



California Proposition 3, Water Infrastructure and Watershed Conservation Bond Initiative (2018)

California Proposition 3, the **California Water Infrastructure and Watershed Conservation Bond Initiative**, is on the ballot in California as an initiated state statute on November 6, 2018.^[1]

California Proposition 3



Election date
November 6, 2018

Topic
Bond issues and Water

Status
On the ballot

Type	Origin
State statute	Citizens

- A "yes" vote supports this measure to authorize \$8.877 billion in general obligation bonds for water infrastructure, groundwater supplies and storage, surface water storage and dam repairs, watershed and fisheries improvements, and habitat protection and restoration.
- A "no" vote opposes this measure to authorize \$8.877 billion in general obligation bonds for water infrastructure, groundwater supplies and storage, surface water storage and dam repairs, watershed and fisheries improvements, and habitat protection and restoration.

Overview

How would the \$8.877 billion bond measure be spent?

Proposition 3 would issue \$8.877 billion in general obligation bonds for water-related infrastructure and environmental projects.^[1] The state fiscal analyst said the bond would generate about \$8.4 billion in interest over a 40-year period, meaning the bond would cost the state a total of \$17.3 billion.^[2]

The largest amount of bond revenue—\$2.355 billion—would go toward conservancies and state parks to restore and protect watershed lands and nonprofits and local agencies for river parkways. The measure would also allocate \$640 million to groundwater sustainability agencies to implement their plans and \$500 million for public water system infrastructure improvements to meet safe drinking water standards, including the treatment of contaminants, or ensure affordable drinking water. The ballot initiative would require that \$1.398 billion be spent on projects benefitting what the state defines as disadvantaged communities and an additional \$2.637 billion be prioritized for disadvantaged communities.^[3] California defines disadvantaged communities as communities with an annual median household income less than 80 percent of the statewide annual median household income. With a median household income of \$63,783 in 2017, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, 80 percent was \$51,026.^[4] The measure would distribute bond revenue as follows:^[1]

Click **show** to expand the bond revenue table.

Water Infrastructure and Watershed Conservation Bond (2018)	[show]
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When did California last vote on a water bond measure?

Gerald Meral, who developed the ballot initiative, was deputy secretary of the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA), overseeing the Bay Delta Conservation Plan, from 2011 to 2013. Gov. Jerry Brown (D) appointed Meral to the CNRA.^[5] Gov. Brown organized a PAC to lead a campaign for the last water bond measure on the

ballot—Proposition 1—in 2014. Proposition 1 authorized \$7.12 billion in bonds for water infrastructure and watershed protection. Meral described his ballot initiative as a follow-up to Proposition 1. He said, “We pretty much modeled this on Prop. 1. It’s very heavy on groundwater (restoration), wastewater recycling and water for fish and wildlife.”^[6] The California State Legislature had appropriated 86 percent of Proposition 1 to various projects as of the 2017-2018 fiscal year.^{[7][8]}

Who is contributing to the campaigns surrounding this ballot measure?

Note: The campaign finance information on this page is according to the most recent scheduled reports, which covered through June 30, 2018, and interim reports available as of August 2, 2018. The deadline for the next scheduled reports is September 27, 2018.

The committees in support of the ballot initiative had raised \$3.04 million. The largest contributions to the support committees were the Ducks Unlimited (\$400,000), California Waterfowl Association (\$275,000), and the California Wildlife Foundation Vesta Fund (\$200,000). There were no committees registered to oppose the ballot initiative.^[9]

Text of measure

Ballot title

The official ballot title is as follows:^[2]

“ Authorizes Bonds to Fund Projects for Water Supply and Quality, Watershed, Fish, Wildlife, Water Conveyance, and Groundwater Sustainability and Storage. Initiative Statute.^[10] ”

Ballot summary

The official ballot summary is as follows:^[11]

