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2010 California General Election Results

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California's 2010 election may be remembered for many reasons, but perhaps the most notable is that California did not ride the Republican wave of change that the nation did.

At the national level, Republicans seized control of the U.S. House of Representatives. Republicans also won an impressive number of U.S. Senate seats and state governorships. However, California reelected Democrat Barbara Boxer.

At the state level, California elected former Governor and current Attorney General Jerry Brown to be the state's next Governor. In fact, Democrats won every statewide office, with only the race for Attorney General still too close to call. Democrat Kamala Harris is leading Republican Steve Cooley by a small margin. Whatever the outcome of the Attorney General's race, a recount is probably looming.

In addition to voting for representatives at the local, state, and federal levels, voters also had to cast their votes for nine statewide ballot measures. Several of the measures were high-profile, such as Proposition 19 and Proposition 23. Proposition 19 attracted national attention because it would have legalized marijuana for personal use. The Obama Administration vowed to challenge the measure in court if it passed, but Proposition 19 failed by a wide margin. Proposition 23 also attracted significant attention because it would have essentially suspended California's landmark climate-change law. Proposition 23 also went down to defeat.

Below we present the results of the 2010 General Election in California, with the winning candidate/propositions in red and the voting percentages as of this morning.

U.S. SENATE

Barbara Boxer (D) 52.1%

Carly Fiorina (R) 42.5%

*

GOVERNOR

Jerry Brown (D) 53.8%

Meg Whitman (R) 41.2%

*

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

Gavin Newsom (D) 50.2%

Abel Maldonado (R) 39.4%

*

SECRETARY OF STATE

Debra Bowen (D) 53.2%

Damon Dunn (R) 38.5%

*

CONTROLLER

John Chiang (D) 55.1%

Tony Strickland (R) 36.4%

*

TREASURER

Bill Lockyer (D) 56.5%

Mimi Walters (R) 36.4%

*

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Kamala Harris (D) 46.1%

Steve Cooley (R) 45.6%

(This race remains too close to call.)

*

INSURANCE COMMISSIONER

Dave Jones (D) 50.6%

Mike Villines (R) 37.8%

*

SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Tom Torlakson 54.7%

Larry Aceves 45.3%

*

Proposition 19

Legalizes Marijuana Under California, but Not Federal, Law. Permits Local Governments to Regulate and Tax Commercial Production, Distribution, and Sale of Marijuana. Initiative Statute.

FAILED (54% No and 46% Yes)

If enacted, this statute would have allowed people 21 years old or older to possess, cultivate, and/or transport marijuana for personal use. Supporters of Proposition 19 argued that this is a long-sought-out "common sense" control of marijuana. Opponents of the measure, which included Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), argued that the initiative had dangerous implications to road safety because it "allows drivers to smoke marijuana until the moment they climb behind the wheel." They further argued that it jeopardizes \$9.4 billion in school funding, billions in federal contracts, and therefore thousands of jobs. The list of opposing organizations and individuals was varied and vast.

Proposition 20

Redistricting of Congressional Districts. Constitutional Amendment.

PASSED (61% Yes and 39% No)

This California constitutional amendment will remove elected representatives from the process of establishing congressional districts and transfer that authority to the recently authorized 14-member redistricting commission composed of Democrats, Republicans, and independent representatives. Supporters argued that the voter-approved Citizens Redistricting Commission will draw fair districts for the Legislature and Congress. They argued that politicians oppose the measure so they can keep power to draw "safe" congressional districts. Opponents argued that the Citizens Redistricting Commission is a "fourteen-person bureaucracy" that will yield even more concentrated power than currently exists.

Proposition 21

Establishes \$18 Annual Vehicle License Surcharge to Help Fund State Parks and Wildlife Programs. Grants Surcharged Vehicles Free Admission to All State Parks. Initiative Statute.

FAILED (58% No and 42% Yes)

If enacted, an \$18 surcharge would have been added to the vehicle license fee. Proponents argued the importance of preserving and investing in state parks, emphasizing that those who register their vehicles, and subsequently pay the surcharge, will have free admission to state parks. Opponents argued that Proposition 21 was an attempt to bring back a portion of the vehicle license fee that Governor Schwarzenegger repealed after the recall of Governor Gray Davis. They also argued that state government needs to make tough funding decisions and work within the pool of money it has and not require more from the citizens of California.

