

2020 Election: Explained

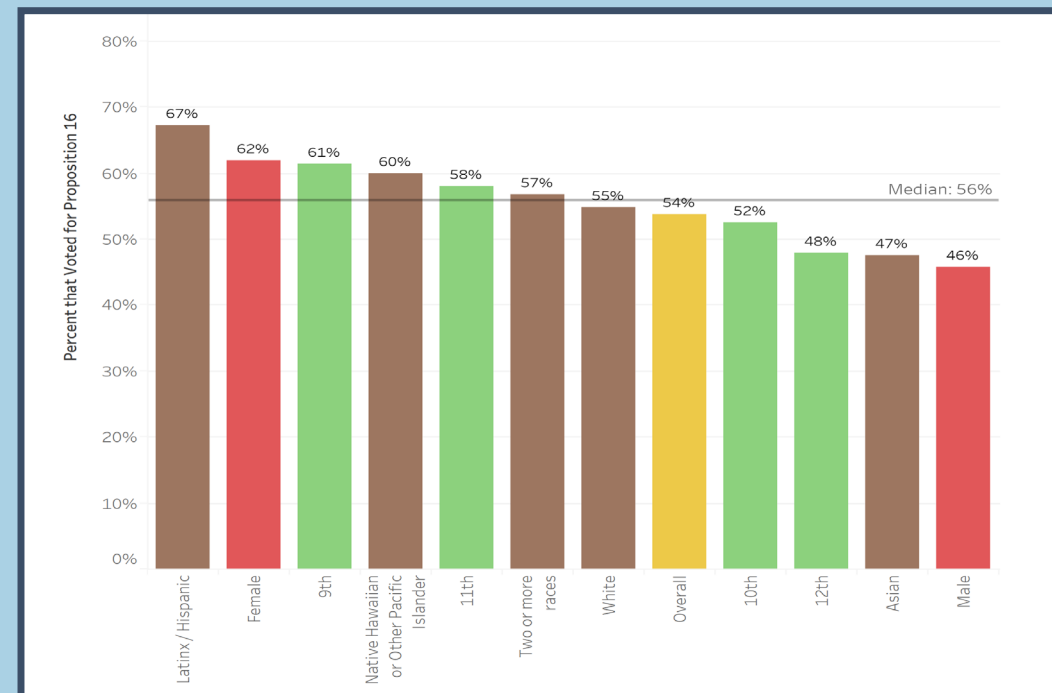
California Propositions

15 Proposition 15 will create two different tax systems for California private property owners by dividing them into either homeowners or large businesses. For homeowners and small businesses, property taxes will remain largely untouched. Larger businesses and corporations will likely see an increase in taxes as the cap established in Proposition 13 is rolled back. This tax increase for large businesses will generate anywhere from \$6.5 billion to \$11.5 billion that will be allocated to California's public K-12 and community college districts, as well as local governments to be used for infrastructure or parks and recreational purposes. Additionally, Proposition 15 will repeal the tax caps for commercial and industrial properties in Proposition 13, which capped off at around 1% of the total property value when purchased.

A vote yes on Proposition 15 means property taxes would increase for property owning corporations, while small businesses, homeowners and renters will be protected. This new distribution of taxes will place more responsibility on big businesses to pay their "fair share," but could raise the cost of living for the average citizen. A vote no would mean there will be no change in property taxes, but local governments and schools would get no additional funding.

16 Proposition 16 will repeal 1996 Proposition 209 which prohibited discrimination and preferential treatment based on race, sex, color, ethnicity, national origin in public education, employment and contracting. Without Proposition 209, affirmative action will be allowed within the limitations monitored by the federal government, including but not limited to in state and local contracting and public university admissions. Race, and gender, among other things, could be considered in decision making in public employment, public education and public contracting. California is currently among eight other states with a ban on affirmative action, and Proposition 16 aims to diversify the workforce and public institutions. Voting against Proposition 16 means race, sex, color, ethnicity and national origin will not be considered as a factor in admissions or government jobs. Without the option of affirmative action, it will be more challenging for racial minorities to find representation, as well as experience a decrease in chance of admissions.

To read more, visit the Proposition 16 opinion column on page 11.



17 Proposition 17 allows people on parole to vote in California as well as grants those who haven't been convicted of perjury or bribery the ability to run for office. Proponents say the proposition is crucial for felons to be reintegrated into society. They argue that the right to vote is what gives prisoners the reason to learn about life outside of prison, the political process and give them hope for a future. Prominent supporters include Gov. Gavin Newsom and Sen. Kamala Harris (D-CA).

Opponents of the proposition point towards the importance of parole as proof of rehabilitation, especially for violent offenders. They believe that voting is a privilege, and those that commit felonies revoke their access to this privilege. Opponents include Crime Victims United of California and CA Sen. Jim Nielson (R-4). Currently, 19 other states have granted the right to vote for felons who have successfully completed parole.

22 A yes vote on Proposition 22 means that drivers for applications like Doordash, Uber and Lyft will remain in their classification as independent contractors, while a no vote means that those drivers are reclassified as employees.

