



Activist Training Series

September 23, 2020

Presented by

Jesse Koklas, Yes On 17

Luis Ojeda, ACLU of NorCal

Daisy Chavez, Initiate Justice

Brittany Stonesifer, ACLU of CA

Brett Shears, Vote Allies

Niki Martinez, Yes on 17

jean-huy Tran, We The People SD

Veronica Hernandez, Yes on 17

What to expect from this training

- Community Guidelines
- Getting to Know Prop 17
- Why Prop 17 Matters
 - Featured Messages: History and continued bias of felony disenfranchisement, National momentum for change
 - Featured Speaker: Niki Martinez, Yes on Prop 17 Comms Fellow
- Ways to Support the Campaign
 - Featured Actions: 1) Register to vote 2) Become a social media ambassador and 3) Get your org to endorse Prop 17
- Resources
- Q&A + Next Steps

Building Community

Community Agreements

- Person-centered language
- Make space/take space (aka, step up/step back)
- One mic
- Mindful listening
- Assume best intentions



Getting to know Prop 17...



Intro to Yes on Prop 17: What is it?

- On the November 3rd California statewide ballot
- Restores voting rights to Californians immediately upon release from prison
- Amends state constitution to eliminate disenfranchisement for people on parole
- Formerly known as “ACA 6”
- Prop 17 *does not*:
 - Affect voting rights of people in prison or affect any criminal sentencing laws
 - Affect states other than California

Intro to Yes on Prop 17: Who is behind it?

FREE =
THE VOTE

is now...

YES =
ON 17

FREE THE VOTE

Intro to Yes on Prop 17: Who is behind it?

ACLU
AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION
California

ARC
Anti-Recidivism Coalition

BRENNAN
CENTER
FOR JUSTICE

INITIATE
JUSTICE ✓

LWV
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF CALIFORNIA

MIFAMILIA
VOTA

Vote
Allies

WP4BL
WHITE PEOPLE & BLACK LIVES

**VOTING
RIGHTS
LAB
ACTION**

*Check out our endorsers -
and join us - at YesOn17.vote!*



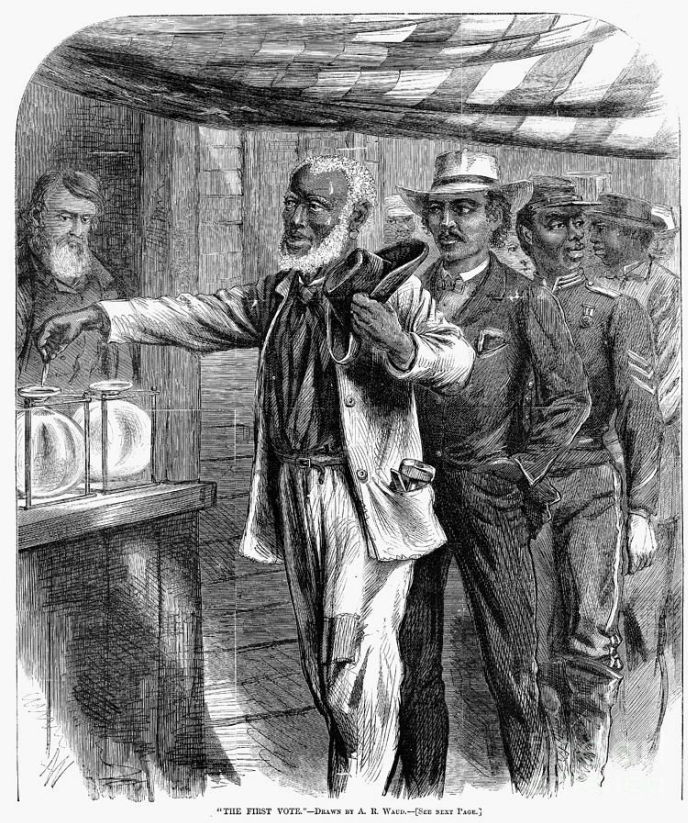
Why is Prop 17 important...