Proposition 22

Prohibits the State from Borrowing or Taking Funds Used for Transportation, Redevelopment, or Local Government Projects and Services. Initiative Constitutional Amendment.

PASSED (61% Yes and 39% No)

This proposition will prohibit the state, even during severe fiscal hardship, from delaying distribution of tax revenues towards transportation, redevelopment, and local government projects and services. Supporters stated that this initiative would stop state politicians from taking local government funds and, further, stop the state from taking gas taxes voters have dedicated to transportation. Opponents argued that tax dollars should go first to schools, public safety, health care, and social services safety nets.

Proposition 23

Temporarily Suspends Implementation of Air Pollution Control Law (AB 32).

FAILED (61% No and 39% Yes)

Proposition 23 attempted to suspend the landmark legislation Assembly Bill 32, which requires major sources of carbon emissions to report and reduce greenhouse gas emissions that cause global warming. The suspension would have been in effect until unemployment drops to 5.5% or less for a full year. Supporters argued that implementing Assembly Bill 32, the carbon emission reporting and reduction measure, would cause further damage to the fragile California economy by causing additional burden to California businesses. Opponents argued that big oil companies want to kill clean energy and air pollution standards in California for their own personal wealth and gain. They also argued that by

postponing the enactment of Assembly Bill 32, public health will suffer from greater air pollution and we will have to continue to contend with dependence on costly oil and dissuade competition from job-creating California renewable energy companies.

Proposition 24

Repeals Recent Legislation That Would Allow Businesses to Lower Their Tax Liability. Initiative Statute.

FAILED (58% No and 42% Yes)

If enacted, this proposition would have increased state revenues of about \$1.3 billion each year by 2012–13 from higher taxes paid by some businesses. Proponents contended that Proposition 24 would have stopped \$1.7 billion in new special tax breaks for wealthy, multistate corporations. They argued that corporations are receiving what they consider unfair tax loopholes without creating new jobs while small businesses get virtually no benefit. Opponents argued that businesses would create more jobs if they have less of a tax burden.

Proposition 25

Changes Legislative Vote Requirement to Pass Budget and Budget-Related Legislation from Two-Thirds to a Simple Majority. Retains Two-Thirds Vote Requirement for Taxes. Initiative Constitutional Amendment.

PASSED (55% Yes and 45% No)

Proposition 25 will change California's Constitution to allow for a majority vote budget in the Legislature versus the current two-thirds legislative vote requirement. Further, the Legislature will permanently forfeit daily salary and expenses until the annual budget bill passes. Supporters of Proposition 25 argued that the constant gridlock over budget disagreements needs to come to an end. By changing the vote threshold to act on a state budget, supporters believe that we will likely adopt budgets on time and that the state will less likely be in perpetual chaos with chronically late budgets. Opponents argued that Proposition 25 is a power grab by politicians.

Proposition 26

Requires That Certain State and Local Fees Be Approved by Two-Thirds Vote. Fees Include Those That Address Adverse Impacts on Society or the Environment Caused by the Fee-Payer's Business. Initiative Constitutional Amendment.

PASSED (53% Yes and 47% No)

Proposition 26 broadens the definition of taxes to include many payments currently considered to be fees or charges. As a result, more state and local proposals to increase revenues would require approval by two-thirds of each House of the Legislature or by local voters. Supporters of Proposition 26 argued that Proposition 26

helps to stop state and local politicians from raising what they consider to be hidden taxes by disguising taxes as “fees” and circumventing constitutional requirements for passing higher taxes. Opponents argued that Proposition 26 is an attempt by oil and tobacco corporations, among others, to save money on cleanup and health matters. They argue that it will cause additional strain on an already troubled budget and would result in additional cuts to schools and public safety, among other programs.

Proposition 27

Eliminates State Commission on Redistricting. Consolidates Authority for Redistricting with Elected Representatives. Initiative Constitutional Amendment and Statute.

FAILED (59% No and 41% Yes)

Proposition 27 sought to eliminate the 14-member redistricting commission. It consolidates the authority for establishing state Assembly, Senate, and Board of Equalization districts with elected representatives who draw congressional districts. Proponents argued that the Citizens Redistricting Commission is yet another state bureaucracy that California cannot afford. It puts the power of legislative redistricting back with elected representatives. Opponents argued that Proposition 27 is an attempt by politicians to regain the power of drawing safe legislative districts.

*Data obtained from California Secretary of State website with 97.1% of precincts reporting.

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