

# NOVEMBER 2020 BALLOT MEASURE VOTER GUIDE



**LUTHERAN OFFICE  
of PUBLIC POLICY  
- CALIFORNIA**

\*These recommendations by the Policy Council of the Lutheran Office of Public Policy-California are made within the framework of the principals, values, and commitments of ELCA Social Statements and Social Messages. More information: [ELCA.org](http://ELCA.org)

Proposition	Position	What it does and our position
<b>14</b> <b>[Bond]</b> <b>Stem Cell Research</b>	NO Oppose	Borrows \$5.5 billion to fund stem cell research. Silicon Valley real estate developer Robert Klein, who led Prop. 71 in 2004, is leading this campaign for more. We oppose because: (1) In a time of economic burden and cuts to social programs, this Prop. doesn't do enough for all God's people – as presented in the <a href="#">ELCA social statement on Economic Life: Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for all</a> pg 3-7 (2) A powerful statement is given <a href="#">here</a> , under opposition, by Marcy Darnovsky, executive director of the Center for Genetics and Society.
<b>15</b> <b>[Amendment]</b> <b>Split Roll Taxes</b>	YES Strong Support  <b>LOPP PRIORITY</b>	Taxes some commercial property based on its market value instead of purchase price. This would raise property taxes on large businesses statewide, increasing funding for local needs. We support because: (1) Many businesses bought cheap land decades ago, continuing tax rates that don't reflect the modern market (2) Homeowners will not face tax hikes, making the fiscal burden equitable. (3) An estimated \$6.5 to \$11.5 billion more in tax revenue would go to cities, counties and school districts. The <a href="#">ELCA social statement on Economic Life: Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for all</a> , pg 11, demands the church face the roots of poverty, and fight for affordable housing options for all.
<b>16</b> <b>[Amendment]</b> <b>End ban on Affirmative Action</b>	YES Strong Support  <b>LOPP PRIORITY</b>	Allows schools and public agencies to take race and other immutable characteristics into account when making admission, hiring or contracting decisions. We support because: (1) Since Prop 209 banning affirmative action in 1996, Black and Latino student enrollment at the state's public elite universities has plummeted and stayed painfully low (2) This Prop will allow, not require, race to be considered and thus will let us account for all of our identities in Christ (3) The current ban allowed women and people of color to lose out on more than 1 billion in government contracts last year (4) Our country must confront racism as a sin; our church affirms this in saying "Racism, both blatant and subtle, continues to deny the reconciling work of the cross. God's forgiveness frees us from the enslavement of racism. For some, this may mean giving up power or privilege; for others, it may mean giving up anger or prejudice. Let us know this reconciliation in our lives!" - <a href="#">ELCA's Social Statement on Race, Ethnicity, and Culture</a> , pg 5.
<b>17</b> <b>Restoring the right to vote</b>	YES Strong Support	Allows Californians who are currently on parole to vote. We support because: (1) Parolees are those returning to our communities, and thus deserve to have their voices heard in legislation; about 40,000 parolees currently don't have their constitutional right to vote (2) Our carceral system has a racial dynamic; a 2016 estimate put 2/3rds of parolees in CA as Latino or Black. The ELCA has spoken directly on addressing the invisible punishments of our carceral system in the <a href="#">ELCA Social Statement on The Church and Criminal Justice</a> , pg 45-47.
<b>18</b> <b>[Amendment]</b> <b>Allows some 17-year-olds to vote</b>	YES Strong Support  <b>LOPP PRIORITY</b>	Allows 17-year-old citizens to vote in a primary and special election as long as they will turn 18 by the subsequent general election. We support because: (1) California has led the nation in increasing voting access, from same day registration to automatic registration in the DMV. Allowing 17 year olds to vote would continue this legacy, joining 23 other states. (2) As seen in the <a href="#">ELCA social statement on The Church in Society</a> , pg 5, we have a religious calling for all Christians to do their part in building God's love, including youth, as well as to push for access to those left in the margins.
<b>19</b> <b>[Amendment]</b> <b>Changes to some tax assessments</b>	YES Support	Allows homeowners over 55 and limited others to take part of their property tax base with them when they sell their home and buy a new one. It would also limit the ability of new homeowners who inherit properties to keep their parents' or grandparents' low property tax payments. We support because: (1) The additional money raised would go into a state fire response fund. (2) This Prop theoretically bolsters housing mobility and housing access. The <a href="#">ELCA social Statement on Economic Life: Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for all</a> , pg 4, asserts an economic principle tempered by attention to our neighbor, making the increase of housing imperative.

