



# **CLU Department of Political Science**



## **Fall 2020 Election Guide**

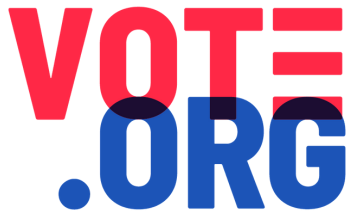
# Register to Vote!

## Are you registered to vote?

If the answer is no, follow these steps to register!

1. Head to [vote.org](https://vote.org)
2. Click the "Register to Vote" button
3. Enter your personal information and follow the website prompts

Congratulations! You are now registered to vote!



## Are you sure you're registered to vote?

Why don't you double check?

1. Head to [vote.org](https://vote.org)
2. Click the "Check your Registration" button
3. Enter your personal information when prompted

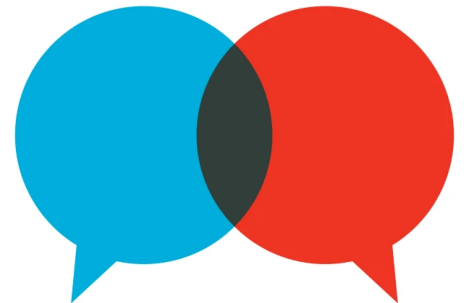
The database will inform you if you are currently registered to vote. If you are not, follow the directions above to register!

(To head to [vote.org](https://vote.org) click the photo)

## Power and People: What's At Stake in the 2020 Election?

Our very own Dr. Hoang will be giving a lecture titled "Power and the People: What's At Stake in the 2020 Election?" which analyze salient issues that will be shaped by the outcome of the presidential and other electoral races discuss strategies to become better informed, and therefore, more empowered to make decisions during this election season.

When: Friday Oct 16, 2020 at 12:00pm



(Click the photo to register for the talk)

You can use this tool to find out what congressional district you reside in and who the candidates are in your district!

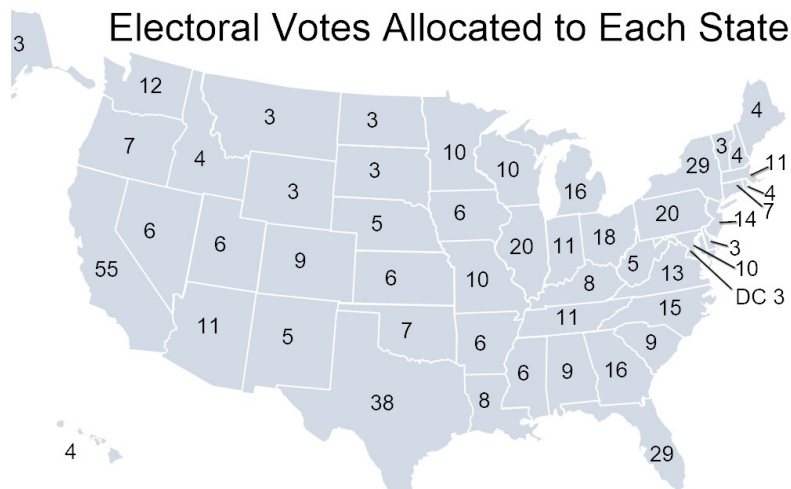


In the remainder of this election guide, we want to breakdown the Presidential election and the California Ballot Propositions. The next page will highlight the Biden and Trump campaigns and Proposition 15, and the remaining pages are dedicated to the rest of the ballot propositions; if you want more information just click the icon or Prop title to visit the CalMatters website.

