

★ ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF PROPOSITION 17 ★

VOTE YES ON PROPOSITION 17

Proposition 17 is simple—it restores a person’s right to vote upon completion of their prison term.

- When a person completes their prison sentence, they should be encouraged to reenter society and have a stake in their community. Restoring their voting rights does that. Civic engagement is connected to lower rates of recidivism. When people feel that they are valued members of their community, they are less likely to return to prison.
- 19 other states allow people to vote once they have successfully completed their prison sentence. It’s time for California to do the same.
- A Florida study found that people who have completed their prison sentences and had their voting rights restored were less likely to commit crimes in the future.
- Nearly 50,000 Californians who have completed their prison sentences pay taxes at the local, state, and federal levels. However, they are not able to vote at any level of government.

PROP. 17 WILL HAVE REAL LIFE IMPACTS—STORIES FROM CALIFORNIANS WHO HAVE COMPLETED THEIR SENTENCES

After a parole board granted Richard his freedom, he was shocked to learn that he still could not cast a vote in California. Over the last 20 years, Richard has become what he describes as “a man built for others”—helping develop a drug and alcohol counseling program while still in prison and advocating for better criminal justice

policies. “I work hard, serve my community, pay taxes, give back, and I am still a citizen of this country,” Richard said. “I believe that qualifies me to have the right to vote again.”

Andrew is a Navy veteran who served his country but developed a drinking problem and made big mistakes that led to prison. He earned parole by working toward his rehabilitation, and now that his prison sentence is completed, he’s building a new life as a veteran learning to contribute to his community. Andrew says, “I believe in working hard for what you get in life, and I believe that I’ve earned the right to vote so I can be a full member of my community.”

YES ON PROPOSITION 17

Parole is intended to be a period of reintegration into the community. People on parole who have completed their prison sentences raise families, hold jobs, pay taxes, and contribute to society in every other way. Restoring a person’s voting eligibility removes stigma and helps strengthen their connection to the community.

Yeson17.vote #FreeTheVote

CAROL MOON GOLDBERG, President
League of Women Voters of California

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Prop. 17 Author

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★ REBUTTAL TO ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF PROPOSITION 17 ★

Proponents claim that Proposition 17 will restore a convicted felon’s voting rights “upon completion of their prison sentence.” THIS IS FALSE.

THE TRUTH: In California, parole is a legally part of the prison sentence, and a convicted felon must successfully complete parole upon release from incarceration in order to have served their sentence and have their voting rights restored. *Proposition 17 will eliminate this critical requirement.*

Proponents do not tell you that 30 states require more than the completion of prison incarceration, *before a felon’s voting rights are restored.* Most require the completion of parole while some require the addition of executive action.

While proponents highlight two stories about released criminals, “Richard” and “Andrew,” they don’t share with you their criminal histories—as if burglars, armed robbers, murderers and child molesters are all the same. *Nothing could be further from the truth.*

THE TRUTH: For every “Richard” or “Andrew” there is a “Robert” or “Scott” who commits a violent felony while

on parole. Proposition 17 restores voting rights before felons complete this critical parole sentence.

Parole is the adjustment period when violent felons prove they are no longer a violent threat to innocent citizens living in a civil society. Their every move is monitored and supervised by a trained state officer.

BOTTOM LINE: PROPOSITION 17 WILL ALLOW CRIMINALS CONVICTED OF MURDER, RAPE, CHILD MOLESTATION, AND OTHER SERIOUS AND VIOLENT CRIMES TO VOTE BEFORE COMPLETING THEIR SENTENCE INCLUDING PAROLE.

Proposition 17 is not justice. VOTE NO ON PROPOSITION 17

HARRIET SALARNO, Founder
Crime Victims United of California

JIM NIELSEN, California State Senator

RUTH WEISS, Vice President
Election Integrity Project California

★ ARGUMENT AGAINST PROPOSITION 17 ★

PROPOSITION 17 WILL ALLOW CRIMINALS CONVICTED OF MURDER, RAPE, SEXUAL ABUSE AGAINST CHILDREN, KIDNAPPING, ASSAULT, GANG GUN CRIMES AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING TO VOTE BEFORE COMPLETING THEIR SENTENCE INCLUDING PAROLE.

