the hundreds of thousands of dollars each year statewide.

### YES People for Prop 17 say:

- People on parole pay taxes. They should be allowed to vote, as well.
- Parole is a time for people to rebuild their lives; voting helps people on parole feel more connected to their communities and increases public safety.

### NO People against Prop 17 say:

- Parole is a time for serious and violent criminals to prove that they have changed.
- When people get out of prison, they should complete parole before being allowed to vote.

## 18 Voting Rights for 17-Year-Olds

Legislative Constitutional Amendment

**The way it is now:** 17-year-olds who are U.S. citizens can pre-register to vote in California. They can only vote if they have turned 18 by election day.

**What Prop 18 would do if it passes:** Prop 18 would allow 17-year-olds to vote in **primary elections** or **special elections** if they will be 18 years old by the general election in November.

**Effect on the state budget:** Prop 18 would increase the number of people who could vote. County election offices would need to spend more money sending out voter information and counting ballots. For each election cycle, Prop 18 would cost up to \$1 million statewide. The state would also need to update voter registration systems. This would cost in the hundreds of thousands of dollars.

### YES People for Prop 18 say:

- Allowing 17-year-olds to vote in primary elections will help to increase voter participation.
- If someone will be 18 years old by the general election, they should be allowed to help choose candidates on the November ballot.

### NO People against Prop 18 say:

- 17-year-olds are not legally adults; they are not mature enough to make important decisions.
- High school teachers and counselors will be able to influence the way that 17-year-olds vote.

### TYPES OF ELECTIONS

**Primary elections** are held in spring. During primary elections, voters:

- Choose who will be on the ballot for the November general election
- Vote on statewide ballot measures

The governor can also call a **special election** when there is an open position in Congress or statewide office.



**19** Changes in Property Tax Rules

*Legislative Constitutional Amendment*

**The way it is now:** You must pay property tax if you own a home. Taxes are based on how much the property was worth at the time it was purchased and go up by a small percent each year. Homeowners in “special groups,” such as people over 55, can buy a new home without paying higher property taxes in some counties once in their lifetime. If you inherit a home from your parents or grandparents, your property taxes may also be lower. Money from property taxes goes to local governments, such as cities, counties, public schools and special districts.

**What Prop 19 would do if it passes:** Prop 19 would expand the property tax rules for people in special groups. This includes people over 55, people who are disabled and people affected by a natural disaster. These homeowners could keep their lower property taxes, when moving to a new home anywhere in the state, up to three times. They could also get a tax discount when moving to a more expensive home. People who inherit a home could only pay lower taxes if they live in the house full-time. Taxes would go up on inherited homes worth more than \$1 million.

**Effect on the state budget:** Prop 19 would increase some taxes and lower others. Local governments could gain tens of millions of dollars per year, in the first few years, and then a few hundred million dollars per year, over time. More local money for schools might save the state tens of millions of dollars or more in some years. Counties would need to spend in the tens of millions of dollars each year to measure property taxes.

**YES** People for Prop 19 say:

- People should not have to pay higher property taxes on a new home if they lose their home in a disaster.
- Prop 19 protects older homeowners and creates new opportunities for renters.

**NO** People against Prop 19 say:

- Prop 19 is a tax increase that was rejected by voters in 2018.
- Prop 19 could hurt families who cannot afford to pay taxes on an inherited family home.

**20** Changes to Criminal Penalties and Parole

*Initiative*

**The way it is now:** Felonies are considered by the legal system to be the most severe crimes. Less severe crimes are called misdemeanors. When people get out of prison for a felony, they may spend time on parole. Over the past 10 years, lawmakers and voters have reduced punishments for people convicted of some nonviolent crimes. This has let some people out of prison earlier.

**What Prop 20 would do if it passes:** Prop 20 would undo parts of the crime laws passed by lawmakers and voters over the past 10 years. Some “petty theft” crimes could be punished as felonies. People convicted of stealing items worth \$250-950 could be sent to county jail for up to three years, in some cases. Prop 20 would also change the factors that can be considered for early release from prison and limit early release for people convicted of some felonies. The state would collect DNA from adults convicted of some misdemeanor crimes, such as drug possession, shoplifting and domestic violence.