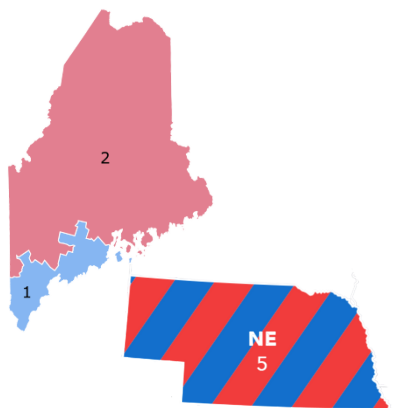
# The Presidency and the Electoral College

The Electoral College is a unique method for indirectly electing the president of the United States, which consists of a total of 538 members, one for each U.S. senator and representative, and three additional electors representing the District of Columbia. The U.S. Constitution does not specify procedures for the nomination of candidates for presidential elector. The two most common methods the states have adopted are nomination by state.

party convention and by state party committee. Generally, the parties select members known for their loyalty and service to the party, such as party leaders, state and local elected officials and party activists. As a result, when a voter casts a vote for a candidate for President of the United States, they are, in actuality, casting a vote for the presidential electors who were selected by that candidate's party. All 50 states and the District of Columbia use one of two methods for awarding their electoral votes:



**The Winner-Take-All System** In 48 states and the District of Columbia, when a candidate for president wins a state's popular vote, that party's slate of electors will cast the vote for president of the United States in December. For example, Florida has 29 electoral votes. If President Donald Trump wins the state's popular vote on Nov. 3, the 29 electors nominated by the Republican Party in Florida will be selected. These 29 people will gather on Dec. 14 to cast their votes for president of the United States.



**The District System** Maine and Nebraska are the only states that do not use a winner-take-all system. Instead, one electoral vote is awarded to the presidential candidate who wins the popular vote in each congressional district, and the remaining two electoral votes are awarded to the candidate receiving the most votes statewide. This is known as the district system. It is possible, under the district system, to split the electoral vote for the state. President Obama, in 2008, won the electoral vote in one of the congressional districts of Nebraska, while John McCain won in the state's other two districts and won the statewide vote as well, securing the state's two at-large votes. Thus, when the Nebraska presidential electors met in December 2008, there were four Republican electors and one Democrat. That election was the first time Nebraska's electoral vote was split.

It takes 270 out of the 538 electoral votes to win the presidential election. You can use this interactive map to create your own 2020 election forecast. Create a specific match-up by clicking the party and/or names near the electoral vote counter. This tool will also let you see how the Electoral College works and what states will be key to the success of the 2020 presidential candidates!

**270**  
**EWIN**

(Click here to check out "270ToWin" and their interactive Electoral map)



# 2020 Presidential Race



Republican Nominee: Donald Trump

Donald J. Trump was elected President of the United States in November of 2016. Under his leadership, the median household income has hit the highest level ever recorded. Almost 4 million jobs have been created since the election and women's unemployment has reached the lowest rate in 65 years. Both African-American and Hispanic-American unemployment reached the lowest rate ever recorded. President Trump signed the largest package of tax cuts and reforms in history. After tax cuts, over \$300 billion was poured back into the United States Economy. Trump signed both the VA Choice Act and the VA Accountability Act, to expand healthcare services for veterans. (Click the photo to be directed to the Trump campaign and learn more)

Democratic Nominee: Joe Biden

During his time as Senator, Joe Biden introduced a bill that became the "Violence Against Women Act" in 1990. He served as chairman of both the Senate Committee on the Judiciary and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. As an established leader, Former Vice President Biden oversaw the \$840 billion stimulus package in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. He fought for America's Auto Industry saving almost 1.5 million jobs across the supply chain. While serving as Vice President, Biden assisted in regional efforts to address economic, social, governance, and citizen security challenges. (Click the photo to be directed to the Biden campaign and learn more)



## CA Proposition 15: Should We Reconsider Proposition 13?

Back in 1978, California voters famously passed Proposition 13 — a huge permanent tax cut for landowners. It amended the state constitution to reset property taxes based on the purchase price of a home or business, and capped how much the tax could increase each year after that. To strip businesses of this protection, a majority of voters must approve Prop. 15 — amending the constitution again. If this measure passes, property taxes for many large businesses would be elevated to the property's current, probably higher, market value. That would net \$6.5 to \$11.5 billion — 60% for cities, counties and special districts, and 40% for schools and community colleges. Homeowners, and businesses with under \$3 million in California property will not be affected and farm land would be exempt.

