

Easy Voter Guide

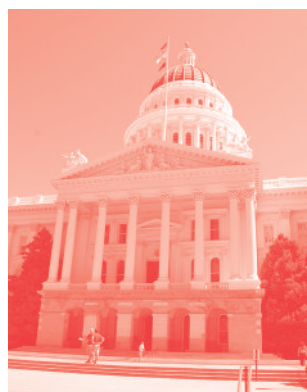
www.easyvoterguide.org

 LEAGUE OF
WOMEN VOTERS®
OF CALIFORNIA
EDUCATION FUND



Your Vote. Your Voice.

YOUR QUICK GUIDE TO THE
November 6, 2012
CALIFORNIA GENERAL ELECTION



WHAT'S INSIDE

About This General Election 2
President and Vice President 3-4
U.S. Senate 4

Propositions 5-11
More Voter Resources 9
Voting 1-2-3!..... 12

Esta guía también está disponible en español ■ 本指南也有中文版

Bản hướng dẫn này cũng có bằng tiếng Việt ■ 또한 이 안내서는 한국어로도 제공됩니다



About This General Election

In the November 6, 2012 election, California voters will make choices on people who will represent us in national and state government:

- U.S. President
- U.S. Senator
- U.S. Representative
- State Senator (for half of California)
- State Assemblymember

This year, California has started a new system for how we choose our U.S. Senators, U.S. Representatives, State Senators, and State Assemblymembers. For each office, only the two candidates who got the most votes in the June 2012 primary election will appear on voters' ballots. How we choose the President is unchanged.

California voters will also make decisions on 11 proposed state laws (propositions):

- Proposition 30 - Temporary Taxes to Fund Education
- Proposition 31 - State Budget
- Proposition 32 - Political Contributions by Payroll Deduction
- Proposition 33 - Auto Insurance Companies
- Proposition 34 - Death Penalty
- Proposition 35 - Human Trafficking
- Proposition 36 - Three Strikes Law
- Proposition 37 - Genetically Engineered Foods
- Proposition 38 - Tax to Fund Education and Early Childhood Programs
- Proposition 39 - Tax Treatment for Multistate Businesses
- Proposition 40 - Redistricting

Your ballot may also have candidates for local government, such as county supervisor, city council, or school board. Every registered voter will get a Sample Ballot in the mail that has information about local candidates and any local ballot measures. What is on your ballot depends on where you live.

KEY DATES

OCTOBER 22, 2012

Last day to register to vote in this election.

OCTOBER 30, 2012

Last day for your county elections office to receive your written request for a "vote by mail" ballot.

NOVEMBER 6, 2012

ELECTION DAY

Polls open 7 a.m. until 8 p.m.

This guide is available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Korean.
Visit www.easyvoter.org to order print copies of it, or to download it as an electronic file.

President and Vice President

In this election, the country will elect a President and a Vice President for a four-year term.

THE PRESIDENT:

- Oversees most federal departments
- Approves or rejects new laws
- Presents a budget each year to Congress
- Is in charge of foreign policy and the armed forces

THE VICE PRESIDENT:

- Takes over if something happens to the President
- Runs meetings of the U.S. Senate
- Attends important events for the President
- Has other duties chosen by the President

