

CALNONPROFITS' 2026 Voter Guide

Midterm Election November 3, 2026



Nonprofit Priorities and the 2026 Election

California's nonprofits anchor the economic, cultural, and civic health of our communities. The policies adopted at all levels of government directly affect our ability to serve. From fair contracting practices to timely payments to workforce sustainability, decisions made by elected leaders and voters have real, immediate consequences for our sector.

Staying informed about upcoming elections is essential to ensuring nonprofits and the communities we support can continue to thrive. That's why CalNonprofits is expanding our nonpartisan voter education work ahead of the November 3, 2026 Midterm Election.

This **Voter Guide** offers information on **1) statewide ballot measures**, **2) statewide elected offices**, and **3) key voter resources** to help nonprofits and the communities we serve participate in our democratic process with confidence, and empowered with current, accurate information.

About CalNonprofits

CalNonprofits is the leading policy voice for California's nonprofit sector, focusing on advocacy, education, and research to build a more powerful and politically engaged nonprofit network across California. We work with lawmakers, advocates and nonprofit leaders to advance the health, stability, and effectiveness of our state's nonprofits.

Our education program helps nonprofit leaders stay up-to-date on everything from the ABCs of nonprofit management to the ever-evolving landscape of rules and regulations governing the sector. We advocate for better data about our sector, share the data that is available, offer perspectives on how to interpret nonprofit data, and on occasion conduct our own research.

Disclaimer: This voter Guide is for informational and educational purposes only and is intended to educate voters on issues relevant to our organization's mission. Our organization is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit and is strictly nonpartisan. We do not endorse or oppose any candidate for public office and are prohibited from doing so under federal tax law. Please confirm details with trusted state sources.



STATEWIDE BALLOT MEASURES

This November, Californians will vote on several statewide ballot measures. Learn what ballot measures are and review the qualified measures below.

What is a ballot measure?

A ballot measure is any proposal that California voters (not lawmakers!) decide directly. Ballot measures can create new laws, change existing laws, or amend the state constitution.

A measure can either be:

Voter-Initiated	Legislature Referred
A proponent drafts a measure, receives approval to circulate it, and collects the required number of valid voter signatures. Once counties verify signatures, the Secretary of State qualifies the measure for the ballot.	Legislature votes to place a proposal (e.g., constitutional amendment, bond measure, or statutory change) directly on the ballot.

Types of Measures include:

- **Initiatives** — Voters propose new statutes or constitutional amendments.
- **Referenda** — Voters approve or reject a law the Legislature already passed.
- **Bond Measures** — Voters authorize the state to borrow money for major projects.

What happens after a measure gets on the ballot?

1. **Voters Decide** — Californians vote **Yes** or **No** on qualified measures
 - a. If it **PASSES** [✓] = The measure becomes law.
 - b. If it **FAILS** [x] = Nothing changes. Existing law stays in place.
2. **Majority Rules** — Most statewide measures pass with a simple majority. Some local measures require 55% or two-thirds approval, depending on the type.
3. **Results are Certified** — After counties complete their count, the Secretary of State certifies the results. Statutes take effect on the timeline written into the measure; constitutional amendments take effect immediately upon certification.

Review the measures in this guide to see what's on the ballot this November. Each measure includes its type (🗳️), what it does (📄), why nonprofits should care (🤝), and financial impact (💰).



Prop 1

Authorizes Bonds for Housing Affordability Programs



LEGISLATIVE STATUTE.



WHAT IT DOES: It authorizes \$11.25 billion in state general obligation bonds to fund affordable housing construction and veteran home-loan programs. It allocates funding for targeted populations, providing \$1.25 billion for veterans' home loans, \$1.15 billion for supportive housing for unhoused residents, \$450 million for farmworker housing, \$350 million for state university student housing, and \$200 million for Native American tribes.



WHY NONPROFITS SHOULD CARE: Without a stable home, it's nearly impossible to stay healthy, keep kids in school, or secure a steady job. Therefore, housing instability directly undercuts every major issue nonprofits tackle—including public health, educational equity, hunger, and economic security. Mission-driven, nonprofit housing developers rely on state bond funding to secure federal tax credits and other resources to build communities for low-income families, seniors, and unhoused veterans. By expanding accessible housing and stabilizing vulnerable households, Proposition 1 could strengthen California's broader social safety net and alleviate pressure on essential services.