Those in favor argue: We are all better off when everyone pays their fair share. But California is giving away billions of dollars in property tax breaks to wealthy corporations. These billions could be used instead to deal with increasing inequality, persistent poverty, unemployment, unaffordable housing, homelessness and underfunded schools. While the wealthiest corporations avoid paying their fair share, our schools have the most crowded classrooms in the nation and our local communities are struggling to respond to the impact of COVID-19. Prop. 15 is a fair and balanced reform which closes property tax loopholes benefiting wealthy corporations, cuts small business taxes, and reclaims billions of dollars to invest in our schools and local

Those against argue: Prop 15. will be the largest annual property tax increase in CA history — up to \$12.5 billion/year — causing a disastrous economic impact for every Californian. Additionally, Prop. 15 eliminates the taxpayer protections established in 1978 by Prop 13, which is a direct threat to homeowners because it is merely a first step towards completely dismantling Prop. 13. Finally, Prop. 15 will raise the cost of living and destroy jobs and small businesses because businesses will either be forced to raise the costs of their goods or let employees go to compensate for the loss of revenue due to the tax. As a result, this tax is a terrible move especially since so many businesses have been hit hard because of the novel COVID-19 pandemic.



# Proposition 14

## Funding Stem Cell Research in CA

### What would Prop 14 do?

Prop. 14 would allow CA to continue funding stem cell research, by borrowing up to \$5.5 billion

### Why am I voting on this?

In 2006 CA voters decided to fund stem cell research in hopes of finding cures for diseases like Parkinson's and even paralysis by borrowing \$3 billion. Now that the funds are drying up, CA wants to continue this research

### Supporters say

The stem cell research has led to clinical trials, biotech jobs, and research toward treatments or cures for ailments affecting half of California families. The primary beneficiaries of the institute's grants are University of California labs and hospitals. The state also has collected royalties on successful stem-cell developments, and would continue to do so on future breakthroughs. (Supporters include the UC Board of Regents, Michael Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research, the Latino Cancer Institute, Sickle Cell Disease Foundation, Gov. Newsom, California Institute for Regenerate Medicine Board of Directors)

### Opponents say

We gave it a try, but funding stem cell research didn't lead to the kind of life-saving cures voters hoped for in 2004. The federal government no longer bans federal dollars from supporting embryonic stem cell research, which was the reason California got involved in the first place. Plus the institute, one of the few state agencies not overseen by the Legislature, has had issues in the past with conflict of interest. (Opponents include Jeff Sheehy, board member of the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine)



# Proposition 15

## Business Property Taxes

### What would Prop 15 do?

Raise property taxes on big businesses to raise funds for schools and local governments

### Why am I voting on this?

In 1978, California voters passed Proposition 13 — a permanent tax cut for landowners — amending the state constitution to set property taxes on the purchase price of a home or business and capping how much the tax could increase each year after.

### Supporters say

Prop. 13 has provided a massive break to some of the state's larger businesses. If this passes, a small fraction of those would pay the vast majority of the higher taxes. All that money would go to cities, counties and school districts — and these days, they could really use it. (Supporters include Joe Biden, Gov. Newsom, California Teachers Association, California Democratic Part, Mark Zuckerberg)

### Opponents say

It would be senseless to pass one of the biggest tax increases in California history in the middle of a cataclysmically bad recession. And while small businesses are technically exempt, large landlords may end up passing the costs to some of their tenants and customers. (Opponents include the California Chamber of Commerce, California Retailers Association, Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association, the California NAACP)



# Proposition 16

## Restoring Affirmative Action

### What would Prop 16 do?

Allow universities and government offices to consider factors in someone's race, gender or ethnicity in making hiring, spending and admissions decisions.

### Why am I voting on this?

More than two-thirds of state lawmakers voted to put this measure on the November ballot. Since Affirmative Action was banned, the number of Black, Latino, and Native American students admitted to the UCs have decreased starkly.

