



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

RECOMMENDS

NOVEMBER 4, 2008 GENERAL ELECTION

PROP 1 High-Speed Rail Bonds

Decision Pending

This \$9.95 billion bond act would partially fund a high-speed rail project segment between Los Angeles and San Francisco. Federal grants and public-private partnerships would be needed to fund the remainder of the total project cost (\$40 billion, including additional segments). Providing a transportation option that reduces greenhouse gas emissions and lessens the need to expand highways and airports is worthwhile. The high cost and financial uncertainties pose a problem. Legislation to require a new business plan, peer review, and other accountability provisions and to allow funding to be used for other segments was pending at the time of our review.

PROP 3 Children's Hospital Bond Act

SUPPORT

Proposition 3 authorizes \$980 million in bonds to fund children's hospitals. These regional centers provide specialized care for children with serious illnesses or injuries without regard to a family's ability to pay. They treat the majority of California's low-income children. Eighty percent of the proceeds would go to eight nonprofit children's hospitals and 20 percent to University of California children's hospitals. Prop 3 will address escalating construction costs and improve health care access for children who are indigent, uninsured, underinsured or eligible for government health programs.

PROP 4 Waiting Period and Parental Notification before Termination of Minor's Pregnancy

OPPOSE

Prop 4 requires a physician to notify the parent of a pregnant minor before performing an abortion. Mandatory notification laws may sound good but, in the real world, they put the health and safety of teens in danger. A frightened, pregnant teen who can't go to her parents may choose an unsafe, illegal abortion, or even contemplate suicide, instead of seeking the counseling and safe medical care she needs. Parents rightfully want to be involved in their teenagers' lives, but good family communication can't be imposed by government. California voters have rejected this proposal twice, but proponents have put it on the ballot again, adding more unreasonable provisions.

PROP 5 Nonviolent Drug Offenses. Sentencing, Parole and Rehabilitation

SUPPORT

Proposition 5 would require the state to expand treatment and rehabilitation for nonviolent drug offenders and parolees, and reduce the criminal consequences of nonviolent offenses. Additional costs of treatment would be offset by reductions in prison and parole operating costs, as well as in the need for capital outlay for prison facilities. The League's study of juvenile justice affirmed the need to give funding priority to prevention, early intervention and rehabilitation.

PROP 6 Police and Law Enforcement Funding. Criminal Penalties and Laws (Runner Initiative)

OPPOSE

This measure requires that nearly \$1 billion annually in state general funds be used for designated local law enforcement and probation programs. This will mean an increase of \$500 million a year for these programs and for operating prison and parole systems, and a \$500 million capital outlay for prison facilities. The League opposes the further restriction on the ongoing use of general funds. Harmful policy changes in this initiative include prosecuting more 14-year-olds as adults and giving counties less flexibility in the use of drug and mental health funds for juveniles.

PROP 7 Renewable Energy Generation

OPPOSE

Proposition 7 requires all utilities, including government-owned utilities, to generate 50 percent of their power from renewable energy by 2025. While the League supports a renewable energy target, we feel this is too optimistic to be achieved, and well beyond the targets for implementing the landmark greenhouse-gas emissions reduction law, AB 32. Moreover, Prop 7 is poorly drafted. Experts say it will not achieve its stated goals and will actually disrupt the development of renewable power. It will force small renewable energy companies out of California’s market and cause higher energy bills.

PROP 8 Eliminates Right of Same-Sex Couples to Marry

OPPOSE

This proposed limitation of marriage as only between a man and a woman infringes on the equal rights that should be available to all people. The California Supreme Court has concluded that there is a “fundamental constitutional right to form a family relationship.” The League opposed Proposition 22 in 2000 and continues to oppose such limits on the basic civil rights that should be guaranteed to all Californians.

PROP 9 Criminal Justice System. Victims’ Rights. Parole

OPPOSE

Proposition 9 would expand the legal rights of crime victims in various ways and could undo many of the rights of prisoners and parolees to due process and speedy parole revocation hearings. This initiative asks voters to support victims’ rights that are already protected under state law and is unnecessary.

PROP 10 Alternative Fuel Vehicles and Renewable Energy. Bonds

OPPOSE

This measure would authorize the sale of \$5 billion in general obligation bonds to provide rebates to purchasers of certain high fuel economy and alternative fuel vehicles, and to fund grants and other incentives for technology development. The League favors the use of bonds to finance capital expenditures or the purchase of property for public purposes. The purposes of this bond are not an appropriate use for state-issued, bond-generated revenues.

PROP 11 Redistricting Reform: California Voters FIRST Act

STRONG SUPPORT

It is an inherent conflict of interest for legislators to draw their own districts to guarantee their reelection. Proposition 11 removes from the legislature the power to redraw district boundaries for the State Senate, Assembly and Board of Equalization after each census. Instead, it provides for the appointment of a 14-member independent citizens commission to perform this process, establishes clear criteria for how the boundaries shall be drawn, and requires an open and transparent process with due notice, public hearings, and no communications outside of the hearings. This measure will hold politicians accountable and help stop the gridlock in Sacramento that keeps pressing issues from being addressed.

Because League positions do not cover the issues in Proposition 2, Standards for Confining Farm Animals, and Proposition 12, Veterans’ Bond Act of 2008, the LWVC is taking no stand on these measures.

7/24/08

VOTE WITH THE LEAGUE ON NOVEMBER 4!