FINANCIAL IMPACT: It is estimated to cost the state General Fund between \$500 and \$600 million annually for 25 years to repay bonds, which is about 0.25% of the annual General Fund budget.

CALNONPROFITS POSITION: VOTE **YES** ON PROP 1

Prop 2

Increases State's Rainy Day Fund



LEGISLATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT.



WHAT IT DOES: It allows the state to save more money during economically good times, so it doesn't have to slash public services during a recession. By tweaking old spending limit rules, it gives lawmakers the flexibility to build a bigger rainy day fund for emergencies. However, because higher revenue can now be swept into state reserves, it also means smaller tax refunds for taxpayers during economic booms.



WHY NONPROFITS SHOULD CARE: During budget downturns, nonprofits face higher demand for services with less funding and fewer resources to deliver. A bigger state savings account may mean more predictable grant/contract funding, fewer mid-year budget panics, and protection for essential public services when the economy inevitably dips. Proposition 2 could incentivize lawmakers to save more money, which can stabilize funding for essential services that nonprofits provide communities.



FINANCIAL IMPACT: Through continued deposits, the state would save more over time, which can make balancing the budget easier when revenues decline.

CALNONPROFITS POSITION: NO STANCE

Prop 3

Provides Permanent Funding for Schools and Healthcare by Extending Existing Tax on High Incomes.



INITIATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT.



WHAT IT DOES: It makes permanent existing higher-income tax rates on the state's highest earners that are set to expire in 2031. Originally established under Proposition 30 and renewed under Proposition 55, the tax applies only to top earners—single filers earning more than \$371,000, heads of household making over \$505,000, and married couples filing jointly making over \$742,000. Revenue would continue to fund schools and community colleges. It would also increase state revenues available for healthcare, reserves, and other programs.



WHY NONPROFITS SHOULD CARE: It would stabilize funding for public education and health programs, which many nonprofits rely on to deliver after-school services, early learning supports, and community health access. Nonprofits serving children, families, and low-income communities could see more predictable state partnerships and fewer disruptions to grant-funded programs by maintaining this revenue stream.



FINANCIAL IMPACT: It is projected to maintain \$5 billion to \$15 billion in annual revenue—an amount expected to grow over time, though annual revenue will fluctuate based on stock market conditions.

CALNONPROFITS POSITION:

VOTE **YES** ON PROP 3

Prop 4

Repeals Prohibition Against Public Funding of Election Campaigns.



LEGISLATIVE STATUTE.



WHAT IT DOES: It gives state and local governments the green light to offer public campaign financing to candidates running for elected office if they meet strict eligibility and spending rules. It also bans the use of those funds for legal fees, fines, or repaying personal loans, and would increase penalties for illegal foreign contributions.



WHY NONPROFITS SHOULD CARE: Running for office is expensive. Public financing lowers the barrier to entry for community leaders, grassroots advocates, and candidates who don't have a network of wealthy donors. The reduced reliance on large donors may increase electoral competitiveness and create new opportunities for nonprofits to engage emerging civic leaders in a landscape less dominated by special interests.



FINANCIAL IMPACT: The total cost of public campaign finance programs varies depending on how each government designs and administers its program. The Fair Political Practices Commission is expected to incur additional oversight and enforcement costs, estimated at a few hundred thousand dollars per year.

CALNONPROFITS POSITION:

NO STANCE

Prop 5

Changes Recall Election Process for Statewide Offices.



LEGISLATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT.



WHAT IT DOES: It cleans up California's recall process by turning recall ballots into a simple yes-or-no vote on removing an official—stopping replacement candidates from securing power with just a fraction of the vote, ensuring big political decisions are rooted in majority rule. If the Governor is removed, normal succession rules apply until a successor is elected. Other recalled offices will remain vacant until filled in a special election or appointed based on the law. Recalled officers are allowed to run as a candidate in a special election.