How We Elect the President

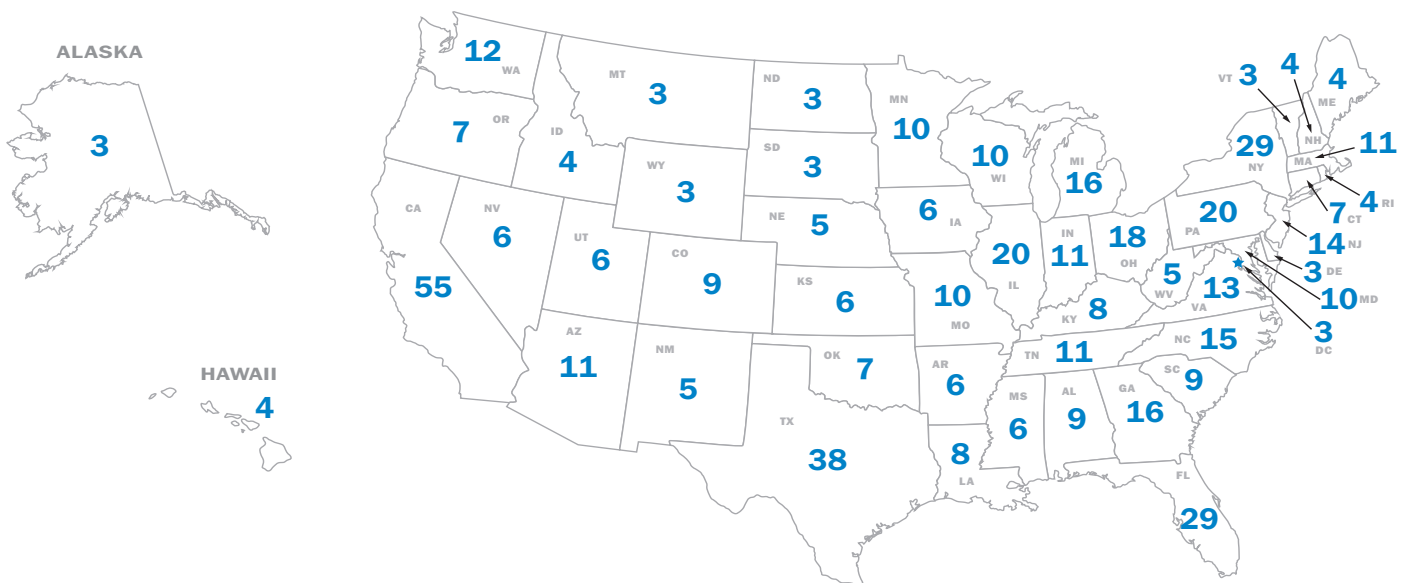
You can think of the election for President as 51 separate elections (one for each state and Washington, D.C.). To win a state, a candidate must win the majority of the people's votes — which is called the popular vote. In most states, the winner of the state's popular vote takes all of that state's electoral votes.

Each state has a certain number of electoral votes, based on how many people live in the state. States with the most people have the most electoral votes.

The total number of electoral votes from all the states is 538. To become President, a candidate must win at least 270 electoral votes. In December, after the General Election, the "Electoral College" officially counts the electoral votes (even though we already know who the winner is). The winner will take office in January 2013.

Your vote for President really matters because just a few people's votes can decide if a candidate wins all of a state's electoral votes. Elections for President have been very close, and each state makes a big difference.

Electoral Votes by State



President and Vice President

Candidates for President and Vice President

The candidates for President and Vice President run together as a pair. You vote for one pair.

This is California's official list of candidates for President and Vice President. Candidates are listed in the order of the size of their political party in California.

PARTY	PRESIDENT	VICE PRESIDENT
Democratic	Barack Obama	Joseph Biden
Republican	Mitt Romney	Paul Ryan
American Independent	Thomas Hoefling	Robert Ornelas
Green	Jill Stein	Cheri Honkala
Libertarian	Gary Johnson	James P. Gray
Peace and Freedom	Roseanne Barr	Cindy Sheehan

MORE CANDIDATES

On October 26, the Secretary of State will prepare and send to county election officials a certified list of write-in presidential candidates.

U.S. Senate

Every state has two U.S. Senators. They are elected for a six-year term.

U.S. SENATORS:

- Represent the people of their state in Washington, D.C.
- Work with other U.S. Senators to make new laws, hold hearings, and approve appointments
- Help develop the federal budget and U.S. policy priorities

Candidates for U.S. Senate

In this election, Californians are voting on only one of our two U.S. Senators. This is California's official list of candidates for that contest.

