



Proposition 18

AMENDS CALIFORNIA CONSTITUTION TO PERMIT 17-YEAR-OLDS TO VOTE IN PRIMARY AND SPECIAL ELECTIONS IF THEY WILL TURN 18 BY THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION AND BE OTHERWISE ELIGIBLE TO VOTE. LEGISLATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT.

ANALYSIS OF MEASURE

Background

Elections in California. In even-numbered years, California holds two statewide elections—the primary and the general elections. At each of these elections voters (1) either nominate or elect candidates to state and federal offices and (2) consider statewide ballot measures. At the primary election, which is held in the spring, voters determine which candidates will compete for elective office at the general election. At the general election in November, voters determine who wins elective offices. Statewide ballot measures can be considered in both the primary and general elections. Outside of this two-year cycle, the Governor may call a special election to fill vacancies in state elective offices or vacancies in the U.S. House of Representatives. In addition to state elections, local governments hold elections for voters to elect local office holders and to consider local ballot measures. Typically, local elections occur at the same time as state elections.

Election Administration in California. County election officials administer the vast majority of elections in California. As part of this work, these officials keep lists of registered voters and provide voting materials to registered voters, such as ballots and other voter information. Some state agencies also have voting-related responsibilities. For example, the Secretary of State oversees elections, which includes providing voter registration cards and operating an electronic voter registration system.

Right to Vote in California. A person generally may register and vote in California if the person is a U.S. citizen who is at least 18 years old and a resident of the state. State law prohibits some people from voting, including those who are in prison or on parole. (Under current law, people who are registered to vote can run for elective offices so long as they meet all other existing eligibility requirements.)

Pre-Registration to Vote in California. A person generally may pre-register to vote in California if the person is a U.S. citizen and is either 16 or 17 years old. (State law prohibits some people from pre-registering to vote, including those who are in prison or on parole.) When a person is pre-registered to vote, they automatically become registered to vote when they turn 18 years old. As of June 29, 2020, there are about 108,000 17-year-olds pre-registered to vote in California.

Proposal

Allows Some 17 Year Old Citizens to Vote. The measure would allow eligible 17-year-olds who will be 18 years old by the November date of the next general election to vote. This means that these 17-year-olds could vote in any special election or primary election that occurs before the next general election. (Because current state law allows registered voters to run for elective office, this measure would result in 17-year-olds who turn 18 by the next general election to do so as well, if they meet all other existing eligibility requirements for elective office.)

Fiscal Effects

Minor Costs for County Election Officials. This measure would increase the number of people eligible to vote in primary and special elections. This would increase work for county election officials. Election officials would send and process voting materials to eligible registered 17-year-olds in the primary and any special elections preceding the general election. The cost of this increased work would depend on the number of eligible 17-year-olds who register to vote before the primary and special elections. This increased work could increase **statewide county costs in each two-year election cycle likely between several hundreds of thousands of dollars and \$1 million.**

Minor One-Time State Costs. This measure would create one-time work for the state to update existing voter registration systems. **The one-time state costs for this work likely would be in the hundreds of thousands of dollars.** This is less than 1 percent of current state General Fund spending.

YES/NO STATEMENT

A **YES** vote on this measure means: Eligible 17-year-olds who will be 18 years old by the time of the next general election may vote in the primary election and any special elections preceding the general election.

A **NO** vote on this measure means: No one younger than 18 years of age may vote in any election.

SUMMARY OF LEGISLATIVE ANALYST'S ESTIMATE OF NET STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT FISCAL IMPACT

- Increased costs for counties, likely between several hundreds of thousands of dollars and \$1 million every two years, to send and process voting materials to eligible registered 17-year-olds.
- Increased one-time costs to the state in the hundreds of thousands of dollars to update existing voter registration systems.

BALLOT LABEL

Fiscal Impact: Increased statewide county costs likely between several hundreds of thousands of dollars and \$1 million every two years. Increased one-time costs to the state of hundreds of thousands of dollars.