

# Christian Citizenship Council

*"When the righteous thrive, the people rejoice; when the wicked rule, the people groan." (Prov 29:2)*

## 5 November 2024 California Presidential Election Kacer's Call on Statewide Propositions

### **Proposition 2: School Bond – Recommend: NO**

**Content:** Bond for **\$10.0B**, to be paid back with **\$7.5B interest** over 35 years for a total cost of **\$17.5B**. Funds to be used to provide new facilities construction, facilities renovation & modernization, land purchase, equipment, reduction of lead levels in drinking water and improved seismic safety. Proposition describes process and equity-based distribution criteria in detail. Funds are to be split between K-12 (Public and Charter schools) (\$8.5B) and community colleges (\$1.5B). For over 20 years, most school facility funding has been provided through voter-approved bonds and not through normal state education budgetary funding process.

**Consider:** Bonds wrongly presume upon the future without regard for intrinsic economic uncertainties (**James 4:13-14; Proverbs 22:3**). Government public debt steals from future generations without their consent (**Exodus 20:15**) and prioritizes immediate financial opportunity above prudent planning and living within existing tax burdens (**Proverbs 13:11; 1 Timothy 6:10a**). Public debt is paid off (with interest) independent of the impact on future tax burdens borne by everyone (in effect, future taxpayers become "slaves" to current debt obligations (**Proverbs 22:7**)). Finally, bonds should only be a last resort to quickly raise funds for extreme, emergency situations (e.g. war); not as a routine way to replace existing budgetary obligations (**Proverbs 20:14**) or put off making the hard budgetary restraint decisions to only fund core governmental duties.

### **Proposition 3: Same-Sex Marriage – Recommend: NO**

**Content:** This proposed State Constitutional Amendment would remove the current definition of marriage as "between a man and a woman" from the California Constitution and replace it with "The right to marry is a fundamental right." The current wording in the California Constitution was approved by voters when they passed Proposition 8 (2008).

**Consider:** Current text in the California Constitution is a clear declaration of what constitutes a biological, historical, traditional, cultural, and most importantly a biblical definition of what is a valid marriage (**Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4-6**). Government is to encourage and support what is best (**1 Peter 2:13-14**) for societal stability and the raising of children and discourage what is destructive to God-designed and ordained family order (**Romans 13:4**). Existing legal statutes protect what marriage is by prohibiting incestuous, child, polygamous, polyandrous, or group marriages. But, by replacing a clear definition of marriage with a vague reference to a "fundamental right" in the state's highest governing document, these legal "guardrails" can be quickly abandoned and replaced with any manner of unhealthy and destructive "marriage" relationships (**Isaiah 5:20**). While the Obergefell decision (2015) made same-sex marriage legal, retaining the current definition keeps the door open for future legal battles that will be attempting to further deconstruct marriage.

### **Proposition 4: Climate Bond – Recommend: NO**

**Content:** Bond for **\$10B** to be paid back with **\$6B interest** over 40 years for a total cost of **\$16B**. Funds to be used to increase amount and quality of water, reduce risk of flooding, improve health of forests, protect communities from wildfires, reduce impact of sea-level rise, protect and restore natural areas, support transition to renewable energy, expand and repair state parks, reduce impact of extreme heat on communities, and help farmers be more sustainable.

**Consider:** See notes above for Proposition 2. Same principles apply.

### **Proposition 5: Lowering Local Bond and Property Tax Voting Approval Threshold – Recommend: NO**

**Content:** This proposed State Constitutional Amendment would lower any remaining, local supermajority voter approval requirements from 66.67% to 55% to issue bonds for broadly defined affordable housing and public infrastructure. In addition, it would allow increases in property taxes to be approved by a 55% vote instead of the current 66.67% (as required by Proposition 13 (1978)) to help pay for bond indebtedness.

**Consider:** With the exception of times of extreme emergency (i.e. war), bonds are an inappropriate means of providing for funding of inherently governmental functions of any kind (see notes above for Proposition 2). Reducing the threshold for approval of local city, county and special district general obligation bonds and increasing property taxes (to pay for bonds) from a 2/3 (66.67%) vote to a 55% threshold makes it far easier to approve tax increases and bond indebtedness. Approval would force property holders (major tax revenue source) to pay disproportionately more taxes to pay off bonded debt. Approval of higher taxes and bond indebtedness should instead be made more difficult to gain approval. Doing so would ensure widespread and clear agreement exists before increasing the tax burden.