Yes on Prop 17: **Topline Messages**

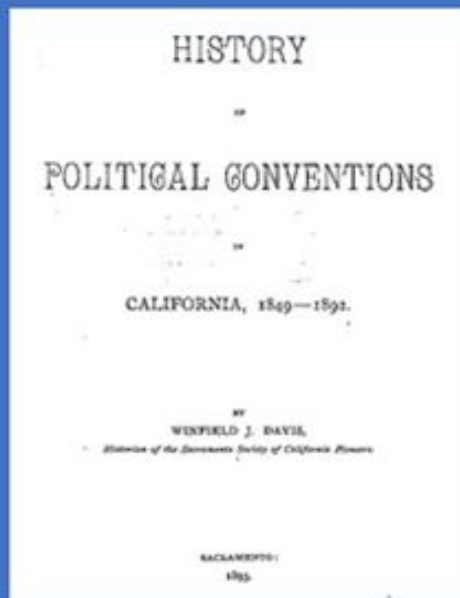
Prop 17 will:

- Allow 50,000 Californians who are returning home from prison reintegrate into society after they've finished their prison term by restoring their right their vote
- **Help combat voter suppression among Black and Brown communities, who are over-policed and subject to systemic inequalities within our criminal legal system**
- Make our communities safer as voting and civic engagement reduce the likelihood that people will be rearrested
- Give Californians who have completed their prison sentence--who are working, raising families, and paying taxes--a say in the policies and representatives who affect their lives
- **Make democracy fairer, more inclusive, and in line with other progressive states**

History of felony disenfranchisement



- Felony disenfranchisement dramatically expanded after the Civil War
- Many states used as a tool of Jim Crow voter suppression
- California is no exception



Democratic State Committee Resolutions 1867

[W]e believe it impracticable to maintain republican institutions based upon the suffrages of negroes, Chinese, and Indians, and that the doctrines avowed by the radical leaders of indiscriminate suffrage, regardless of race, color, or qualification, if carried into practice, would end in the degradation of the white race and the speedy destruction of the government

CA Constitution last amended: 1974

- California Supreme Court found previous disenfranchisement rules in state constitution violated Equal Protection.
- Amended by voters in 1974. Currently, Californians are prohibited from voting:

“While imprisoned or on parole for the conviction of a felony”

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RIGHT TO VOTE

Ballot Title

RIGHT TO VOTE. LEGISLATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT. Amends Article II, section 3, and Article XX, section 11, of the State Constitution to eliminate provisions disqualifying electors convicted of an infamous crime, embezzlement or misappropriation of public money and to now provide for the disqualification of an elector while mentally incompetent, or imprisoned or on parole for the conviction of a felony. Financial impact: Minor increase in county government costs.

FINAL VOTE CAST BY LEGISLATURE ON ACA 38 (PROPOSITION 10):

ASSEMBLY—Ayes, 56	SENATE—Ayes, 27
Noes, 12	Noes, 8

Analysis by Legislative Analyst

PROPOSAL:

The California Constitution requires the Legislature to pass laws to prevent persons convicted of specified crimes from voting. The Constitution does not allow the Legislature to restore voting rights to such persons when their prison sentences have been completed. The loss of the right to vote continues throughout life, unless restored by pardon.

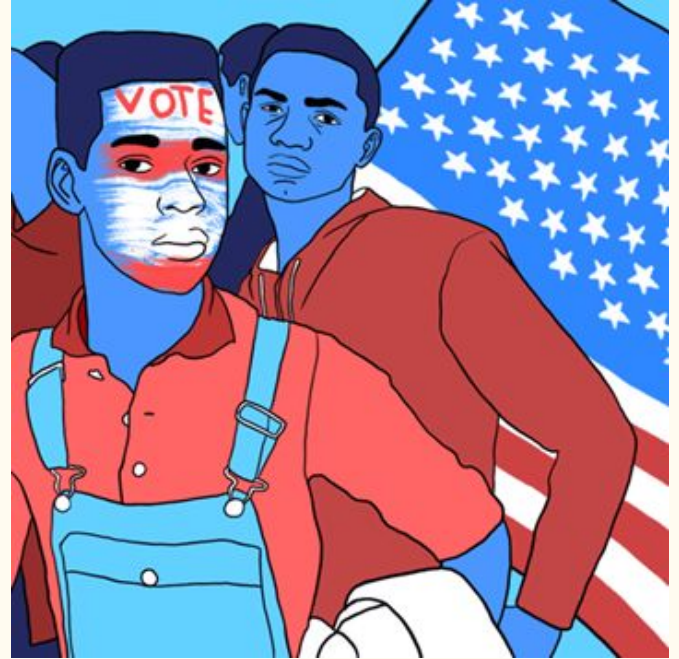
This proposition will require the Legislature to pass laws which deny the right to vote to persons when they are in prison or on parole for committing a felony. The right of convicted felons to vote would be restored, however, when their prison sentences, including time on parole, have been completed.