### Supporters say

California is far more diverse than it was in the mid-1990s, when a Republican governor backed propositions to banish affirmative action and deny undocumented immigrants access to public services. Structural racism exists and to preach a color-blind philosophy is to be blind to the impacts of racism. Instead, for example, principals should be able to specifically seek to employ qualified Latino teachers in a school where most teachers are white but most students are Latino. Public universities should be able to consider a student's race as one of numerous admissions factors. As for the growth in Latino admissions at the UCs, that's good news, but affirmative action could have led to those increases much sooner.

### Opponents say

Allowing schools and government offices to make decisions based on race, ethnicity or sex is its own kind of prejudice. Equal rights mean everyone is treated equally. The claim that America is systemically racist is a false narrative that "fuels racial paranoia, division and hatred." The state already has made strides in diversity. And it's legal now to give preference to students who really need it — those who grew up in low-income families. As for who gets into the public universities, the fault lies with inadequate K-12 schooling.



# Proposition 17

## Giving parolees the right to vote

### What would Prop 17 do?

Allow people on parole in California to vote and run for office (if they're registered to vote and haven't been convicted of perjury or bribery).

### Why am I voting on this?

The Legislature, by a two-thirds vote, approved placing this amendment to the state constitution on your ballot.

### Supporters say

Civic engagement will lead to fewer parolees committing other crimes; it allows them to help remove the stigma of their past. People who complete their prison sentences deserve the right to participate in a democracy. (Supporters include League of Women Voters in California, Gov. Newsom, Californians for Safety and Justice, Assemblymember Kevin McCaarty)

### Opponents say

Parole is an opportunity for violent offenders to prove they've been rehabilitated. Voting is a right that offenders should receive once they demonstrate they have been rehabilitated; not before. (Opponents include Crime Victims United of California and Election Integrity Project California)



# Proposition 18

## Change the voting age to 17

### What would Prop 18 do?

Allow 17-year-olds to vote in primary and special elections if they will be 18 and eligible by the next general election.

### Why am I voting on this?

The Legislature, by a two-thirds vote, placed this constitutional amendment on your ballot.

### Supporters say

Allowing teens who would be first time voters in an election cycle to participate from the beginning could increase interest and voter participation among youth. It's a simple way to raise the voices of young voters. Many of them already work and pay taxes and they are allowed to join the military so voting if they are eligible makes sense. (Supporters include CA Association of Student Councils, Gov. Newsom, Secretary of State Padilla, CA League of Conservation Voters, and CA School Boards Association)

### Opponents say

Seventeen-year-olds are still kids. Biologically their brains are not yet fully developed, they can't enter into legal contracts, and they still need parent permission for certain activities. These high schoolers may be unduly influenced by teachers or school positions on issues, and many have no real world experience with paying bills, renting or buying a house, or holding down a job. (Opponents include Election Integrity Project of California and Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association)



# Proposition 19

## Tax breaks for those 55 and older

### What would Prop 19 do?

Give Californians 55 or older a big property tax break when buying a new home. To fund that new tax break, it would curtail a separate tax break Californians may receive on homes inherited from parents and grandparents.

### Why am I voting on this?

The Realtors and firefighters' union, two powerful state interest groups, convinced lawmakers to put this one on the 2020 ballot.

### Supporters say

Prop. 19 will incentivize seniors stuck in oversized homes to downsize, freeing up inventory in the state's ridiculously expensive housing market. Closing the inheritance tax break will provide a budget boost to local governments and state firefighting efforts, at a time when the coronavirus pandemic has depleted public coffers. (Supporters include CA Association of Realtors, CA Professional Firefighters, Gov. Newsom, the CA Democratic Party, and the CA Nurse Association)

### Opponents say

This is a giveaway to Realtors, who are twisting public policy to boost their commissions. Plus, adult children should have the right to do whatever they want with the property they inherited — without facing a crushing tax burden. (Opponents include Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association and Sen. Patricia Bates (R-Laguna Hills))





# Proposition 20

## Increasing criminal penalties

### What would Prop 20 do?

Increase penalties for certain property crimes and repeated parole violations and make it more difficult for some convicted felons to qualify for early parole and release from prison.