### **Proposition 6: Prohibit Prisoner Involuntary Servitude – Recommend: NO**

**Content:** Currently, the California Constitution allows involuntary servitude of persons incarcerated as punishment for a crime. This Proposition would prohibit disciplining any incarcerated person for refusing a work assignment, while at the same time still allow the awarding of credits to an incarcerated person who voluntarily accepts a work assignment.

**Consider:** Convicted criminals paying restitution for their crimes is an important justice principle (**Exodus 22:1,3-6,14; Leviticus 6:2-5; Luke 19:7-8**). Serving prison time by itself is not restitution, it is a punitive action against an “evildoer” (**Romans 13:4**) that does not benefit the criminal’s victims and punishes taxpayers who pay for the costs of the incarceration. Accordingly, requiring productive labor (not “hard labor”) to produce something of value that will result in compensation to victims and/or the community at large is very appropriate. Whether the criminal receives any financial benefit from the labor is a wisdom issue and is secondary to providing restitution. Labor (producing something with the hands or the mind) is a blessing (**Genesis 1:28; 2:15**). Refusing to “work” shows contempt for victims, the community, and the legitimacy of producing something of value. As such, refusal should be met with the appropriate withholding of any prison privileges (over and above necessities) the prisoner may have had (**Proverbs 10:4-5; 2 Thessalonians 3:10**).

### **Proposition 32: Minimum Wage – Recommend: NO**

**Content:** If passed, this Proposition would increase the current minimum wage across California to \$18 an hour beginning in 2025. Starting in 2027, the minimum wage will be adjusted yearly based on the amount of inflation (increases in the cost of living).

**Consider:** The worker deserves his/her wages (**1 Timothy 5:18**). Government working toward mandating “Living Wages” to allow a person to provide for themselves and their family independent of the level of work is not within the proper role of government (**Romans 13:1-7**). The marketplace already distinguishes levels of worker value based on how physically and/or mentally difficult, specialized by nature, and how high a skill level is required (**Matthew 20:1-2**). Mandating a minimum wage above market value by ignoring the skill level involved is a disincentive to the employee to acquire skills and advance professionally to provide for himself (**Proverbs 22:29**). Artificially inflating salaries also reduces an employer’s wage flexibility to reward employees as they see fit (**Matthew 20:1-15**). Although reports differ, if this Proposition passes it is not unreasonable to expect a loss of entry level jobs and a commensurate impact on small businesses ability to stay competitive.

### **Proposition 33: Local Rent Control – Recommend: NO**

**Content:** If passed, this Proposition would repeal the Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act (**1995**) that currently: prevents cities and counties from implementing rent controls on residences built after 1995 and allows landlords to set their own rental rates when new tenants move in.

**Consider:** Two prior attempts were made to repeal CHRHA and failed (**2018, 2020**). The poor are to be cared for (**Psalms 82:3-4**), however, artificial restraint on “supply and demand” principles (price fixing) creates disincentives to new construction or implementing costly upgrades/maintenance (result: property decay). Local rent controls appear “compassionate” (**Matthew 22:39**), but don’t correct the reasons for high housing costs: unnecessary bureaucratic delays, high labor union costs, and tax/regulation/zoning impacts. These factors contribute to limiting the housing supply and driving up costs. Repealing CHRHA would profoundly impact the rental industry negatively, and the families involved.

### **Proposition 34: Patient Spending – Recommend: NO**

**Content:** Federal law allows health care providers to obtain discounts on pharmaceuticals if they serve low-income and at-risk patients. These health care providers may sell those drugs at retail rates and use these profits to provide care to disadvantaged groups of people. This Proposition requires health care providers that meet specific criteria to prove 98% of the net drug sale profit goes to “direct patient care.” If not compliant the provider may lose their state license, lose their tax-exempt status, and be denied any government contracts.

**Consider:** The eclectic criteria defined in this Proposition makes it only applicable to one healthcare provider in California: The AIDS Healthcare Foundation. Singling out one unnamed entity by using tailored criteria to force conformance to arbitrary requirements to try to prevent their legal, but disfavored political, ethical, or moral business decisions is not within a proper role of government (**Romans 13:4**). Government is to provide equal justice to all, rich or poor, powerful or weak with measures that apply to all (**Leviticus 19:15,35-36; Proverbs 11:1**). If AHF is not meeting the federal requirements governing use of the sale of discounted pharmaceuticals and the resulting revenue, then the federal government must hold that company accountable.