“

- Authorizes \$8.877 billion in state general obligation bonds for various infrastructure projects: \$3.03 billion for safe drinking water and water quality, \$2.895 billion for watershed and fisheries improvements, \$940 million for habitat protection, \$855 million for improved water conveyance, \$685 million for groundwater sustainability/ storage, and \$472 million for surface water storage/dam repairs.
- Appropriates money from General Fund to pay off bonds.
- Requires certain projects to provide matching funds from non-state sources; gives priority to disadvantaged communities.^[10]

”

Fiscal impact

Note: The fiscal impact statement for a California ballot initiative authorized for circulation is prepared by the state's legislative analyst and director of finance.

The fiscal impact statement is as follows:^[2]

“ State costs of \$17.3 billion to pay off principal (\$8.9 billion) and interest (\$8.4 billion) on bonds over a 40-year period. Annual payments would average \$433 million. Annual payments would be lower than this average in the initial and final few years, and somewhat higher in the intervening years. Varying fiscal effects on individual local governments depending on specific projects undertaken, amount of grants and loans received, and amount of local cost-share required.^[10] ”

Full text

The full text of the measure is available [here](#).

Support

Californians for Safe Drinking Water and a Clean and Reliable Water Supply is leading the campaign in support of the initiative.^[3]

Supporters

Officials

- U.S. Rep. Jim Costa (D-16)^[12]
- U.S. Rep. John Garamendi (D-3)^[12]
- Former Treasurer Phil Angelides (D)^[12]

Arguments

Official arguments

Dyan Whyte, a water quality scientist, **Janet Santos Cobb**, executive director of the California Wildlife Foundation, and **Roberto Ramirez**, a water resources engineer, wrote the official argument found in the state voter information guide in support of Proposition 3:^[11]

- “ Proposition 3 meets California’s urgent, critical need to secure a safe, reliable and clean water supply by ”
- Improving long term drought preparedness
 - Providing safe drinking water to millions of Californians, including those in disadvantaged communities
 - Increasing mountain water runoff we can capture and use
 - Repairing existing canals that irrigate our food crops
 - Repairing Oroville and other dams to keep people safe and hold more water
 - Improving water quality in groundwater, rivers, lakes, and streams
 - Using purified recycled water for industry and landscaping

Opposition

Arguments

Official arguments

Janet Roberts, president of the Central Solano Citizen/Taxpayer Group (CSCTG), **Robert Jarvis**, vice president of CSCTG, and **Murray Bass**, a member of CSCTG, wrote the official argument found in the state voter information guide in opposition to Proposition 3:^[11]

Does Prop. 3 look familiar? It should.

“ We saw a water-related measure on the June ballot, with similar words. In fact, since 1996, there have been eight statewide bond measures committing money to water issues. So far the total amount is more than 29 Billion Dollars!

What do we have to show for all that money? Not one thing that will get us more water.

California is basically a desert. Without dams collecting rain and snow-melt from the mountains, extensive agriculture in the Central Valley would not exist. Our cities would be a fraction of their present populations.

Despite a decades-long drought, not one penny of that \$29 Billion went to build a new dam. The nearcatastrophic failure at northern California's Oroville Dam last year showed that the State doesn't

Campaign finance

See also: *Campaign finance requirements for California ballot measures*

The campaign finance information on this page is according to the most recent scheduled reports, which covered through June 30, 2018, and interim reports available as of August 2, 2018. The deadline for the next scheduled reports is September 27, 2018.

