**“Roger’s Recommendations” for the 2016 General Election**

***For Listeners of “The Bottom Line” Show (and anyone else who might be interested)***

*Updated 18 October 2016*

Election 2016 appears to be one of the most contentious in recent memory. While the usual Republican vs Democrat rancor is evident, the larger narrative involves pitting the “establishment” against those who feel as though “the American Dream” has become either a mirage at best or a nightmare. As of this update, there does not appear to be a clear cut “leader” in the Presidential race – and several other key seats in the House, Senate and state legislature appear to be “up for grabs” as well.

What follows are my recommendations the key election issues of the day, focusing primarily on the races in which votes can actually have some kind of impact. First up, the state propositions; next, the Presidential race followed by the battle for whom will be the Golden State’s next United States Senator. Finally, a look at key races for seats in the California State Senate and Assembly. Then, at the end of my recommendations, I’ll provide a link to a couple of places you can turn for a fairly thorough analysis of key state initiatives and races county by county here in California.

**The California Propositions:**

**Proposition 51: “The California Public School Facility Bonds Initiative”**

* A “yes” vote authorizes the issuing of $9 billion in bonds to fund the construction of new facilities for K-12 schools and community colleges as well as providing maintenance for existing structures. (A “no” vote keeps things as is.)

Proponents of this measure argue that our schools are falling apart and in dire need of repair. Add to the mix the growing student bodies in already-overcrowded public schools and you have a recipe for “disaster.” There are literally hundreds of voices (mostly politicians and construction companies) that would LOVE to see this measure passed. So why does none other than Governor Jerry Brown actually oppose it?

Well, for openers, this measure would wind up costing $17 billion in “repayment costs” . . . in other words – our tax dollars. Count on an “emergency measure” at some point to help pay for this. Also . . . this proposition claims to generate revenue for the construction of new facilities at public schools – but local educators will have NO SAY in how those funds are spent (that decision will be made on a state level). So there are no guarantees that the districts with the greatest need will actually get the most help.

I’m not usually a fan of bond issues anyway . . . but this one is a real dud. ***I recommend a “NO” vote on Proposition 51.***

**Proposition 52: Voter Approval to Divert Hospital Fee Revenue to State General Fund**

* A “yes” vote on Prop 52 would require any request to divert private hospital fees to the California General Fund to obtain a 2/3 majority approval from voters before the legislation could decide to do so. (A “no” vote allows the state Assembly and Senate to continue to vote on matters like these without any other voter influence.)

The federal Medicare system provides funding so that low-income Americans have access to healthcare. In California, that system is called MediCal. Federal funding sent to states to helps fund this program and is determined based on the amount of fees private hospitals pay to the state. For Fiscal Year 2015/16, private hospitals paid $4.6 billion to the State of California in fees . . . but California lawmakers diverted $900 million into the state’s General Fund. As a result, MediCal wound receiving considerably less in federal grants than it was eligible to receive simply because the legislature engaged in some “tricky” accounting. (What they did was not illegal but it did hamper the MediCal system somewhat.)

Prop 52 would require a 2/3 majority of voters to approve this type of action from happening in the future. Most parties involved appear to be on board with this. ***I recommend a “YES” vote on Proposition 52.***

**Proposition 53: California Voter Approval Requirement for Revenue Bonds Above $2 Billion**

* A “yes” vote on Prop 53 would require a 2/3 majority of voters to approve any infrastructure project necessitating $2 billion or more in Revenue Bond funding. (A “no” vote keeps the system in place as is – which contains a loophole allowing legislators to divert an unlimited amount of money from the General Fund into “special projects” like the high-speed bullet train without voter knowledge or approval.)

California sells two types of bonds: ***General Obligation*** and ***Revenue***. Those classified as “General Obligation” are repaid using money from the California General Fund. “Revenue” bonds are repaid based on fees and other charges paid by users of said project. (Eg bond issue to build a toll road would be repaid by toll fees collected from drivers who use that road.)

Proponents of Prop 53 are of the opinion that passing this proposition will add an extra layer of accountability in the legislature. Opponents of Prop 53 are of the opinion that passing this proposition will make it more difficult for local communities to get much-needed infrastructure repairs started. They also hold the opinion that the state would not be able to move as quickly in the case of a natural disaster to provide relief for structural damage incurred.

From where I sit, it appears this proposition has been fueled by Californians who are frustrated with the way the high-speed rail project is being funded. (It was initially to be funded by a voter-approved bond issue but cost overruns have soared into the tens of billions of dollars – and the Governor plans to pay for the increase through a combination of a few federal grants and a lot of General Fund redirection.) Those opposed include the environmental lobby and a host of other groups who regularly receive special treatment from Sacramento.