WHY NONPROFITS SHOULD CARE: Changes to recall procedures and gubernatorial succession could affect the political stability of the environment nonprofits rely on for policy implementation and state partnerships. Recall elections are expensive and exhausting, pulling attention, public funds, and civic bandwidth away from real challenges that nonprofits are addressing everyday. Proposition 5 potentially discourages frivolous political recalls, keeping state focus and taxpayer money where it belongs: on community needs.



FINANCIAL IMPACT: The impact is uncertain. It could lead to savings or costs in the millions of dollars per recall event depending on the specific election scenario.

CALNONPROFITS POSITION: NO STANCE

Prop 37

Creates Loan Program for Middle-Income Buyers of Qualified New Homes.



INITIATIVE STATUTE.



WHAT IT DOES: It creates a state loan program to help middle-income Californians buy newly built or converted homes with down-payment assistance. This would allow the California Housing Finance Agency (CalHFA) to issue up to \$25 billion in revenue bonds to create low-interest loans covering up to 17% of the home price for eligible buyers.



WHY NONPROFITS SHOULD CARE: Buyer subsidies without reforming barriers to building more supply – such as zoning reforms, streamlining environmental reviews, or allowing higher density – may increase purchasing power for very few Californians in a supply-constrained market. This risks driving up overall home prices rather than creating net-new homes, which will exacerbate ongoing affordability challenges. Nonprofits may see increased demand for pre-purchase education and long-term homeowner support.



FINANCIAL IMPACT: There is no direct state or local cost. These revenue bonds are designed to be fully repaid by the homebuyer's mortgage payments.

CALNONPROFITS POSITION: NO STANCE

Prop 38

Authorizes Bonds for Immunology Medical Research.



INITIATIVE STATUTE.



WHAT IT DOES: It authorizes \$8.4 billion in state bonds for immunology research. Funds would be split between UC-affiliated institutes and grants for public/nonprofit universities, with at least half earmarked for major disease research like cancer, Alzheimer's disease, and heart disease. Treatments developed would be sold in California at 20% below the national average, and bonds would be repaid from the General Fund.



WHY NONPROFITS SHOULD CARE: It expands funding for nonprofit universities and research institutions, creating new opportunities for nonprofit-led medical research, clinical trials, and community health partnerships. If immunology breakthroughs advance and treatments are developed, nonprofits working in public health, patient support, and disease prevention could benefit from improved treatment options and reduced long-term healthcare burdens in the communities they serve.



FINANCIAL IMPACT: It is estimated to cost the state General Fund between \$500 and \$600 million annually for 20 years to repay bonds, which is about 0.25% of the annual General Fund budget. Future savings are based on revenue from discoveries.

CALNONPROFITS POSITION: NO STANCE

Prop 39

Prohibits Citizens from Voting Unless They Present Government-Issued ID.



INITIATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT.



WHAT IT DOES: It amends California's Constitution to require voters to show a government-issued ID at the polls or provide an ID number when voting by mail. Currently, Californians attest under penalty of perjury that they are U.S. citizens and provide identifying information when registering, but they are not required to show ID when casting a ballot. This measure prohibits voters without required identification from voting in person or by mail, invalidating any mail ballots cast without one. It also requires the state to offer free voter ID cards, and counties to report annually on the percentage of voters whose citizenship was verified.



WHY NONPROFITS SHOULD CARE: Voting should be accessible, simple, and fair. Proposition 39 adds extra steps to the voting process, making registration and vote-by-mail more complex for many eligible voters, especially in communities nonprofits serve. Nonprofits focused on civic engagement may need to expand outreach and assistance to help voters navigate additional ID requirements. Many vulnerable populations supported by nonprofits are less likely to have up-to-date identification or the time and resources to obtain official documents. Because civic participation is central to nonprofit missions, additional hurdles at the ballot box directly affect efforts to ensure every community's voice is represented.



FINANCIAL IMPACT: It is estimated to cost anywhere from tens of millions to low hundreds of millions of dollars annually, plus tens of millions in upfront implementation costs.

CALNONPROFITS POSITION: VOTE **NO** ON PROP 39

Prop 40

Imposes One-Time Tax on Certain Taxpayers.



INITIATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT & STATUTE.