There were three ballot measure committees registered in support of Proposition 3. The committee **Californians for Safe Drinking Water and a Clean and Reliable Water Supply in Support of Proposition 3** received most of the funds. Together, the three support committees received \$3.04 million and spent \$2.12 million.^[9]

The top contributor to the support committees was the Ducks Unlimited, which contributed \$400,000. The second largest contributor, California Waterfowl Association, donated \$275,000.^[9]

There were no committees registered in opposition to the measure.^[9]

Total campaign contributions:	
Support:	\$3,043,199.91
Opposition:	\$0.00

Support

The following table includes contribution and expenditure totals for the committees in support of the initiative:^[9]

Committees in support of Proposition 3				Totals in support	
Supporting committees	Cash contributions	In-kind services	Cash expenditures	Total raised:	
Californians for Safe Drinking Water and a Clean and Reliable Water Supply in Support of Proposition 3	\$2,991,980.73	\$9,323.54	\$2,093,882.55		\$3,043,199.91
Northern California Water Association for a Water Bond	\$38,982.00	\$0.00	\$11,088.30	Total spent:	\$2,117,208.03
Agricultural and Dairy Community for Safe Drinking Water and Reliable Water Supply	\$50.00	\$2,863.64	\$50.00		
Total	\$3,031,012.73	\$12,187.18	\$2,105,020.85		

Donors

The following were the top five donors who contributed to the support committees:^[9]

Donor	Cash	In-kind	Total
Ducks Unlimited	\$400,000.00	\$0.00	\$400,000.00
California Waterfowl Association	\$275,000.00	\$0.00	\$275,000.00
California Wildlife Foundation Vesta Fund	\$200,000.00	\$0.00	\$200,000.00
American Pistachio Growers	\$160,000.00	\$0.00	\$160,000.00
California Fresh Fruit Association	\$155,000.00	\$0.00	\$155,000.00

Reporting dates

In California, ballot measure committees filed a total of five campaign finance reports in 2018. The filing dates for reports are as follows:^[13]

Campaign finance reporting dates for November 2018 [show]
ballot

Methodology

Ballotpedia calculates campaign finance based on the political committees registered to support or oppose a measure and independent expenditures, when relevant and available. When a committee is registered to support or oppose multiple measures it is impossible to distinguish between funds used for one measure and funds used for the other.

In calculating campaign finance for supporting and opposing committees, Ballotpedia does not count donations or expenditures from one ballot measure committee to another since that would amount to counting the same money twice. This method is used to give the most accurate information concerning how much funding was actually provided to and spent by the opposing and supporting campaigns.

Ballotpedia subtracts out committee-to-committee contributions—both cash donations and in-kind contributions. Because of this, it is possible for certain committees to have negative contributions. Negative contributions mean that a committee has provided more contributions to other committees than it has received. If expenditures exceed contributions, it means the committee has accrued unpaid bills, has unpaid or unforgiven loans, or has contributed a certain amount of in-kind services to another committee.

Ballotpedia provides information about all reported in-kind donations. In-kind contributions are also counted toward total expenditures since, with in-kind gifts, the contribution and services or goods are provided simultaneously. Ballotpedia does this to provide the most accurate information about the cash-on-hand of supporting and opposing campaigns.

Polls

California Proposition 3 (2018)						[hide]
Poll	Support	Oppose	Undecided	Margin of error	Sample size	
Public Policy Institute of California 7/8/2018 - 7/17/2018	58.0%	25.0%	17.0%	+/-3.4	1,711	
<p><i>Note: A "0%" finding means the candidate was not a part of the poll. The polls above may not reflect all polls that have been conducted in this race. Those displayed are a random sampling chosen by Ballotpedia staff. If you would like to nominate another poll for inclusion in the table, send an email to editor@ballotpedia.org.</i></p>						

Background

California Proposition 1 (2014)

See also: *California Proposition 1, Water Bond (2014)*

In 2014, voters in California approved Proposition 1—a \$7.12 billion water bond measure. The California State Legislature referred the measure to the ballot through a 77-2 vote in the state Assembly and a 37-0 vote in the state Senate. Both the state Democratic Party and state Republican Party endorsed Proposition 1. Gov. Jerry Brown (D) organized a PAC to support Proposition 1. Committees in support of Proposition 1 raised a combined \$21.82 million, while opponents received \$101,149.