### **Proposition 35: Health Care Tax – Recommend: NO**

**Content:** Since 2009, California taxes Managed Care Organizational Providers (MCOP) to generate funding for the State Medi-Cal program. Medi-Cal funds medical services for those defined as “low-income” (approximately 40% of the State) whether they are here legally or illegally. The tax is periodically re-approved by the legislature and is currently scheduled to expire in 2027. This Proposition would make the MCOP tax permanent; it would prevent this revenue from being used for other than Medi-Cal purposes; and it would prohibit its use to support or replace other State General Fund health care budget allocations.

**Consider:** Government providing a health care “safety-net” is not within a primary role of government (**Romans 13:1-4; 1 Peter 2:13-14**). Government’s intrinsic bureaucratic inefficiencies and politically-driven social decisions guarantee low quality care and escalating tax pressure that discourages growth of independent, private health care. Also, by indiscriminately covering non-citizens in the country illegally, it incentivizes abuse and encourages more to come. Finally, no metrics or processes are defined to guarantee future California General Fund health care budget allocations won’t dry up, with the expectation that Medi-Cal will carry the load.

**Proposition 36: Criminal Penalties – Recommend: YES**

**Content:** If passed, this Proposition would reverse some of Proposition 47 (2014) “reforms” which reclassified many theft and drug-related crimes as misdemeanor’s instead of felonies and resulted in major increases in property crimes and homelessness (drug related). It will create a new category of crime called “Treatment-Mandated Felony” where pleading guilty to identified felonies gives the opportunity to complete drug treatment/rehabilitation instead of incarceration in prison. If treatment is refused or not completed, prison time may be imposed. Also, holds drug dealers responsible for harm done to others.

**Consider:** When punishment for crime is weakened, delayed, or requires multiple offenses before prosecution occurs, then the sinfulness of people (**Jeremiah 17:9**) ensures criminal acts will increase and become bolder (**Ecclesiastes 8:11**). This Proposition restores harsher penalties for crimes historically treated as felonies while still allowing judicial discretion on the severity of the penalty imposed (**Proverbs 6:30-31**). Unfortunately, justice is still delayed in many situations since multiple convictions of crimes will often still be required before harsher punishment is imposed.

**General Guidelines I Follow in Analyzing Propositions:**

- **Do:** First read Title/Summary, then proposed legal text, then official analysis (if provided); then arguments for & against
- **Do:** Ask yourself if this is a proper role of government biblically
- **Do:** Ask yourself if this is the right thing to do, who benefits, and what consequences will result
- **Do:** Determine what general principles apply (biblical, conservative, practical)
- **Do:** Concentrate on the major implications and not on trivial aspects to make a decision
- **Do:** Apply common sense; come to a tentative conclusion – compare to positions of those you trust
- **Don’t:** Rely on recommendations of organizations by name only (many sound good but are misleading)
- **Don’t:** Wait until the last day to do your research (do it over time)
- **Don’t:** Support government going into future debt (there are very rare exceptions (e.g. war))
- **Don’t:** Allow rare circumstances or emotional arguments to overly influence you (“rare cases make bad law”)
- **Don’t:** Support anything that’s too complex to completely understand (could be purposeful obfuscation)
- **Don’t:** Accept a lot of bad legislation for the sake of a small amount of good, “worthwhile” legislation

**Who is Frank Kacer?**

Frank has been married to Lynn for 51 years, has three children and five grandchildren. He has served as a pastor/elder at Grace Bible Church since 1990 and is now pastor/elder emeritus. Professionally, Frank was a physicist in the Department of Defense Intelligence Community for over 35 years and a senior systems engineer with SAIC for 12 years. As a Christian worldview political activist, Frank has engaged in grass-roots political activism and formal political party representation. He is an author (“*Christian Fratricide – Why Christians Continue to be Divided Politically*,” “*65 Wisdom Principles for Christian Activists*,” and a novella: “*Destined for Completion – A Short History of the Universe*”). Frank currently serves as the Director of Research, Content and Curriculum for Well Versed ministries, and is a professor at Chula Vista Christian University. As Founder of the Christian Citizenship Council (C3), Frank has published his “Kacer’s Call” biblical perspective on every California statewide Proposition since 2002 and local Measures since 2016.

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