WHAT IT DOES: This is a billionaire tax advanced by SEIU United Healthcare Workers West, a labor union. It imposes a one time tax of up to 5% on individuals with covered assets valued at over \$1 billion. 90% of the tax revenues would be spent on healthcare and 10% would fund food assistance or education-related programs. It would prohibit using revenues to replace existing funding for these purposes and exempts revenue from school, budget, and state spending requirements.



WHY NONPROFITS SHOULD CARE: This measure sparked a big fight, even among traditional allies. Major unions and progressive groups have opposed it as a risky, one-time cash grab that threatens the reliable, long-term funding our public schools and healthcare systems depend on. On the flip side, many community-based groups may support it as a direct cash infusion into healthcare and social safety-net programs to relieve overburdened local charities, as the tax may stabilize the vital public funds they rely on to serve our most vulnerable neighbors.



FINANCIAL IMPACT: It is estimated to generate tens of billions in initial revenue but may lead to an ongoing decrease in revenue of hundreds of millions of dollars or more.

CALNONPROFITS POSITION: NO STANCE

Prop 41

Prohibits New State Taxes that Exclude Revenues from State Spending Limit.



INITIATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT.



WHAT IT DOES: Proposition 41 was crafted as one of two so-called poison pills to undercut the proposed 5% wealth tax on California's billionaires (Proposition 40). The billionaire tax was designed to bypass the state's normal voter-approved spending caps so that all of its funds could be spent on healthcare and education. This measure closes that door by banning any new state tax from dodging those spending limits. It also requires pre-election and ongoing audits of proposed initiatives and the programs they fund. If voters approve both the billionaire tax (Proposition 40) and Proposition 41, whichever measure gets more "Yes" votes wins. If this measure gets more votes, it completely voids the billionaire tax—canceling it out entirely.



WHY NONPROFITS SHOULD CARE: This measure could reshape the public-funding environment nonprofits rely on by increasing scrutiny, transparency, and performance expectations for state-funded initiatives. It may influence how future special-tax revenues are allocated, potentially affecting nonprofit partners that depend on those funds to deliver services in areas like health care, education, and social support.



FINANCIAL IMPACT: The impact is uncertain, as it depends on audit costs that would mostly be paid from the new revenues collected by special taxes, as well as possible savings from implementation recommendations from audits.

CALNONPROFITS POSITION: NO STANCE

Prop 42

Prohibits New State Personal Property Taxes & Certain Retroactive State Taxes.



INITIATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT.



WHAT IT DOES: This measure is one of two so-called poison pills to sink the billionaire tax (Proposition 40). It would block the billionaire tax—and any future tax like it—from ever taking effect by amending the California Constitution to ban any new state taxes on personal property, investments, or retirement holdings, and forbids taxing activities retroactively. If voters approve both the billionaire tax (Proposition 40) and Proposition 42, whichever measure gets more "Yes" votes wins. If this measure gets more votes, it completely voids the billionaire tax—canceling it out entirely.



WHY NONPROFITS SHOULD CARE: This measure could influence the broader fiscal environment nonprofits work within by limiting future revenue options for state programs. If state policymakers have fewer tax mechanisms available, nonprofits that rely on public funding, particularly in health, housing, and social services, may experience increased cost pressures from tighter state budgets and greater competition for limited resources.



FINANCIAL IMPACT: The financial outcome is unpredictable. Restricting the state's ability to raise taxes could lower future tax revenues and limit future funding.

CALNONPROFITS POSITION: NO STANCE

Prop 43

Limits Voters' Ability to Raise Revenues for Local Government Services.



LEGISLATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT.



WHAT IT DOES: It makes it harder to pass local taxes for specific causes by requiring every local special tax initiative put on the ballot by voters to hit a 66.7% supermajority vote instead of a simple majority. It would also bar both local governments and voter initiatives from imposing property-value taxes except where the Constitution already allows. In a twisting turn of events, this measure was proposed by Assemblymember Buffy Wicks as an emergency compromise to force the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association into dropping an even harsher ballot proposal. Now that the threat is gone, she's actively telling voters to vote **NO** on her own measure.