Democratic Party	Dianne Feinstein
Republican Party	Elizabeth Emken

Propositions are proposed laws presented to the public to vote on. They are placed on the ballot by people who collected enough voter signatures. A proposition passes and becomes law when it receives more than 50 percent YES votes.

Propositions 30 through 39 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 40 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 want the law overturned.

There are 11 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.

30 Temporary Taxes to Fund Education

INITIATIVE • CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

The way it is now:

In preparing the current 2012-13 General Fund budget, state lawmakers could not cover the cost of programs with estimated revenue. To create additional revenue, lawmakers passed this year’s budget with a plan of asking voters to approve temporary tax increases. That plan is Prop 30. If voters do not approve Prop 30, then the budget has required “trigger cuts” of \$6 billion, mainly to K-12 education, community colleges, and public universities.

What Prop 30 would do if it passes:

Make temporary increases in sales tax and personal income tax, mainly to pay for education programs. The sales tax would go up by ¼ cent (0.25%) for four years. For seven years, there would be higher income taxes on people with over \$250,000 of taxable income per year and couples filing jointly with over \$500,000 of taxable income per year. K-12 schools and community colleges would receive most of the revenue from these increases, with the rest going to help balance the state budget. Prop 30 would also require the state to continue to fund local public safety programs that were transferred to local government last year.

Effect on the state budget:

Every year for the next five years, these temporary increases would add an estimated \$6 billion to the state General Fund. There would also be some smaller amounts of additional revenue available for other budget years. And in the current budget year, the planned cuts to education would not go into effect.



People for Prop 30 say:

- Prop 30’s taxes are temporary, balanced, and necessary for our state’s students.
- Prop 30 is the only initiative which protects school and safety funding, and addresses the state’s unending budget mess.

www.yesonprop30.com



People against Prop 30 say:

- Prop 30 has no assurances that tax increases will actually benefit classrooms.
- Politicians and special interests want to continue their out-of-control spending, but not make meaningful reforms.

www.stopprop30.com

CONFLICTING BALLOT MEASURES

Another measure on the ballot, Prop 38, would increase personal income tax rates, but in a different way than Prop 30.

For more information on what might happen if voters approve both Prop 30 and Prop 38, see page 10.

31 State Budget

INITIATIVE • CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

The way it is now:

Every year, state lawmakers and the Governor approve a budget for the General Fund that has to balance planned spending with expected revenue. When they pass laws during the year, they do not have to say where the money to pay for any new costs will come from.

What Prop 31 would do if it passes:

The state would plan and approve a budget every two years instead of every year. Lawmakers would have to find a way to pay for any new law that would call for more than \$25 million per year in either spending or tax cuts. In financial emergencies, the Governor would have greater power to cut spending to balance the budget. Local governments (counties, cities, school districts, community college districts, and special districts) would set up new ways of coordinating to provide services, and Prop 31 would transfer some money from the state for that purpose.

Effect on the state budget:

Transferring state funds for local government collaborations would decrease state revenue and increase local revenue, probably about \$200 million every year. It is hard to predict the combined effect of other parts of Prop 31.



People for Prop 31 say:

- Prop 31 requires a real balanced budget and stops billions of dollars from being spent without public review.
- Prop 31 encourages more collaboration and creative problem-solving by local governments.

www.accountableca.org



People against Prop 31 say:

- Prop 31 may mean well but it gives the Governor too much power and has many complicated provisions that will end up in court.
- Prop 31 could let local governments undo important environmental regulations and other state rules.

www.Prop31Facts.com

32 Political Contributions by Payroll Deduction

INITIATIVE

The way it is now:

Many unions use funds they obtain from payroll deductions for political purposes. This includes contributions to campaigns for candidates, campaigns for ballot measures, or “independent expenditures” not directly coordinated with a campaign for a candidate or a ballot measure. Other than unions, not many corporations or other organizations obtain funds from payroll deductions to use for political purposes.