The Bottom Line – this appears to be a commonsense measure that will help more than it might hurt. ***I recommend a “YES” vote on Proposition 53.***

**Proposition 54: Public Display of Legislative Bills Prior to Vote**

* A “yes” vote on Prop 54 would require legislators to post written text of a proposed bill in print and online 72 hours before a vote on said measure. (A “no” vote would leave existing policy in place.)

Our state legislators propose a hefty number of pieces of legislation throughout the year. The process to get final approval before sending a proposal to the Governor’s desk is lengthy and somewhat arduous. But often times “we the people” only find out about a controversial measure AFTER it has been signed into law. Prop 54 adds a measure of protection in the form of information made available where we can access it. It enjoys a substantial amount of support from a variety of different bi-partisan sources, including the Republican and Libertarian Parties.

Opposition comes from labor unions (including the California Federation of Teachers) as well as the Democratic Party; they claim that this measure will “make it easier for special interest groups to impose their influence on government.” Ironically these same groups are the ones who ALREADY USE this same type of “influence” through their highly-paid lobbyists.

In all honesty, only a dedicated few citizens (like “Bottom Line” listeners) will actually take advantage of this new information. But I believe it is a step in the right direction in terms of having a more informed electorate. ***I recommend a “YES” vote on Proposition 54.***

**Proposition 55: The California Extension of Proposition 30 Income Tax Increase**

* A “yes” vote would extend Proposition 30 from the 2012 General Election, a temporary 1.5% increase on taxpayers earning more than $250,000 per year in personal income. (A “no” vote would allow the Prop 30 increases to expire as scheduled in 2019.)

In 2012, as California (along with the rest of the country) was continuing to dig out from the Great Recession, voters approved Proposition 30 which added a 1.5% supplemental and graduated tax on personal incomes of $263,000 (joint filings of $526,000). The Prop 30 tax has generated approximately $6 billion annually in additional tax revenue. Around 90% of the funds have been allocated for K-12 institutions; the other 10% have been directed to the state’s community colleges.

Supporters of the original measure assured skeptics that Prop 30 was a “temporary tax.” Realists (like yours truly) understand that “there is no such thing as a ‘temporary tax.’” True to form, within one year of Prop 30’s passage, supporters begin campaigning for “an extension,” citing the fact that it was “so successful” that it “wouldn’t be fair to children” to eliminate it.

While the additional money for schools (and healthcare) have certainly been helpful, there is little to convince voters that funding for schools would be jeopardized if Prop 30 were not extended. (At present, more than half of the general fund is allocated for education. California has a constitutional mandate to provide public education and that mandate is not in danger.) Prop 30 was sold to voters as a “temporary fix” and Prop 55 would extend that “temporary” part for 12 more years (it would end in 2030 rather than 2018). Rejecting this measure sends a message to Sacramento that we, the voters/taxpayers, expect them to hold up their end of the bargain – that a “temporary tax” should be just that. ***I recommend a “NO” vote on Proposition 55.***

**Proposition 56: Tobacco Tax Increase**

* A “yes” vote on Prop 56 would increase the existing state tobacco tax by $2.00 per pack, with equivalent increases on other tobacco products and electronic cigarettes. (A “no” vote would keep the existing tobacco taxes in place – currently $0.87 per pack.)

Proponents of this measure claim it will increase funding for physician training, prevention and treatment of dental diseases, provide more funding for Medi-Cal patients dealing with tobacco-related illnesses, tobacco-use prevention for children and more. Opponents claim that only 13% of the funding would actually go toward helping kids either quit smoking or never start in the first place, and that the measure would actually deny public schools close to $600 million in funding they already receive from tobacco taxes.

As a non-smoker, any increase in this tax does not directly affect me. But I’m usually a bit leery of any sort of “indulgence tax” like this one simply because the door is often left open for a corruption of the ideals upon which the measure is originally built. This measure appears to promise much more than it can deliver. ***I recommend a “NO” vote on Proposition 56.***

**Proposition 57: California Parole for Non-Violent Criminals and Juvenile Court Trial Requirements Initiative**

* A “yes” vote increases parole and “time off for good behavior” opportunities for felons who have been convicted on “non-violent offenses.”
* Also, in the case of whom determines whether or not a minor is tried as an adult or a juvenile, a “yes” vote transfers that responsibility from prosecutors to judges
* A “no” vote leaves the system the way it is.