### Why am I voting on this?

Law enforcement unions, conservative prosecutors, crime-minded legislators and some retailers concerned about crime put Prop. 20 on the ballot.

### Supporters say

Californians made a mistake when they rolled an array of property crimes from felonies down to misdemeanors. It's triggered a predictable increase in car thefts and shoplifting. Prop. 20 would correct that mistake. Likewise, Californians went too far when they voted to create opportunities for "non-violent felons" to apply for early release from prison. California law only specifies 23 offenses as "violent felonies" — and child abuse, domestic violence, hate crimes and aggravated assault are not on that list. They should be. (Supporters include Assemblymembers Jim Cooper and Vince Fong, CA Retailers Association, Sacramento County DA Anne Schubert)

### Opponents say

California already tried the "lock 'em up and throw away the key" strategy. It didn't cut crime, it exploded the state's prisons budget and it tore apart countless families. That's why voters have consistently backed reforms that give all but the most serious offenders a chance to rehabilitate themselves. This year, with more focus than ever before on how the penal system disproportionately harms Black and Latino Americans, is no time to revert back to a tired, failed approach. (Opponents include Gov. Newsom, CA Democratic Party, ACLU of CA, CA Teachers Association, and Chief Probation Officers of CA)



# Proposition 21

## Rent Control

### What would Prop 21 do?

Allow cities to pass rent control measures on rental housing, as long as it's more than 15 years old.

### Why am I voting on this?

This is a third attempt to repeal the CA Costa-Hawkings Rental Housing Act - advocates hope that the financial shock triggered by the coronavirus pandemic will make people more eager to protect renters.

### Supporters say

This would let cities pass limits on rent increases to protect California families who are one rent hike away from being driven out of their neighborhoods by corporate landlords. This will stop more homelessness and gentrification. (Supporters include Michael Weinstein - Pres. of the AIDS Healthcare Foundation, CA Democratic Party, Eviction Defense Network, Sen. Bernie Sanders)

### Opponents say

It would make it less profitable for builders to construct more housing, affordable or not, at a time when California has a massive housing shortage. It would also decrease revenue for city and state governments, already cash-strapped by the pandemic. Plus, Californians already made up their mind in 2018. (Opponents include CA Apartments Association, Gov. Newsom, Essex Property Trust and Prometheus Real Estate Group, CA Seniors Advocates League)



# Proposition 22

## Gig worker benefits and rights

### What would Prop 22 do?

Exempt gig companies like Uber and Lyft from a state law requiring them to treat workers as employees.

### Why am I voting on this?

Gig companies were a primary political target of the new law, but they've fought state and city attorneys over whether they should have to comply.

### Supporters say

This is a business necessity for gig companies to continue offering drivers work on flexible schedules — and consumers on-demand rides at low prices. It's also just a backdoor way for labor groups to try to unionize app drivers. Uber has said that up to 76% of its 209,000 California drivers could be cut if the company is forced to comply with the state's stricter law, and that rider prices would increase 25-111% across the state. (Supporters include Uber, Lyft, Instacart, Doordash, CA Chamber of Commerce, CA Police Chiefs Association, CA NAACP)

### Opponents say

Gig companies undermine job stability and exploit drivers, so their warnings about job cuts are overstated and designed to get regulators to back off. The pandemic is a prime example of why gig workers need the stricter state law, which gives them protections like paid sick leave and unemployment insurance. That's a surer bet than relying on government intervention such as the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program made available to drivers through federal relief measures. (Opponents include Joe Biden and Sen. Kamala Harris, Service Employees International Union, CA Teachers Association, Gig Workers Rising - a driver advocacy organization)



# Proposition 23

## Dialysis clinic regulations

### What would Prop 23 do?

Implement stricter regulations on kidney dialysis clinics that include having physicians present more often and reporting infection data to the state.

### Why am I voting on this?

This is a second attempt at implementing these restrictions as the number of CA citizens who require dialysis treatment continues to grow – about 80,000 Californians depend on it.