**Effect on the state budget:** The effects of Prop 20 would depend on how the law is applied and if it is challenged in court. If Prop 20 fully took effect, it could increase costs for law enforcement, courts and the correctional system in the tens of millions of dollars each year.

**YES** People for Prop 20 say:

- Prop 20 prevents violent criminals from getting out of prison early.
- Collecting DNA from people convicted of drug possession or shoplifting will help solve more serious crimes, such as rape.

**NO** People against Prop 20 say:

- California already has some of the toughest laws against serious and violent crime.
- Prop 20 wastes millions of dollars on prisons that could be spent on education, healthcare or affordable housing.

## 21 Local Governments and Rent Control

Initiative

**The way it is now:** Housing costs in California tend to be higher than other states. Several California cities have “rent control” laws that limit how much landlords can increase rents each year. State law prevents rent control on single-family homes and housing built after Feb. 1, 1995. Landlords can charge any amount they want when a new renter moves in. Landlords must also be allowed to increase rents on current renters enough to make a profit each year. A new state law limits rent increases to 5-10 percent each year, depending on inflation. This law applies to housing that is more than 15 years old and will be in effect until 2030.

**What Prop 21 would do if it passes:** Cities and counties could pass rent control rules for housing that is more than 15 years old. Communities could limit how much a landlord can increase rent when a new renter moves in. Landlords could raise rent by up to 15 percent over three years on new renters, plus any increase allowed by local law. Prop 21 would only apply to landlords who own more than two housing units. Local rent control laws would still need to allow landlords to make some money each year.

**Effect on the state budget:** Prop 21 could decrease money made from state and local taxes. Governments could see decreases in the high tens of millions of dollars each year. Effects would depend on how many cities and counties pass rent control laws and how landlords would respond.

**YES People for Prop 21 say:**

- Rent control will help families, children, senior citizens and veterans stay in their homes.
- Prop 21 is fair; it guarantees that landlords can still earn a profit.

**NO People against Prop 21 say:**

- Rent control laws will cause landlords to evict renters.
- Prop 21 will make housing less available and less affordable at a time when people are struggling to get back to work.

## 22 Rideshare and Delivery Drivers

Initiative

**The way it is now:** An independent contractor can choose when, where and how much to work. An employee has their schedule and work set by their employer. Employees get benefits and protections that independent contractors do not. These include minimum wage, overtime pay and paid time off if they are sick.

Rideshare and delivery apps include companies such as Uber, Lyft and DoorDash. These companies currently hire drivers as independent contractors. A 2019 state law requires rideshare and delivery companies to hire drivers as employees instead of as independent contractors. The state attorney general and three cities are suing Uber and Lyft for refusing to follow the state’s new law.

**What Prop 22 would do if it passes:** Rideshare and delivery drivers would stay as independent contractors. Rideshare and delivery companies would have to pay drivers 20 percent more than the local minimum wage for time spent driving. These companies would have to help pay health insurance costs for contractors who drive more than 15 hours per week and pay medical costs when a driver is injured while working. Prop 22 would also limit cities and counties from putting new rules on rideshare and delivery companies.

**Effect on the state budget:** Prop 22 would lead to small increases in income tax paid by rideshare and delivery company drivers. By keeping drivers as independent contractors, rideshare and delivery companies would likely earn higher profits.

**YES People for Prop 22 say:**

- Rideshare and delivery drivers want to work as independent contractors, not employees.
- Forcing companies to hire drivers as employees would get rid of hundreds of thousands of jobs.

**NO People against Prop 22 say:**

- Rideshare and delivery companies don’t want to pay drivers basic benefits.
- Treating drivers as employees will make sure they get paid sick leave and unemployment benefits.

## 23 Kidney Dialysis Clinics

Initiative

**The way it is now:** If a person's kidneys stop working, they may need a special treatment called dialysis. In California, dialysis is usually provided by licensed dialysis clinics. A patient's personal doctor must visit them at least once per month during treatment at a dialysis clinic. Dialysis treatment is paid for by Medicare, Medi-Cal and private insurance. Private insurance pays more money for treatment than Medicare and Medi-Cal.