On the surface, this seems like a “no-brainer.” In an effort to rid the state of drug crime, California voters have been pushing for laws like “3 strikes and you’re out” for quite some time. Critics of this style of legislation have argued that many non-violent offenders have been locked up too quickly and for too long based on their crimes. Add to the mix the fact that many teen offenders who could have been sent to Juvenile Hall are often tried as adults and subsequently sent to state prison. Prop 57 aims to remedy those problems and has a host of support from legislators, unions and the Governor’s Office. More than $8 million has been raised to pass this measure while only $250,000 has been raised to stop it. Which means it will more than likely pass. Shouldn’t we be happy about that?

Not exactly. Opponents of the measure are quick to point out that, while this proposition SOUNDS great (reducing sentencing for non-violent offenders . . . and trying 15-year-olds as kids instead of adults . . . and letting judges decide how to charge these non-violent offenders instead of prosecutors hungry for more easy conviction), it falls into the category of “Well-Intentioned but Badly Written Laws” fairly quickly. Start with the definition of a “non-violent offense.” What exactly does that mean? No one knows for certain . . . and Prop 57 does NOTHING to correct that problem. Also – the measure does not take a suspect’s criminal history into account. That means if an offender is released as accumulating enough “good behavior time” and then is arrested on another drug charge, the court will treat him as though he was a first-time offender . . . EVERY time he arrested after that. Finally, what about multiple convictions? If a perpetrator is arrested for a weapons charge (violent offense) along with a drug possession charge (non-violent offense), she may earn release based on the non-violent offense but what about the weapons charge? Prop 57 makes NO provision for that scenario either.

So - even though the State stands to save $10 million per year through the early release program . . . and although counties may only incur an additional $2 million each year in additional cost for holding new prisoners . . . and in spite of the fact that the only real reason so many lawmakers want to see this happen is because of a federal mandate to reduce California’s overcrowded prisons, this measure doesn’t really hold water for me. ***I recommend a “NO” vote on Proposition 57.***

**Proposition 58: Non-English Languages Allowed in Public Education**

* A “yes” vote would allow non-English languages to be taught in public schools as a means for helping English-learners become more proficient and eventually fluent in English.
* A “no” vote keeps the law as is.

This is an interesting proposition on a number of levels. First, its placement on the ballot was not the result of citizen activism but a vote of the California State Legislature. Both the State Senate and Assembly proposed this legislation in response to Proposition 227 (passed by voters in 1998) which required English-learners (those whose native tongue was a language other than English) to receive language instruction in English only (an “immersion” program) after receiving one year of immersion training.

Proponents of Prop 227 argued that dual-language instruction was resulting in lower fluency rates among students. Critics argued that the dual-language method was actually more effective but more was needed to help these students achieve the goal of becoming fluent in English.

Over the past 18 years, the number of English-learners in California public schools has ballooned to 1.4 million (20% of the total student body) and fluency rates have stagnated. Supporters of Prop 58 claim that giving educators the opportunity to reintroduce the Pre-Prop 227 bilingual approach will improve the fluency rate, also providing native English speaking students the opportunity to also benefit from Spanish language immersion as a way of learning a second language.

So – what’s the best solution?

Well, for openers it’s key to see who is supporting this measure. Nearly every Democrat I the California Legislature voted in favor of the bill (originally AB 1174). Many unions are behind this as well. Perhaps they like it because the measure actually gives LEGISLATORS the opportunity to amend it at will, even providing the means to remove provisions that English even be taught in California public schools. In addition, many school districts already offer Spanish-language immersion programs (as well as other languages such as Chinese) so Prop 58 does NOT help those students as it promotes. Finally . . . consider this recommendation from the Editorial Staff at the Los Angeles Times: “The new accountability system for schools that the state is rolling out demands improvement in English fluency for non-native speakers. And if students aren’t achieving academically, Proposition 58 could be amended through a simple majority vote of the Legislature. Immigrant parents and their local school districts should be trusted to work this out together.”

So . . . if this doesn’t work, we’re to trust our State Legislature to amend it through “a simple majority vote?” And it’s we the taxpayers who will foot the bill for this program . . . but “immigrant parents and their local school districts should be trusted to work this out together?” In what reality is this NOT taxation without representation? ***I recommend a “NO” vote on Proposition 58.***

**Proposition 59: Overturn of Citizen’s United Act Advisory Question**

* A “yes” vote would urge California’s Legislative bodies to use every resource in their authority to overturn the Citizens United vs the Federal Election Commission decision from 2010 – even if it means proposing a new amendment to the US Constitution.
* A “no” vote leaves everything as is.