FISCAL EFFECT:

The cost effect of this proposition would be on county government and would be minor, if any.

Impact on racial and social justice today

- Continued racial disparity of felony disenfranchisement
 - CA: 75% of people in prison or on parole are non-white
 - Nationwide: Black Americans 4x as likely to be prohibited from voting
- Current law is confusing and there are punishments for voting if ineligible
 - “De-facto disenfranchisement”



@IntoAction

National Momentum for Voting Rights Restoration

- Iowa (August 2020)- Governor signed an Executive Order restoring voting rights to lowans with felony convictions after completing their sentence and supervision mandate
- Washington, D.C. (July 2020)- The DC City Council approved a police reform bill that included a provision restoring voting rights to anyone currently incarcerated for a felony
- Colorado and Nevada (2019)- restored the right to vote upon release from prison
- Florida (2018)- Voters approved a ballot proposition that lifted the lifetime voting ban for those convicted of some crimes upon completion of sentence and supervision mandate
- New York (2018)- Governor issued an executive order restoring the right to vote for people on parole

Disenfranchisement Across the Country

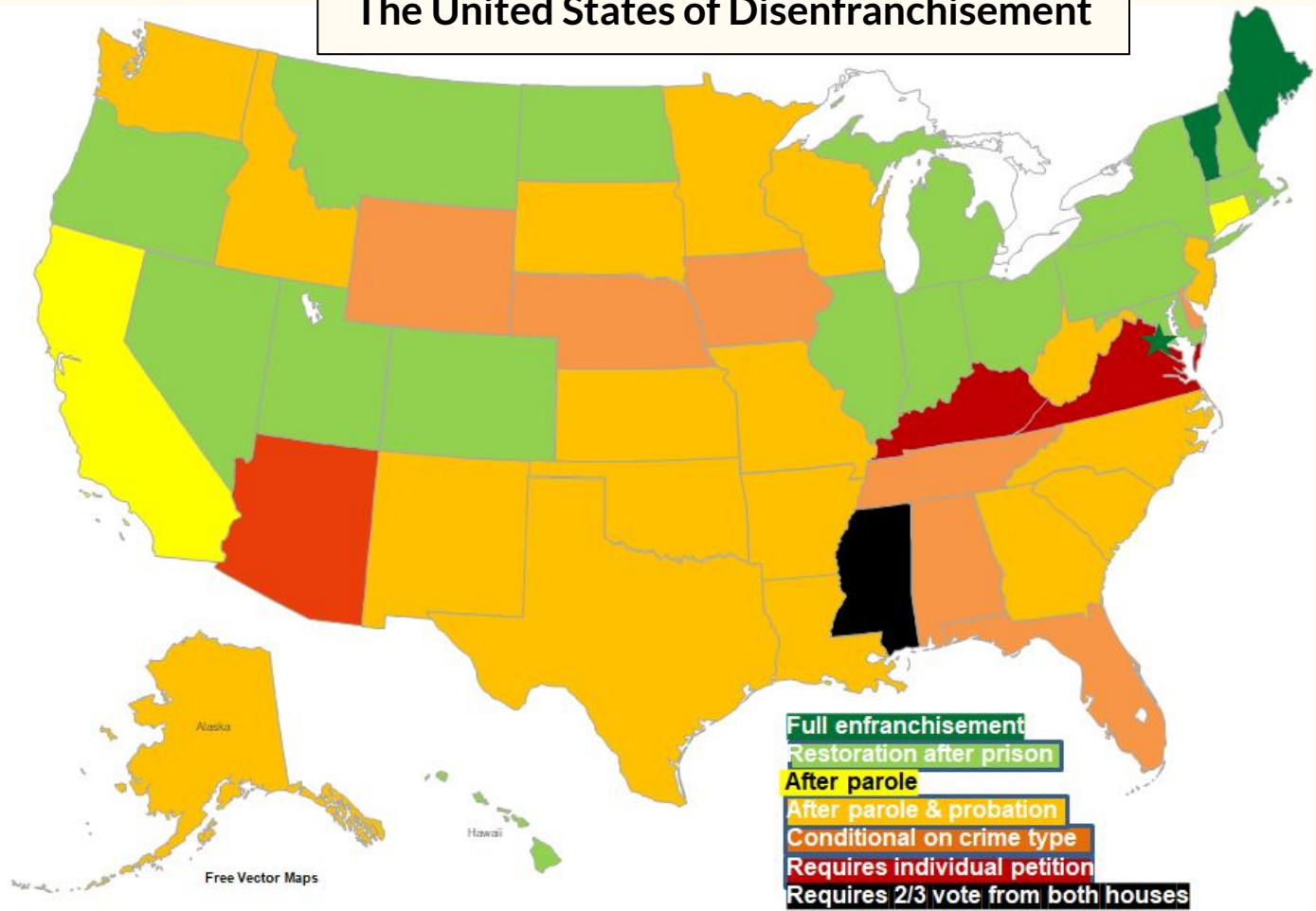
of Incarcerated/Formerly Incarcerated People