Bond issues on the ballot in California

See also: *Bond issues on the ballot*

Voters of California cast ballots on 39 bond issues, totaling \$154.829 billion in value, from January 1, 1993, through January 1, 2018. Voters approved 31 (79.49 percent) of the bond measures—a total of \$143.409 billion. Six of the measures were citizen's initiatives; four of six were approved. Thirty-three of the measures were legislative referrals; 25 of 33 were approved. The most common purposes of bond measures during the 25 years between 1993 and 2018 were water infrastructure and public education, for which there were seven bond measures each. All seven of the bond measures related to water infrastructure between 1993 and 2018 were approved.

Click **show** to expand the bond revenue table.

Year [show]	Measure	Amount	Primary purpose	Origin	Outcome
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Bond debt in California

As of December 1, 2017, California had \$73.33 billion in debt from general obligation bonds. The state had \$31.09 billion in unissued bonds, including \$2.19 billion for natural resources and environment-related bonds.^[14]

Path to the ballot

See also: *California signature requirements and Laws governing the initiative process in California*

Process in California

In California, the number of signatures required for an initiated state statute is equal to 5 percent of the votes cast in the preceding gubernatorial election. Petitions are allowed to circulate for 180 days from the date the attorney general prepares the petition language. Signatures need to be certified at least 131 days before the general election. As the verification process can take multiple months, the secretary of state provides suggested deadlines for ballot initiatives.

The requirements to get indirect initiated state statutes certified for the 2018 ballot:

- **Signatures:** 365,880 valid signatures were required.
- **Deadline:** The deadline for signature verification was June 28, 2018. However, the secretary of state suggested deadlines for turning in signatures of March 7, 2018, for initiatives needing a full check of

signatures and April 24, 2018, for initiatives needing a random sample of signatures verified.

Signatures are first filed with local election officials, who determine the total number of signatures submitted. If the total number is equal to at least 100 percent of the required signatures, then local election officials perform a random check of signatures submitted in their counties. If the random sample estimates that more than 110 percent of the required number of signatures are valid, the initiative is eligible for the ballot. If the random sample estimates that between 95 and 110 percent of the required number of signatures are valid, a full check of signatures is done to determine the total number of valid signatures. If less than 95 percent are estimated to be valid, the initiative does not make the ballot.

Initiative #17-0010

On July 14, 2017, Gerald H. Meral submitted a letter requesting a title and summary for the initiative. The California attorney general issued a title and summary on September 20, 2017, allowing proponents to begin collecting signatures. Proponents of the initiative needed to submit 365,880 valid signatures by March 19, 2018, in order for it to make the 2018 ballot.^[15]

On March 13, 2018, the secretary of state announced that signatures had been filed for the ballot initiative. A total of 604,805 signatures had been filed. At least 365,880 of those signatures—about 60.5 percent—needed to be valid. Counties had until April 24, 2018, to conduct a random sample of signatures.^[16]

The committee hired Masterton & Wright, a political consulting firm, to organize the signature drive.^[9] Compared to the 15 ballot initiatives certified for the ballot in California in 2016, a 60.5 percent validation requirement was near average for an initiative to make the ballot. The 15 ballot initiatives from 2016 had an average validation requirement of 61.9 percent, with a range between 58.1 and 67.4 percent.

On April 25, 2018, the secretary of state's office declared that the initiative had qualified to appear on the ballot. Of the 604,805 signatures filed, an estimated 463,896 were valid (76.7 percent).^[16]

Cost of signature collection:

Sponsors of the measure hired Masterton & Wright to collect signatures for the petition to qualify this measure for the ballot. A total of \$1,883,203.00 was spent to collect the 365,880 valid signatures required to put this measure before voters, resulting in a total cost per required signature (CPRS) of \$5.15.