In 1974, California voters approved restoring the right to vote to convicted felons once they have completed their sentences (including parole). More recently, California's prison reform measures have moved all but the most vicious criminals out of prisons and into local jails. People convicted of nonviolent felonies like car theft or drug dealing are incarcerated in county jails *and have the right to vote while serving their sentence*. For them there is no parole.

PAROLE IN CALIFORNIA IS FOR SERIOUS AND VIOLENT CRIMINALS.

Criminals in prison have been convicted of murder or manslaughter, robbery, rape, child molestation or other serious and violent crimes and sex offenses. They have victimized innocent, law-abiding citizens who are condemned for life to revisit those crimes in every nightmare. Certain sounds, smells and everyday experiences will always return them mentally and emotionally to the scene of the crime, and for them there is no end to their sentence. Knowing that their victimizers would have social equality with them before they have been fully rehabilitated simply adds to their lifelong pain and misery.

PAROLE IS TO PROVE REHABILITATION BEFORE FULL LIBERTY, INCLUDING VOTING RIGHTS, IS RESTORED.

Offenders released from PRISON after serving a term for a serious or violent felony are required to complete parole (usually three years) as part of their sentences. Parole is an adjustment period when violent felons prove their desire to adjust to behaving properly in a free

society. Their every move is monitored and supervised by a trained state officer. *If the state does not trust them to choose where to live or travel, with whom to associate and what jobs to do, it MUST NOT trust them with decisions that will impact the lives and finances of all other members of society.*

MOST PAROLEES STUMBLE AND 50% ARE CONVICTED OF NEW CRIMES.

Unfortunately, about half of parolees commit new crimes within three years of release. Clearly, they are not ready to join the society of law-abiding citizens. Rewards and privileges in life must be earned and deserved. Giving violent criminals the right to vote before they have successfully completed their full sentence, which INCLUDES A PERIOD OF PAROLE, is like giving students a high school diploma at the end of tenth grade. It makes no sense, and hurts their future and all of society.

JUSTICE DEMANDS A NO VOTE ON PROPOSITION 17. Crime victims deserve justice. Granting violent criminals the right to vote before the completion of their sentence is not justice. Offenders deserve justice as well. Their self-respect depends upon knowing that they have made full restitution for their crimes and have earned a second chance. Californians deserve a justice system where offenders pay for their crimes, prove their rehabilitation, and only then are welcomed back into civil society. Proposition 17 is NOT justice.

VOTE NO ON PROPOSITION 17

HARRIET SALARNO, Founder
 Crime Victims United of California

JIM NIELSEN, Chairman
 California Board of Prison Terms (Ret.)

RUTH WEISS, Vice President
 Election Integrity Project California

17

★ REBUTTAL TO ARGUMENT AGAINST PROPOSITION 17 ★

VOTE YES ON PROP. 17

PROP. 17 opponents are using scare tactics to try and stop you from fixing a nearly 50-year-old, out-of-date voting policy.

THE FACTS:

- Prop. 17 will simply restore a citizen's right to vote upon completion of their prison term aligning California with 19 other states that already do the same.
- After a similar law was changed in Florida, a parole commission study found that citizens who have completed their prison sentences and had their voting rights restored *were less likely to commit crimes in the future.*
- Parole is intended to be a period of reintegration into the community. Citizens on parole who have completed their prison sentences raise families, hold jobs, pay taxes, and contribute to society in every other way.
- Nearly 50,000 Californians who have completed their prison sentences pay taxes at the local, state and

federal levels and yet, are not able to vote at any level of government.

DON'T BELIEVE OPPONENTS AND THEIR SCARE TACTICS. DEMOCRATS AND REPUBLICANS SUPPORT PROP. 17

- More than two thirds of the state legislature—Democrats and Republicans, supported asking California voters to consider Prop. 17.
- Prop. 17 does nothing to change anyone's prison term including those convicted of serious and violent crimes. VOTE YES ON PROP. 17!

CAROL MOON GOLDBERG, President
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