Never Lose Voting Rights	Automatic Restoration Upon Release from Prison	Restoration After Completing Parole	Restoration After Completing Probation & Parole	Restoration Only for Certain Crimes	Individual Petitions Required (& only considered for certain crimes)
ME, VT, D.C.	17 states	CA, CT	18 states	7 states: AL, DE, IA, FL, NE, TN, WY	KY, VA, MS*, AZ**

*restoration requires a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote from both houses of the legislature

**required if more than 1 conviction

The United States of Disenfranchisement



The Impact of Disenfranchisement on Democracy



- 6.1 million Americans cannot vote due to a felony conviction
- African Americans are four times more likely to lose their voting rights
- 30 states condition the restoration of voting rights to the individual's ability to pay legal debts.
- According to a 2002 study in the *American Sociological Review*, multiple Senate races and even presidential elections would likely have had different outcomes if formerly incarcerated people had been enfranchised

The Personal Impact of Prop 17

Niki Martinez

- Works as a mentor for youth coming out of juvenile hall with Youth Empowerment and as a Case Manager for the adult reentry program
- She is also a teaching artist with the Old Globe Theater and volunteers with the Sister Warriors Freedom Coalition and National Conflict Resolution Center.
- Niki has never been able to vote and she says, “Voting is important because I would like to be able to do my civic duty. I pay taxes, live in a community, and would like to have a vote that could influence what happens in the community.”



Ways to support Prop 17...



Ways to support Prop 17

- Check your voter registration status today!
 - voterstatus.sos.ca.gov
- Donate to the Yes on 17 campaign
- Follow us on social media
- Become a Yes on 17 Fundraising Captain or Social Media Ambassador
- Get your agency or community group to endorse Yes on Prop 17
- Call or text 5 friends to join our email list using sample script
- Ask another activist to join you at our next training - Fri, 10/2, 1pm

Voting this November: Eligibility

- In order to vote you must be: **eligible** *and* **registered**
- To be eligible to vote in CA, you must be:
 - A US citizen and resident of CA (no min. time)
 - At least 18 years old on Election Day
 - **Not currently sentenced state or federal prison or on parole***
 - *Not* currently found mentally incompetent to vote by a court
- *Otherwise eligible adults may still vote if sentenced to jail or probation, serving a misdemeanor sentence, awaiting trial, discharged from parole, or on any form of community supervision other than parole
 - [LetMeVoteCA.org](https://www.LetMeVoteCA.org)

Voting this November: Registration

- When to register:
 - Regular registration “deadline”: **Oct. 19, 2020** (15 days before Election Day)
 - Same-day registration: From Oct. 20 through Election Day
- How to register:
 - Up to Oct. 19: Online, paper form, or by phone
 - Oct. 20-Election Day: Usually in-person
- Check your registration status TODAY:
 - RegisterToVote.ca.gov

Voting this November: Casting your ballot

- This November, all California voters* will automatically be sent a **vote-by-mail ballot**
 - *Only applies to active, registered voters
 - Make sure your address is up-to-date!
 - Return through USPS, ballot drop boxes, or any voting location
- Also option to vote **in-person**
 - Check your local election office's website or sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-info for locations and hours
 - Services: early voting, same-day registration, language and disability assistance
 - On Election Day: 7am to 8pm; right to vote if in line at 8pm
- Election protection hotline: 866-OUR-VOTE or 866ourvote.org

Prop 17 Social Media Ambassadors

What: A social media campaign to create awareness about restoring voting rights for 50,000 people coming home from prison in CA.