WHY NONPROFITS SHOULD CARE: Local ballot measures are often a community's way of self-funding its own safety net; however, getting two-thirds of voters to agree on any tax increase is an incredibly high hurdle. When cities fail to pass local revenue measures, essential services get cut, meaning fewer shelter beds, closed after-school programs, and reduced community health services.



FINANCIAL IMPACT: There is no direct cost or revenue change to the state budget. However, the measure creates significant indirect financial effects for local governments, as future local tax revenue would not grow as much due to the higher approval threshold.

CALNONPROFITS POSITION: VOTE **NO** ON PROP 43

Prop 44

Requires Community Health Clinics Spend 90% of Revenue on Program Services.



INITIATIVE STATUTE.



WHAT IT DOES: It sets minimum spending on health care at community health centers and clinics by requiring them to spend at least 90% of revenue directly on program or patient services. Under this rule, non-direct expenses—such as administrative, operational, and capital costs—are capped at 10%. Clinics that fall below the 90% spending threshold must pay an annual penalty.



WHY NONPROFITS SHOULD CARE: It requires a strict 90% "direct care" spending mandate, which ignores basic reality: keeping community clinics afloat requires paying for rent, utilities, medical translators, and IT systems, which this measure treats as unnecessary "overhead." The rigid 90% cap prevents clinics from building reserve funds to open new facilities, upgrade technology, invest in value-based care, or prepare for public health emergencies. By arbitrarily capping and penalizing these essential operational costs, Proposition 44 forces vital safety-net clinics across California to choose between cutting patient services or shutting their doors entirely. Nonprofits don't need to be told how to run their operations to best serve communities.



FINANCIAL IMPACT: It is estimated to cost tens of millions in annual state enforcement costs, with the measure directing the state to recover those costs by charging fees to affected clinics. It could create uncertain effects on state and local costs if clinics cannot meet the 90% minimum spending requirement and ultimately close.

CALNONPROFITS POSITION: VOTE **NO** ON PROP 44

Prop 45

Modifies Environmental Review for Certain Projects.



INITIATIVE STATUTE.



WHAT IT DOES: It speeds up environmental reviews for essential projects like housing, transportation, water, health, and clean-energy. It sets deadlines for agencies to complete reviews, narrows agency review obligations for expedited review, and sets deadlines for filing and resolving lawsuits.



WHY NONPROFITS SHOULD CARE: Streamlining permitting and environmental review for essential projects, including affordable housing, clinics, schools, clean energy, water systems, and broadband, may accelerate development in areas where nonprofits frequently partner or rely on public infrastructure. While faster timelines may lower costs and expand access to facilities and services that support nonprofit missions, expedited processes could reduce opportunities for environmental review, potentially affecting ecosystems and communities nonprofits also serve.



FINANCIAL IMPACT: It is estimated to cost in the high tens to over \$100 million annually; some of these costs may be partially offset by fees charged on project applicants. Long-term fiscal effects remain uncertain and depend on how many projects qualify for the program and whether those projects create different environmental impacts.

CALNONPROFITS POSITION: NO STANCE



STATEWIDE OFFICES

Statewide offices shape the policies and systems nonprofits rely on every day. Below is a quick look at the key statewide offices on the ballot and how their role affects our sector. *(Click on each candidate's photo to go to their website.)*

KNOW WHO'S ON THE BALLOT

Governor – The Governor proposes California's state budget and sets policy priorities that determine funding levels for health, housing, human services, arts, environmental programs, and other areas where nonprofits deliver core services. The administration establishes statewide contracting rules, emergency response systems, and cross-agency initiatives that determine how nonprofits partner with the state.

Javier Becerra (D)
Voting Rights Attorney



Steve Hilton (R)
Small Business Owner



Lieutenant Governor – The Lieutenant Governor serves as the second-highest ranking executive officer in the state and the first person in line to succeed the Governor. They preside over the California State Senate and vote in case of ties, and sit on key commissions, influencing decisions on higher education, land use, and economic development. Their roles influence workforce pipelines and statewide economic strategies that can shape where and how nonprofits operate.