As independent contractors, drivers have lots of flexibility about when to work. As employees, they would lose that flexibility but would gain benefits that are beneficial for employees like healthcare and sick leave.

Proponents of Proposition 22 argue that setting your own schedule and having flexibility is an important part of the business. Those against Proposition 22 argue that it could cause many drivers to be paid below minimum wage. Former Vice President Joe Biden and Senator Elizabeth Warren are both against Proposition 22, while delivery drivers like Leni I. from Los Angeles and Jim P. from Modesto are in support. The advertisement campaign for a no vote is the most expensive for a proposition in California history largely funded by Uber, Lyft and Doordash.

Data from these graphs comes from Aragon's 2020 Student Mock Election, which took place virtually via Canvas the week leading up to Oct. 6. 60% of the student body participated, casting 1045 ballots, with not every ballot responding to each election prompt. To learn more about the Mock Election, check out the news article about it on page 2.

18 Proposition 18 is a California constitutional amendment to permit 17-year-olds who will have turned 18 by the next general election to vote in primary and special elections.

Proponents believe Proposition 18 will increase youth interest in politics and voter participation. They argue that voting privileges should be given to 17-year-olds, since many already have jobs, have to pay taxes and are able to join the military.

Opponents are concerned with 17-year-olds' capability to vote, considering those that at that age are still considered minors; they cannot enter legal contracts, are often subject to school influence and still require parental permission for many activities. Opponents are also concerned with this age group's lack of experience with taxes, jobs, housing and money, bringing concerns if 17-year-olds can truly understand the issues they are voting for yet.

As of June 2020, 18 other states and the District of Columbia have a law similar to Proposition 18 enacted.

SMUHSD Board election

The San Mateo Union High School District board of trustees contains five members and dictates policy that affects over 8,400 students. The board has been responsible for decisions such as credit/no credit grading, returning to school procedures and asynchronous Wednesdays. This year, the seats of Greg Land and Marc Friedman are up for election. Friedman is not running for reelection, leaving two open spots.

Neal Kaufman
Neal Kaufman has been a business executive for 25 years. His campaign focuses on transparency and money management, similar to Marc Friedman's role during this term. Kaufman has also been endorsed by three current board members, Trustees Linda Lees Dwyer, Peter Hanley and Friedman. Additionally, Kaufman is a lacrosse coach at Burlingame High School, which he says gives him necessary school experience to be a board member. Kaufman's core message is bringing "differentiated, equitable and excellent education for all students."

Greg Land
Incumbent Greg Land has 10 years of experience on the SMUHSD board. Land's platform emphasizes equity, innovation and student choice in learning, which is similar to Kaufman's platform. Notably, Land originally abstained during the credit/no credit vote before changing his vote to support credit/no credit after about an hour of additional debate. State Senator Jerry Hill, the San Mateo Daily Journal and the SMUHSD Teacher's Association all endorse Land.

Ligia Andrade Zuniga
Ligia Andrade Zuniga's candidacy is grounded in inclusivity. She notes that she brings diversity to the board as a woman of color with a disability and has experience starting a Latino parent group at Burlingame High School while her children were enrolled in the district. She looks to bring more awareness to disability within the district if she is elected. The San Mateo Daily Journal, State Senator Jerry Hill, Mayor of San Mateo Joe Goethals and the SMUHSD Teacher's Association endorse Andrade Zuniga.

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Presidential election

The major nominees propose vastly different plans to address issues that voters care most about, and these policies will dictate the nation's trajectory. President Donald Trump continues to support a trickle down economy in which taxes on the wealthy are reduced to stimulate businesses, thus theoretically fueling employment and consumer expenditures. Democratic candidate Joe Biden claims that such policies only perpetuate the nation's rampant income inequality. Instead, he's proposing expanding taxes on the wealthy, namely applying a higher payroll tax on individuals making over \$400,000. The funds from these taxes will partially be used to protect and build on the Obama-era Affordable Care Act – expanding healthcare coverage to families in need. Trump has not put forth a comprehensive health care plan, but he will continue to roll back many aspects of the ACA, such as the individual mandate that required all citizens to have insurance and thus incentives participation in the program, citing the plan's impracticality and high deductibles as reasons for doing so. If Trump serves a second term, the act could be deemed unconstitutional, especially because conservative judge Amy Coney Barrett has been approved.

With the rapid increase of global temperatures and environmental degradation, a growing percentage of voters are turning to the Democratic Party to tackle this concerning trend. Trump pulled out of the Paris Climate Agreement, a multinational effort to respond to climate change, citing the supposedly unfair economic burden it placed on America in proportion to other participating nations. On the other hand, Biden plans to reduce U.S. emissions to net zero by 2035 and create millions of green jobs. These contrasting policies reflect the polarized state of society.

- GLORIA LA RIVA
- ROQUE "ROCKY" DE LA FUENTE GUERRA
- JO JORGENSEN
- HOWIE HAWKINS
- DONALD J. TRUMP
- JOSEPH R. BIDEN

Mock presidential election data

Flip to page 2 to learn more about the student mock election.