### Supporters say

Kidney patients deserve better treatment than what they receive from many dialysis clinics, and these high profit companies haven't invested enough in patient safety. The removal of people's blood during dialysis treatment puts enormous strain on people's bodies and leaves them vulnerable to medical crises. So having a licensed physician on site at all times – not just sometimes – means that during emergencies, a physician can respond immediately. (Supporters include Service Employees International Union United Health Care Workers, CA Labor Federation, CA Democratic Party)

### Opponents say

The proposition is unnecessary, as clinics already report infection data to the federal government. They also already have the necessary medical staff to keep patients safe, including a medical director. But adding physicians around the clock would only increase costs for clinics, pushing them to reduce hours or possibly close. What this is, at heart, is a union ploy to pressure clinics and organize dialysis workers. (Opponents include DaVita, Fresenius Medical Care, California Medical Association, California State Conference NAACP)



# Proposition 24

## Data Privacy

### What would Prop 24 do?

Increase data privacy regulations that allow voters to decide what information to share with businesses.

### Why am I voting on this?

Alastair Mactaggart began advocating for consumer privacy a few years ago, after a Google engineer told him Americans would be shocked by how much the company knows about us. Mactaggart successfully pushed the Legislature to pass a landmark data privacy law in 2018 and says it needs some changes.

### Supporters say

The existing privacy law doesn't have enough teeth. Updates in Prop. 24 would create a system to enforce the privacy law and triple fines on companies that violate kids' privacy. They would give consumers more control over their most personal data, allow you to shield your precise location from tracking, and give you more ability to sue companies if your email and password are stolen or hacked. Passing this proposition will make it harder for lobbyists to change privacy laws in the Legislature. (Supporters include Alastair Mactaggart, Common Sense Media, Consumer Watchdog, Alice Huffman - President of the CA NAACP, and Rep. Ro Khanna (D - Fremont))

### Opponents say

California's data privacy law is very new – it just went into effect this year – so we should see how it plays out before changing it. Some of the updates in Prop. 24 would hurt consumers – delaying a rule that allows workers to find out what information employers collect about them, making it easier for businesses to charge you more if you don't let them sell your data, and allowing tech companies to grab your data when you leave California. This proposition is the pet project of one man, and lacks backing from a broad coalition of privacy advocates. (Opponents include American Civil Liberties Union, Public Citizen, Consumer Federation of CA, the OC Register Editorial Board)



# Proposition 25

## Getting rid of cash bail

### What would Prop 25 do?

Transform how people get out of jail while awaiting trial – making California the first state to replace cash bail with an algorithm.

### Why am I voting on this?

In 2018, former Gov. Jerry Brown signed a law that would have replaced cash bail with a risk-based algorithm. Superior courts would have to create new pretrial assessment divisions. Opposition, led by the bail bonds industry, challenged the law almost immediately.

### Supporters say

The cash bail system is inherently classist, racist, and unfair. People with generational wealth can pay their way out of jail while awaiting trial. Poorer people in the exact same legal circumstances, with the same statistical likelihood to appear – or not appear – for trial cannot afford to pay their way out. The bail bonds industry is designed to exploit this problem and these people. And hey, maybe the accused will put money back into the economy instead of spending it on bail. (Supporters include Service Employees International Union, CA Democratic Party, CA Medical Association, Gov. Newsom, and Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon)

### Opponents say

There are two sides to the opposition. The bail industry: We shouldn't switch something that's working for an alternative that is no better, and potentially more costly. Not only that, but it could lead to more people going free before trial and then committing more crimes. Civil rights advocates: Cash bail is fundamentally flawed. But while algorithms can pitch you a song or sell you a toaster, they shouldn't be used for release decisions. The factors considered for release will still lead to people of color being held for trial at disproportionate rates. Prop. 25 is further from the existing problem, but no closer to the solution. (CA NAACP, CA Peace Officers' Association, CA Bail Agents Association, and Human Rights Watch)