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<b>20</b> <b>Changes to sentencing and prison release</b>	NO Strong Oppose	Allows prosecutors to charge repeat or organized petty theft as a felony, requires the seeking of tougher penalties for three-time parole violations, and excludes those convicted of domestic violence and certain nonviolent crimes from early parole consideration. We oppose because: (1) This Prop upholds a wrongful attachment to a punitive justice system. Our church has, in the <a href="#">ELCA social statement on The Church and Criminal Justice</a> , recognized the harm in the current Criminal Justice system, specifically with ‘zero tolerance’ type policies. (2) This will exacerbate racial disparities already at play with the justice system (3) These laws have been found repeatedly to have no effect at deterring crime. (4) California has shockingly overcrowded prisons, and this fact has led to both the suffering of human dignity from lack of access as well as a costly bill for taxpayers.
<b>21</b> <b>[Statute] Rent Control</b>	YES Support	Allows cities to introduce or expand rent control laws on housing 15 years or older, excluding many single-family homes. We support because: (1) Housing is a fundamental human right, and this Prop. works to ensure more affordable housing for a housing-deprived state. (2) Our church has an outstanding commitment for housing and resources towards the vulnerable, especially the unhoused, as <a href="#">expressed in the ELCA Message on Homelessness</a> . (3) This Prop gives municipalities some of the tools they lack to begin the fight for housing justice.
<b>22</b> <b>[Statute] Independent contractors exemption</b>	NO Oppose	Turns “app-based” drivers into independent contractors, exempting companies such as Lyft and Uber from standard wage and hour restrictions. It would also guarantee these drivers an earnings floor, a stipend to purchase health insurance and other minimum benefits. We oppose because: (1) App-based drivers are necessary to their respective business, and deserve fair wages, the right to unionize, worker safety and discrimination protection, and more, all which is challenged as ‘independent contractors’ (2) The <a href="#">ELCA social statement on Economic Life: Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All</a> , pg 1, underscores that we do not solely trust in the power of market forces, but also push for realizing dignity in economic life. (3) This Prop would be creating a special exception in current law for big businesses.
<b>23</b> <b>[Statute] Dialysis clinic regulation</b>	NO Oppose	Requires dialysis clinics to have at least one physician on site at all times and to report patient infection data to California health officials. We oppose because: this measure could affect health care access for others, which we recognize as a need for all. <a href="#">The ELCA Social Statement Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor</a> , pg 1, speaks to keeping costs low in healthcare to ensure equal access for all.
<b>24</b> <b>[Statute] Consumer privacy law</b>	NO Oppose	Strengthens California’s strongest-in-the-nation consumer privacy law and establishes a California Privacy Protection Agency. We Oppose because: (1) This Prop does not do enough to fully protect data or consumers; this Prop could actually hurt consumers -especially lower income- by allowances for ‘pay for privacy’ schemes (2) There was landmark legislation passed in 2018 toward data protection that does not have such negative impacts on privacy matters. The ELCA affirms in <a href="#">our Social Message: Human Rights 2017</a> , pg 12, that the rights given in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are necessary and valuable rights afforded to all people, including the right to privacy.
<b>25</b> <b>[Referendum] End Cash Bail</b>	YES Support	Asks voters to either approve or strike down a state law that banished money bail from the state criminal justice system. We support because: (1) The cash bail system has been shown to disproportionately affect those of low income, specifically people of color (2) As many as 61% of inmates in local jails have not been convicted of a crime, but stay imprisoned due to lack of funds. Our <a href="#">ELCA Social Statement on The Church and Criminal Justice</a> , pg 36 and elsewhere, has taken a specific stand against destructive bail systems in favor of a moral, restorative approach to justice. We acknowledge the faults in this law and will work hard to improve it through further advocacy.