What Prop 32 would do if it passes:

Prohibit any corporation, labor union, government contractor, or government employer from using payroll deductions for political purposes. Prop 32 would also prohibit any government contractor (including public sector labor unions) from making contributions to elected officials who play a role in awarding a contract to the contractor.

Effect on the state budget:

The state would experience increased costs to investigate possible violations of the law and to respond to requests for advice. These costs could exceed \$1 million every year.



People for Prop 32 say:

- Prop 32 prohibits money from being deducted from employees’ paychecks for political purposes without their permission.
- Prop 32 stops special interest groups from influencing politicians with contributions.

www.yesprop32.com



People against Prop 32 say:

- 99% of California corporations don’t use payroll deductions for political contributions, so Prop 32 is aimed at limiting unions.
- Prop 32 does nothing to stop Corporate Super Political Action Committees and independent expenditure committees.

www.stopspecial exemptions.org

33

Auto Insurance Companies

INITIATIVE

The way it is now:

In California, the price of car insurance is based on three main factors: 1) a driver's safety record; 2) the number of miles driven each year; and 3) the number of years a person has been driving. Insurance companies are not allowed to use a driver's history of insurance coverage as a factor in setting prices.

What Prop 33 would do if it passes:

Allow insurance companies to include a driver's history of insurance coverage as a factor in setting prices. Insurance companies would be allowed to give discounts to new customers who had a history of continuous coverage with their former insurer. Insurance companies would also be allowed to increase prices for new customers who did not have continuous coverage.

Effect on the state budget:

There would probably be no major effect on the state's income from taxes on auto insurance.



People for Prop 33 say:

- Prop 33 will make it easier for drivers to shop for better insurance deals, without losing their loyalty discounts for continuous coverage when switching companies.
- Prop 33 will increase competition between insurance companies, resulting in better insurance prices for all drivers.

www.yesprop33.com



People against Prop 33 say:

- Prop 33 will allow insurance companies to increase the price of insurance to drivers who have not had continuous coverage.
- Drivers with perfect driving records would pay an unfair penalty if they have not had continuous coverage.

www.stopprop33.org

34

Death Penalty

INITIATIVE

The way it is now:

In California, some murder convictions can get sentences of either death, or life imprisonment with no chance of parole. Most death penalty cases last for decades. Prisoners on death row have much higher court and prison costs than people serving life sentences. Since 1978, when the death penalty was reinstated in California, 900 individuals have received death sentences. Only 14 of them have been executed.

What Prop 34 would do if it passes:

End the death penalty, and make life imprisonment with no chance of parole the maximum punishment for murder. This change would apply to prisoners currently on death row. Prop 34 would also set up a new "SAFE California Fund," providing a total of \$100 million over 4 years to local law enforcement agencies to make faster progress on open murder and rape cases.

Effect on the state budget:

The state and counties would save about \$130 million each year from less court activity and lower prison costs. The state would spend a total of \$100 million over 4 years on the SAFE California Fund.



People for Prop 34 say:

- Evidence shows that more than 100 innocent people have been sentenced to death in the United States, and some have been executed.
- California will save hundreds of millions of dollars.

www.safecalifornia.org



People against Prop 34 say:

- Prop 34 lets murderers who commit vicious crimes escape justice.
- Prop 34 takes money from the General Fund to pay for a program we don't need.

www.waitingforjustice.net

35

Human Trafficking

INITIATIVE

The way it is now:

State law defines “human trafficking” as forcing or misleading people into doing 1) labor or 2) sex acts for sale. Under state law, trafficking is punishable with up to five years in prison, or up to eight years if the victim is under age 18. If the victim suffers great injury, up to six more years can be added to the prison sentence.

What Prop 35 would do if it passes:

Expand the definition of trafficking to include crimes related to distributing obscene materials depicting a child. Prop 35 would also increase trafficking prison sentences up to 15-years-to-life, and trafficking fines up to \$1.5 million. Fines collected would go to services for victims and to law enforcement. Under Prop 35, all sex offenders would have to provide information about their Internet activity.

