

Thank you for subscribing to the Urban Counties of California (UCC) e-newsletter. During the Legislature's fall break, we will be publishing updates on an as-needed basis. We will return to a weekly publication schedule when the Legislature returns for the 2020-21 session in January 2021.



*Established in 1991, UCC serves as the representative voice for state legislative advocacy for high-population counties in California. Initially composed of seven counties, the association has grown to 14 today. Over 80 percent of the state's population reside in UCC counties. Consequently, urban counties carry out critical programs and services to the state's most vulnerable populations. For more information, including details on our Board of Directors, please visit [our website](#).*

## UCC Weekly News: November 6, 2020

### November 2020 Election Round-Up **State Legislative Races**

While there are still 2 million uncounted ballots in California, changes are afoot in the California State Senate. As many as four Senate seats – two in Orange County, one in Los Angeles, and one in Riverside – could flip from Republican to Democrat, which would augment the number of Democrats in the Senate from 29 to 33 in the 40-seat chamber. Democratic insiders expect the Democratic candidates to prevail in at least two of those four races once the election is certified.

Additionally, Senator Holly Mitchell – who current serves as Senate budget committee chair – won her race for the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. She is expected to resign her Senate seat next month, which will leave a vacancy for several months. It also means that Senate President Pro Tempore Toni Atkins will be appointing a new chair of the Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee. Once Senator Mitchell's seat is vacant, the Governor will call a special election in December – likely for a March primary and a run-off in late April or early May. Sitting Assembly Member Sydney Kamlager has announced she is running to replace Senator Mitchell.

On the Assembly side, it looks like the Democrats will hold 60 seats (down from 61), the Republicans will hold 19 seats (up from 18). Additionally, one Independent remains in the chamber, given that Assembly Member Chad Mayes – who last year changed his party affiliation from Republican to “no party preference” – prevailed in his reelection this week. The change in the Democratic-Republican split in the lower chamber resulted from two Republicans securing the top-two spots in the June primary for Assembly District 38; the seat currently is held by Democratic Assembly Member Christy Smith, who gave up the seat to run for Congress. Assembly Speaker Anthony

		Proposition Title	Yes Votes	%	No Votes	%
Yes	14	Bonds to Continue Stem Cell Research	6,216,139	51.0%	5,964,961	49.0%
No	15	Property Tax to Fund Schools, Government Services	5,979,003	48.3%	6,405,666	51.7%
No	16	Affirmative Action in Government Decisions	5,366,655	43.9%	6,854,393	56.1%
Yes	17	Restores Right to Vote After Prison Term	7,289,248	59.0%	5,059,072	41.0%
No	18	17-year-old Primary Voting Rights	5,549,073	44.8%	6,825,260	55.2%
Yes	19	Changes Certain Property Tax Rules	6,233,543	51.4%	5,896,647	48.6%
No	20	Parole Restrictions for Certain Offenses	4,556,754	37.7%	7,529,008	62.3%
No	21	Expands Governments' Authority to Rent Control	4,922,437	40.3%	7,300,324	59.7%
Yes	22	App-Based Drivers and Employee Benefits	7,178,076	58.4%	5,116,019	41.6%
No	23	State Requirements for Kidney Dialysis Clinics	4,400,274	36.0%	7,812,042	64.0%
Yes	24	Amends Consumer Privacy Laws	6,778,632	56.0%	5,317,765	44.0%
No	25	Eliminates Money Bail System	5,349,338	44.4%	6,688,378	55.6%

Rendon will retain his speakership, while Assembly Republicans are expected to elect a new leader next month.

***Statewide Propositions*** (see chart above)

The voters were asked to make decisions on 12 ballot propositions that dealt with – individually and collectively – varied and rather complex policy issues. At the time of this writing, here are the results with several measures (Propositions 14, 15, and 19) being too close to call. Note that all elections results will be certified by December 11.

A few facts and observations:

- It is reported that approximately \$775 million was expended overall on the 12 propositions before the voters – with Prop 22 representing the biggest spend.
- Campaign experts note that the more California becomes a one-party state, the more certain interest groups – business in particular – will likely rely on the initiative process to achieve their objectives. The most notable example from this week's election is the huge investment – and payoff – that gig-based tech companies made in Proposition 22.
- Both property tax-related initiatives – Props 15 and 19 – are too close to call for the moment. Eyes are particularly focused on Prop 15, given the considerable impacts that measure would have on state and local finance as well as county operations.
- The outcomes on the criminal justice related measures were a bit of a mixed bag. Voters enthusiastically embraced the restoration of parolee voting rights in Prop 17; that measure passed by a margin of 18 points. The electorate put even more gusto behind its defeat of Prop 20, a measure that would have rolled back various provisions of previous criminal justice reforms measure, including Props 47 (2014) and 57 (2016). That measure lost by a nearly 25-point margin.
- It bears a bit more explanation – and therefore its own bullet – on what arguably was the most confusing criminal justice related initiative on the ballot. Proposition 25 – the referendum to overturn SB 10 (Hertzberg, 2018) – failed, meaning that bail reform as contemplated in SB 10 will not be implemented. Recall, of course, that SB 10 – had Prop 25 passed – would have eliminated the cash bail system and replaced it with a risk-based assessment for guiding pre-trial release decisions. While some have argued that the voters were fully cognizant of what they were doing in voting no on Prop 25 – hence putting a stop to bail

reform as outlined in SB 10 – others believe that the construct of a referendum leads to voter confusion, which often results in a “no” vote. Read this *Sac Bee* [article](#) for more on the interesting dynamics and strange bedfellows on the No on Prop 25 campaign. It’s highly doubtful that bail reform as a policy conversation is over. Remember, of course, that [final resolution](#) in the potentially precedent-setting *Humphrey* case is pending before the California Supreme Court.

### **Local Ballot Measures**

The November election included more than 400 measures on local ballots, 260 of which were local tax and bond measures. Michael Coleman of CaliforniaCityFinance.com has prepared his initial summary [here](#). While final results are a few weeks away, a couple of highlights to note:

- November 2020 had a notable number of general tax measures proposed by cities and counties. These measures only require a simple majority (50% + 1) and most of them are passing (90%).
- School bond measures totaled 60, a substantially smaller number than November 2016 (184) or November 2018 (112), but passage rates at this point appear to be similar to prior years.
- Pro-cannabis measures (ordinances and tax measures) were also receiving positive voter support in jurisdictions across the state. It appears that more than two dozen jurisdictions have approved measures to tax current or future marijuana operations.

### **Assembly Hosts Joint Hearing Next Week on State’s COVID-19 Response**

The Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 6 on Budget Process, Oversight and Program Evaluation and the Assembly Governmental Organization Committee are hosting a joint hearing on Tuesday, November 10 to receive an update on the state’s response to the pandemic. The committees will hear from various state officials for updates on two specific topics: (1) operational efforts to contain COVID-19 and (2) the state’s procurement process and availability of personal protective equipment (PPE). The [agenda](#) can be found here.

### **BCSH Seeks Stakeholder Input to AB 3088 Implementation**

The California Business, Consumer Services, and Housing Agency (BCSH) is seeking stakeholder input in their efforts to implement the Tenant, Homeowner, and Small Landlord Relief and Stabilization Act of 2020 (AB 3088) and how the best direct potential future federal stimulus funding.

The AB 3088 Stakeholder Engagement survey, open through November 13, is available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

### **News from the Strategic Growth Council**

As the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) Program prepares to launch next funding round, the California Strategic Growth Council (SGC) has posted the [AHSC Round 6 Final Draft Guidelines](#) for review. The Council will consider and vote on the Final Draft Guidelines at its [public meeting](#) on November 17, 2020.

If the Council adopts the Final Draft Guidelines, AHSC Program Staff will launch its sixth funding round with the release of the Round 6 Final Guidelines and Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA), worth approximately \$350 million. AHSC Round 6 applications are due on **February 23, 2021**. Look for announcements regarding technical assistance, including workshops and project consultations, from the AHSC team soon.

The SGC has also announced the launch of the [Partners Advancing Climate Equity \(PACE\)](#), a new program providing training and technical assistance to frontline community members seeking to build community capacity to drive climate action and resilience. PACE participants will connect with other leaders from across California while receiving support to advance action on climate-related projects in their communities.

PACE is a year-long program split into two six-month phases. In Phase 1, participants will engage in virtual workshops and supplemental activities for approximately 10-15 hours per month. Once the cohort concludes, select participants will receive technical assistance in Phase 2 to for greater support on project development. Participants will receive a stipend up to \$8,000, in-depth training, and individualized mentorship to cultivate skills in:

- Navigating State funding programs, policies, resources, and decision-making processes.
- Performing data-driven community needs assessments and developing actionable plans.
- Forming and sustaining cross-sector partnerships that maximize collective impact strategies.
- Leveraging available resources to advance local climate resilience and social equity priorities.

The application to join the PACE cohort is now open and due **Thursday, December 3** at 5:00 p.m. The PACE team will host an informational webinar on **Monday, November 16 from 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.** to provide potential

applicants an opportunity to learn more and ask questions. Register for the webinar [here](#).