**What Prop 23 would do if it passes:** Prop 23 would require dialysis clinics to have a doctor present during all treatment hours. Clinics would have to report any dialysis-related infections to the state every three months. Clinics would need permission from the state before closing or reducing services. Clinics could not discriminate against clients based on their insurance or how they are paying for their treatment.

**Effect on the state budget:** Budget effects would depend on how dialysis clinics respond to Prop 23. Dialysis companies might close some clinics or try to charge more money for treatment. Health care costs for state and local governments would likely increase in the low tens of millions of dollars each year. The state would spend in the low millions of dollars each year to enforce Prop 23. These state costs could be paid for by increasing licensing fees.

### YES People for Prop 23 say:

- Dialysis is a dangerous procedure; clinics should always have a doctor available to help.
- Prop 23 prevents discrimination and protects patients in rural communities.

### NO People against Prop 23 say:

- Prop 23 would take thousands of doctors away from hospitals and emergency rooms, making California's doctor shortage worse.
- Some dialysis clinics in the state might close due to increased costs.

## 24 Changes to Consumer Privacy Laws

Initiative

**The way it is now:** A consumer is someone who buys or uses a product or service. Businesses collect data about consumers for many reasons. They may sell the data to other companies or use it to improve their services. A state law called the California Consumer Privacy Act allows consumers to:

- Find out what data companies are collecting about them
- Tell a business to stop selling their personal data
- Have their data removed from a company's files

**What Prop 24 would do if it passes:** People would have some increased power over their personal data. Consumers could contact companies to prevent them from sharing or using "sensitive personal information." This includes location data, health information or private communications. Prop 24 would also create a state agency to enforce these rules and issue fines to companies that break privacy laws.

**Effect on the state budget:** A new state agency would cost the state \$10 million or more each year. Enforcing privacy laws would likely cost the state in the low millions of dollars each year. Fines on companies breaking consumer privacy laws would help pay for the state's costs. The effect on local government budgets is unclear.

### YES People for Prop 24 say:

- We need to stop tech companies from tracking everything we do online.
- Prop 24 would protect kids by giving the state more power to go after companies that break children's privacy laws.

### NO People against Prop 24 say:

- Prop 24 still gives too much power to tech companies to use our data.
- Consumers should not have to fill out paperwork and send forms to every tech company to have their data protected.

**25** Yes or No on Getting Rid of Bail

Referendum

**Background:** Prop 25 asks voters to decide if the state should get rid of bail. When a person is charged with a crime, they may have to stay in jail while waiting for a trial. One way that people are released from jail is by paying bail. Bail is money used to guarantee that a person will return to court. The state passed a law in 2018 that would replace bail with a new system. This law has not yet gone into effect. Under the new system, people charged with less serious crimes would be released without having to pay bail. Courts would determine if people charged with more serious crimes should be released. A judge could keep someone in jail if the judge decides they are a danger to the public or might not return to court. Certain people released from jail could be required to check in with a probation officer or wear a tracking device.

**What Prop 25 would do if it passes:** Voting “yes” on Prop 25 would get rid of the bail system and allow the state’s new law to go into effect. People charged with less serious crimes would be released before trial. Judges would decide if people charged with more serious crimes should be released or kept in jail, based on whether they are considered a danger to the public or might not return to court. Voting “no” on Prop 25 would keep the state’s current bail system in place.

**Effect on the state budget:** Getting rid of bail would cost state and local governments in the mid hundreds of millions of dollars each year. Counties would save in the high tens of millions of dollars each year due to lower jail costs.

**YES** People for Prop 25 say:

- The current bail system is unfair; if you cannot afford bail, you must stay in jail.
- Prop 25 means that decisions will be based on public safety, not a person’s ability to pay.

**NO** People against Prop 25 say:

- The state’s new system could discriminate against African Americans, Latinos and people who live in low-income neighborhoods.
- Releasing people from jail will make our communities less safe.

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