Effect on the state budget:

State and local costs could increase about \$2 million every year with the increase in criminal justice activity. Higher fines could bring in a few million dollars every year, which would be spent on helping victims and on law enforcement. Collectively, local governments could need to spend a few million dollars on training for police officers on a one-time basis.



People for Prop 35 say:

- We need stronger laws to stop human traffickers and online predators from harming vulnerable individuals.
- We need to identify victims, protect their rights, and help them get necessary services.

www.caseact.org



People against Prop 35 say:

- In trying to protect us from sex offenders, Prop 35 goes too far in intruding on our privacy rights.
- Prop 35 is badly drafted; it might spend state money without reducing human trafficking.

www.esplerp.org

36

Three Strikes Law

INITIATIVE

The way it is now:

In 1994, California voters adopted a “three strikes” law that defines strict sentencing for a person’s third felony conviction. If a person has two violent or serious felony convictions, their sentence for *any* third felony conviction — not just violent or serious felonies — is life imprisonment with a minimum of 25 years before the possibility of parole.

What Prop 36 would do if it passes:

Reduce the sentencing for some third non-violent, non-serious felony convictions. Instead of life imprisonment with a minimum of 25 years before the possibility of parole, the sentence would be twice the usual prison term for that felony. Prop 36 would also allow those previously sentenced for a third non-violent, non-serious felony to apply for resentencing.

Effect on the state budget:

Savings could be between \$70-90 million every year, because fewer people would be imprisoned for life, and some current inmates would get sentence reductions. The cost of court activities for resentencing could be a few million dollars in the first few years.



People for Prop 36 say:

- Prop 36 would make the punishment better fit the crime.
- Prop 36 would save money and resources for schools and law enforcement, instead of wasting it on life sentences for non-violent offenders.

www.fixthreestrikes.org



People against Prop 36 say:

- Prop 36 would allow the release from prison of dangerous repeat criminals previously sentenced to life terms.
- The three strikes law has reduced the state’s crime rate and prevented criminals from being recycled through our courts over and over again.

www.savethreestrikes.com

37

Genetically Engineered Foods

INITIATIVE

The way it is now:

“Genetic engineering” (GE) is a process of changing plants or animals so they behave differently. For example, common GE foods are corn or soybeans that have been changed to resist pests or tolerate pesticides. It is estimated that between 40% and 70% of food sold in California may contain GE ingredients. No current law specifically regulates GE foods, or requires identification of GE foods.

What Prop 37 would do if it passes:

Require food sold in California stores to have labels that say if it is made from GE plants or animals. The law would not apply to food served in restaurants and certain other foods.

Effect on the state budget:

It could cost the state a few hundred thousand dollars or up to \$1 million per year to make sure food suppliers follow the new labeling regulations.



People for Prop 37 say:

- Consumers will be able to make more informed decisions about what they eat.
- GE plants and animals can create risks to our health and environment.

www.carighttoknow.org



People against Prop 37 say:

- Prop 37 requires costly monitoring of foods and would open the door to unnecessary lawsuits.
- Food producers will have to make changes in packaging and/or in ingredients which could make food more expensive.

www.noprop37.com

MORE VOTER RESOURCES

The League of Women Voters of California Education Fund's Smart Voter Website

You can look up your polling place by typing in your address at the Smart Voter website. You can also see your entire ballot, with national, state, and local contests. Find Smart Voter online at www.smartvoter.org.

The League of Women Voters of California Education Fund's Pros & Cons

Pros & Cons explains state propositions in more detail than this *Easy Voter Guide*. Find Pros & Cons (and more) online at www.CAvotes.org.

California Secretary of State's Official Voter Information Guide

The Secretary of State's guide also gives detailed information about the state propositions, as well as voting resources and statements from the candidates for U.S. Senate. Find the Official Voter Information Guide online at www.voterguide.sos.ca.gov.