Fiona Ma (D)
State Treasurer/CPA



Gloria Romero (R)
Educator/Businesswoman



Secretary of State – The Secretary of State oversees elections and voter registration systems. The office also tracks campaign finance and lobbying disclosure, maintains business filings, and oversees several state registries and administrative programs. The agency manages compliance and filing requirements for incorporated businesses, which determines the legal standing of nonprofits registered in the state and their ability to operate. Nonprofits that engage in legal lobbying must also file disclosures with the Secretary of State.

Shirley Weber (D)
CA Secretary of State



Donald Wagner (R)
Orange County Supervisor



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Controller – The Controller manages the state's financial operations, disbursing funds, tracking revenues, and auditing how public dollars are spent by state and local agencies. The office also publishes reports on state spending and local government finances. The Controller oversees the processes for reimbursing state grants and contracts, which can shape cash flow and sustainability of state-funded programs, especially for nonprofits that contract with the state to deliver many services on its behalf.

Malia Cohen (D)
State Controller/Mother



Herb Morgan (R)
Chief Investment Officer



Treasurer– The Treasurer manages California's finances, investments, public debt, serving as the state's primary banker and asset manager. The office invests the state's idle funds for projects and programs, and administers state bonds that finance infrastructure, school, housing, transportation, and environmental projects. The Treasurer also chairs numerous financing authorities that direct capital to public and private projects that nonprofits support or help deliver, and oversees the State commission that allocates tax-exemption for financing for purposes like housing or economic development.

Eleni Kounalakis (D)
CA Lieutenant Governor



Jennifer Hawks (D)
Retired Businesswoman



Attorney General – The Attorney General is California's top lawyer and law enforcement official, representing the state in civil and criminal matters, advising state agencies, supporting district attorneys and law-enforcement partners, and leading investigations into fraudulent, unfair, or illegal activities. The Attorney General also oversees California's Registry of Charities & Fundraisers, enforcing charitable solicitation, governance, and consumer protection laws. They play a role in protecting nonprofits from politically motivated federal actions, safeguarding their tax-exempt status, and defending communities when policies threaten funding, rights, or services.

Rob Bonta (D)
CA Attorney General



Michael Gates (R)
Deputy United States Attorney



Insurance Commissioner – The Insurance Commissioner oversees California's insurance market. The office reviews premium rates, monitors claim-handling, and addresses challenges such as unfair practices, rising premiums, coverage disruptions, and gaps in availability. The Commissioner also helps the state, including nonprofits, prepare for and recover from natural disasters and climate impacts, works to keep insurance affordable, and fights insurance fraud to create a more stable market for predictable insurance costs.

Jane Kim (D)
Attorney/Consumer Advocate



Ben Allen (D)
California State Senator





VOTER RESOURCES

Explore and share key educational resources to stay informed ahead of the November election.

State Resources

- CA Secretary of State | [Elections and Voter Information](#)
- CA Secretary of State | [Official Voter Guide Information](#)
- CA Secretary of State | [Statewide Initiative Guide](#)
- CA Secretary of State | [Life Cycle of a Ballot](#)
- CA Secretary of State | [Voter Registration](#)
- Legislative Analysis Office | [Propositions Analyses](#)

Tools and Webinars

- CalNonprofits | [Nonprofit's Guide to 2026 Primary Voter Activation Strategies](#)
- California Policy Forum | [Securing the Right to Vote: Election Protection Strategies](#)
- Alliance for Justice | [Practical Guidance: Nonprofit Voter Assistance - California](#)
- Nonprofit Vote & CalNonprofits | [2026 Voter Engagement Guide for California](#)
- CalMatters | [2026 Voter Guide - Propositions](#)
- Alliance for Justice | [The Rules of The Game A Guide to Election-Related Activities for 501\(c\)\(3\) Organizations](#)
- National Council of Nonprofits | [Civic Engagement and Charitable Nonprofit Organizations: Messaging and Response Guidance](#)
- Nonprofit Quarterly | [Democracy Needs You: 5 Steps Nonprofits Can Take to Support Free and Fair Elections](#)
- Alliance for Justice | [Want to Conduct or Fund a Voter Registration Drive? What Nonprofits and Foundations Need to Know](#)



Interested in Exploring More?

Visit our Nonprofit Priorities & the 2026 Election webpage.
calnonprofits.org/2026-election