How to vote

See also: Voting in California

Poll times

All polls in California are open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Pacific Time. An individual who is in line at the time polls close must be allowed to vote.^[17]

Registration requirements

To vote in California, an individual must be U.S. citizen and California resident. A voter must be at least 18 years of age on Election Day. Conditional voter registration is available beginning 14 days before an election through Election Day.^[18]

On October 10, 2015, California Governor Jerry Brown (D) signed into law Assembly Bill No. 1461, also known as the New Motor Voter Act. The legislation authorized automatic voter registration in California for any individuals who visit the Department of Motor Vehicles to acquire or renew a driver's license. The law was scheduled to take effect in 2016.^{[19][20]}

Online registration

See also: [Online voter registration](#)

California has implemented an online voter registration system. Residents can register to vote by visiting this website.

Voter ID requirements

According to the Office of the California Secretary of State, "in most cases, California voters are not required to show identification at their polling place." A voter may be asked to provide identification at the polls if it is his or her first time voting (this requirement applies if the individual registered by mail without providing a driver's license number, state identification number, or the last four digits of a Social Security number). Acceptable forms of identification include driver's licenses, utility bills, or any document sent by a government agency. For a complete list of acceptable forms of identification, see this list.^[21]

State profile



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Both sides of America's political divide have taken the opportunity to emphasize how different California is from the rest of the country. After the 2016 presidential election, supporters of Donald Trump complained that were it not for Hillary Clinton's margin of victory in California, Trump would have won the popular vote. For their part, California's Democratic politicians have taken a leading role in opposing Trump's vision for America; some Californians are even flirting with seceding from the union, though "Calexit" faces constitutional obstacles that make it highly improbable. Despite such antagonism, California and the United States need each other, even if it no longer seems like it.

Americans have long thought of California as the Golden State -- a distant and dreamy land initially, then as a shaper of culture and as a promised land for millions of Americans and immigrants for many decades. America's most populous state remains in many ways a great success story. But in ...(read more)

Presidential voting pattern

See also: [Presidential voting trends in California](#)

California voted for the Democratic candidate in all five presidential elections between 2000 and 2016.

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Demographic data for California

	California	U.S.
Total population:	38,993,940	316,515,021
Land area (sq mi):	155,779	3,531,905
Gender		
Female:	50.3%	50.8%
Race and ethnicity**		
White:	61.8%	73.6%
Black/African American:	5.9%	12.6%
Asian:	13.7%	5.1%
Native American:	0.7%	0.8%
Pacific Islander:	0.4%	0.2%
Two or more:	4.5%	3%
Hispanic/Latino:	38.4%	17.1%

Education

- More...

High school graduation rate:	81.8%	86.7%
College graduation rate:	31.4%	29.8%
Income		
Median household income:	\$61,818	\$53,889
Persons below poverty level:	18.2%	11.3%
Source: <i>U.S. Census Bureau</i> , "American Community Survey" (5-year estimates 2010-2015)		

***Note: Percentages for race and ethnicity may add up to more than 100 percent because respondents may report more than one race and the Hispanic/Latino ethnicity may be selected in conjunction with any race. Read more about race and ethnicity in the census [here](#).*

See also

2018 measures



- 2018 ballot measures
- Bond issues on the ballot
- Water on the ballot
- Environment on the ballot
- 2018 legislative sessions

California



- California ballot measures
- California ballot measure laws

News and analysis



- Ballot measure lawsuits
- Ballot measure readability
- Ballot measure polls

External links

- Initiative Petition #17-0010

Footnotes

1. *California Attorney General*, "Initiative 17-0010," August 11, 2017
2. *California Secretary of State*, "Initiatives and Referenda Cleared for Circulation," accessed March 6, 2017
3. *Californians for Safe Drinking Water and a Clean and Reliable Water Supply*, "Homepage," accessed March 7, 2018
4. *U.S. Census Bureau*, "Quick Facts: California," accessed March 7, 2018
5. *The Sacramento Bee*, "Top water official linked to tunnel plans to retire," December 15, 2018

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