When: From now until November 3rd!

- You can start right now by sharing our content on social media: tinyurl.com/Prop17social

Who: Anyone can sign up to be a social media ambassador!

How: Sign up through our website on the [Take Action](#) page/[Join the Movement](#) button

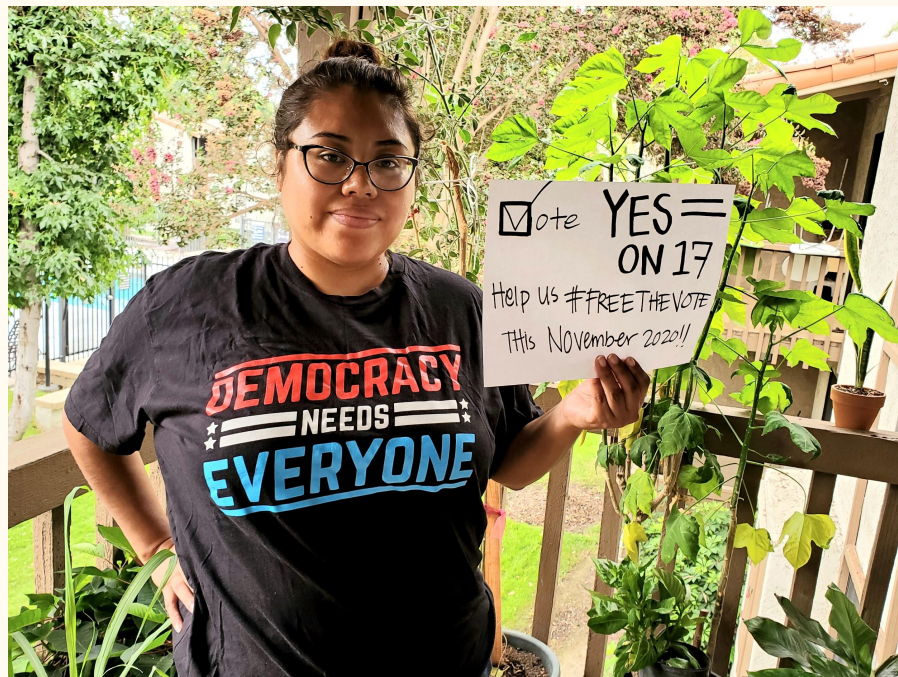
- **We:** Provide talking points and social media content
- **You:** Post weekly content on your accounts about Yes on 17 and/or share official posts from Yes on 17 social media accounts
- This can be combined with the fundraising campaign or done separately

Get Organizations to Endorse Prop 17!

1. Confirm that your organization is willing to endorse Prop 17
2. On the Yeson17.vote website, click on the “**Endorsements**” tab and select “**Endorse Today**”
3. Complete the form. *If you can, include a quote about why your organization supports Prop 17!*
4. Our team will be in contact with you to confirm the endorsement & obtain your logo and any missing information!
5. People can also sign up to endorse in their individual capacity!

Show Your Support for #YesOnProp17

- Take a photo of yourself holding a sign displaying your support for Proposition 17
- Tag @YesOnProp17 on our social media and spread the word to your networks!
- Share the donate link!



Yes on Prop 17: Resources

- Website: YesOn17.vote
 - Social media:
 - FB/IG: @YesOnProp17
 - TW: @FreeTheVoteCA
 - [Take Action](#) page is your one-stop shop!
- Next activist training: Fri. 10/2 at 1pm
- Contact us: info@yeson17.vote; media@yeson17.vote

Questions?

Please put your questions in the chat-box!



Thank you!

- Check out our website: **YesOn17.vote**
- Join us for our next training on **Fri., 10/2, at 1pm**
 - Bring a friend!