California Secretary of State's Voter Hotlines

Voters who want to find out more can also call the Secretary of State at these numbers:

ENGLISH	(800) 345-8683
SPANISH	(800) 232-8682
CHINESE	(800) 339-2857
HINDI	(888) 345-2692
JAPANESE	(800) 339-2865
KHMER	(888) 345-4917
KOREAN	(866) 575-1558
TAGALOG	(800) 339-2957
THAI	(855) 345-3933
VIETNAMESE	(800) 339-8163
TTY/TTD	(800) 833-8683

38

Tax to Fund Education and Early Childhood Programs

INITIATIVE

The way it is now:

Under California's personal income tax system, people with higher incomes pay a bigger percentage of tax on their income. State income tax rates range from 1% up to 9.3% for the highest income tax bracket. Personal income taxes are the largest source of revenue for the state's General Fund, which provides most of California's public school funding.

What Prop 38 would do if it passes:

Increase personal income tax rates on all but the lowest income tax bracket. Tax rates would increase by 0.4% up to 2.2% depending on income tax bracket. The highest income tax bracket would be at 11.5%. This tax increase would end in 2024. Initially, 60% of the increased revenues would go to schools, 10% to early childhood programs, and 30% to state debt payments. In 2015-16 and 2016-17, a higher share could be used for state debt payments, and after that, roughly 85% of the funds would go to schools and roughly 15% would go to early childhood programs.

Effect on the state budget:

Prop 38 would generate about \$10 billion every year. In the first few years, school districts would receive about \$6 billion per year, and early childhood programs would receive about \$1 billion per year, mainly for child care and preschool. Until the end of 2016-17, the remaining \$3 billion would be used to make payments on the state's debts.



People for Prop 38 say:

- Prop 38 makes schools a priority again by guaranteeing to restore education funding.
- Early childhood education is very underfunded, and Prop 38 helps more students get the start they need to succeed.

www.ourchildrenourfuture2012.com



People against Prop 38 say:

- Taxpayers would be locked into higher taxes until 2024, with very little accountability as to how the money is spent.
- Under Prop 38 there are no requirements to improve school performance or get rid of bad teachers.

www.stopthemiddleclass taxhike.com

WHAT HAPPENS IF VOTERS APPROVE BOTH PROP 30 AND PROP 38?

Both Prop 30 and Prop 38 would increase personal income tax rates, but in different ways. When sections of two or more ballot measures conflict like this and voters approve both, the state Constitution says the measure that gets more YES votes will be the one to go into effect.

If voters approve both Prop 30 and Prop 38, the courts might need to decide what sections of those measures go into effect.

Prop 30 says that if it gets more YES votes, then Prop 38 will not go into effect.

Prop 38 says that if it gets more YES votes, then Prop 30's tax increases will not go into effect. If Prop 30's tax increases do not go into effect, then the state budget will experience the \$6 billion in "trigger cuts" that lawmakers set as a backup plan if voters did not approve Prop 30.

39

Tax Treatment for Multistate Businesses

INITIATIVE

The way it is now:

A “multistate” business is one that operates both in California and in other states or countries. The majority of California’s corporate income taxes come from multistate businesses. Current law gives these businesses a choice about which way they calculate how much tax they owe to the state. They can pay taxes based on the percentage of their total sales that are in California. But some choose a formula that also looks at employees and property out of the state, because then their taxes come out lower.

What Prop 39 would do if it passes:

Require multistate businesses to pay state income taxes based on the percentage of their total sales in California. For the first five years, half of the increased money coming into the state would be dedicated to projects that create energy efficiency and clean energy jobs.

Effect on the state budget:

Increase state income from taxes by about \$1 billion per year. A large part of this money would be spent on schools. For the first five years, the state would spend about \$550 million per year on energy efficiency and alternative energy projects.



People for Prop 39 say:

- Prop 39 ensures that large corporations pay their fair share at a time when there have been drastic California budget cuts.
- Prop 39 will fund energy efficiency projects, create jobs, and help fund schools.

www.cleanenergyjobsact.com



People against Prop 39 say:

- This \$1 billion tax increase will make businesses have to cut thousands of jobs in California.
- Energy efficiency projects are already well funded.

www.Stop39.com

40

Redistricting

REFERENDUM

The way it is now:

Each state lawmaker represents people who live in a specific district. Every 10 years after the U.S. census, the Citizens Redistricting Commission adjusts the maps for these districts to make sure each district has about the same number of people (a process called “redistricting”). The law says that these district maps can be challenged by a “referendum,” requiring voters to approve them. Enough signatures were gathered to challenge the current district maps for state Senators.

What Prop 40 would do if it passes:

A YES vote would approve the current state Senate district maps created and certified in 2011. A NO vote would reject the current maps, and court-appointed officials would be required to set temporary boundaries for use in future elections. Either way, there is no effect on the district boundaries for state Assembly, Board of Equalization, or representatives in Congress.

Effect on the state budget:

If voters approve the current state Senate district maps, there would be no effect on state or local government budgets. If voters reject the current state Senate district maps, it would cost the state about \$500,000 to draw new district maps, and it would cost all counties about \$500,000 to develop new election materials.



People for Prop 40 say:

- A YES vote keeps the current districts and upholds the will of the people in creating the Citizens Redistricting Commission.

www.holdpoliticiansaccountable.org

People against Prop 40 have chosen to stop campaigning and are no longer asking voters for a NO vote.

Voting is as easy as 1-2-3!

**CALIFORNIA GENERAL ELECTION
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2012**

1

SIGN UP



- You are eligible to vote if you are a U.S. citizen, 18 years or older.
- You must register to get on the official list of voters in your county. The deadline to register is October 22 to vote in the November 6 election.
- You can pick up a voter registration form at a library or post office. Or, have a registration form mailed to you by calling 1-800-345-8683.
- It is important to fill out the form completely. You will be asked to include your driver license number or other identification.
- Once you are on the list, you only need to reregister if you change your address, change your name, or want to change your political party.

2

GET READY



- Before you vote, it helps to learn about what you will be voting on.
- All registered voters receive two things in the mail:
 - 1) a Sample Ballot that lists everything that will be on your ballot along with where you vote (your “polling place”)
 - 2) an Official Voter Information Guide about statewide candidates and measures
- In addition to this *Easy Voter Guide*, you can visit the Smart Voter website at www.smartvoter.org for more information about everything on your ballot plus a handy way to find your polling place.

3

VOTE!



- You choose whether to vote at your polling place or use a “vote by mail” ballot.
- For voting in person, the polls are open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. You may also be able to vote before election day at your county elections office. If you registered and your name is not on the list of voters at your assigned polling place, you can vote using a “provisional ballot.”
- To vote by mail, use the form in your Sample Ballot to request a “vote by mail” ballot to be sent to you. The deadline to ask for one is October 30. When your “vote by mail” ballot comes, fill it out and mail it back *in time for it to arrive by election day*. You may also drop it off at any polling place in your county on election day. You can sign up to get a “vote by mail” ballot for every election.

ABOUT THE EASY VOTER GUIDE

The *Easy Voter Guide* has been providing new voters and busy voters with nonpartisan information for statewide elections in California since 1994. Community reviewers help ensure the guide is easy to read and understand. The proposition explanations in this guide are based on information from the nonpartisan Legislative Analyst's Office. The arguments for and against each proposition are taken from the arguments in the Secretary of State's Official Voter Information Guide and other sources.

Every effort is made to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the information presented in the *Easy Voter Guide*. Additional information made available after the guide is printed and any other corrections are posted at www.easylvoterguide.org. Please send questions or suggestions about this guide to easyvoter@lwc.org.

The *Easy Voter Guide* is made possible in part by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act, administered by the California State Librarian.

The League of Women Voters® of California Education Fund is a 501(c)(3) nonpartisan organization that encourages informed and active participation in government and works to increase understanding of major public policy issues. For more information, go to www.cavotes.org.