Passage of Prop 59 will change nothing. No new laws will be passed. The only result is that Californians will have voted to urge our legislators to try to pass a Constitutional Amendment to stop a ruling by the US Supreme Court. Citizens United vs the Federal Election Commission was decided by a 5-4 margin in 2010. The majority opinion found that a provision in the McCain-Feingold Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act denied certain corporations their 1st Amendment rights with regard to campaign advertising. (In short, the provision would have banned for-profit groups, non-profit organizations and unions from airing “electioneering communications” – the practice of running campaign ads either 30 days before a presidential primary ends or 60 days before the general election.

The Left howled when the Supreme Court struck down this provision, claiming it allowed Conservative groups the opportunity to “buy” elections. Of course, the provision is also available to liberal and Leftist groups as well. But that’s of little consequence to the Left; their passions are based on feelings so that actual facts in the Citizens United decision may have been a bit confusing for them. The fact that this measure is even on the ballot is a testament to this reality.

This is a do-nothing proposition that will never impact any sort of meaningful change – and could actually wind up hurting its supporters more than helping them. ***I recommend a “NO” vote on Proposition 59.***

**Proposition 60: Condoms in Pornographic Films Initiative**

* A “yes” vote would require performers in pornographic films to use condoms and other protective measures during filming. The measure would also require the producers of these movies to pay for “certain health requirements and check-ups.” (A “no” vote will keep things as is.)

There are two ways of looking at this initiative: either this is a good way to stop a potential health crisis . . . or it’s a stinging indictment of how badly society’s morals and values have drifted from God’s natural law. Prop 60 is patterned after a 2012 initiative (Measure B) which passed in the City of Los Angeles and withstood a legal challenge the year after it was passed. Prior to the passage of Measure B, California was the largest producer of pornographic material in the world – with nearly 90% of that production taking place in the San Fernando Valley. Since then, however, Southern California porn production has declined by 60% - and the passage of Prop 60 may drive it down even lower.

On the other hand, though, an argument can also be made for NOT passing this bill either because it is an exercise in overregulation . . . or because the majority of porn users will not be turning out to vote on 8 November. (That may be a bit of a stretch: according to a report from the website TechAddiction, 25% of internet searches are for pornography. 8 out of 10 men use online porn at least once a month and 1 out of every 3 women does as well. So, perhaps there will be a lot of porn users hitting the polls after all!) I do not like the overregulation aspect of this measure – but the greater good for passing this measure could result in fewer pornographers plying their trade in California. I realize that this will not end pornography; they’ll just move to Las Vegas or Salt Lake City. But the Bottom Line is that this measure will be good for California. ***I recommend a “YES” vote on Proposition 60.***

**Proposition 61: Drug Price Standards**

* A “yes” vote would require state agencies (like Medi-Cal) to pay the same for prescription medications as the US Department of Veteran Affairs.
* A “no” vote would maintain the status quo in this area.

Prop 61 was the result of citizens seeking more cost-effective treatments for HIV/AIDS. On average, state agencies like Medi-Cal and the California Public Employees Retirement System (CalPERS) pay approximately 51 cents on the dollar prescription meds (based on the going market rate) while the VA is often able to get those same meds at 42 cents on the dollar. The actual rate the state pays is subject to debate. But assuming the 51 to 42 ratio is in fact accurate, a compelling case could be made for tying the two purchasers together . . . but ONLY if the current VA rate were to prevail. Prop 61 contains no such guarantee. (While the language of the proposed law makes it illegal for the state to enter into a contract with a pharmaceutical company if the VA already has a lower rate, there is NO provision keeping that same company from raising the VA rate to bring it in line with the higher state rate.)

The skeptic in me couldn’t help but notice that virtually every major pharmaceutical company (aka “Big Pharma”) has pumped millions of dollars into the “NO on 61” campaign. As a result, the YES side trails in fundraising by a factor of 6 to 1. But in the end, my reason for opposing this bill has less to do with Big Pharma’s influence on that side of the equation – and more to do with the fact that this measure could make it impossible to accomplish what its supporters are trying to convince you it could do. ***I recommend a “NO” vote on Proposition 61.***

**Proposition 62: The “Repeal the Death Penalty” Initiative**

* A “yes” vote would repeal the death penalty in California. Every inmate currently on death row would have their sentences changed to “life in prison without the possibility of parole.” (A “no” vote keeps it in place.)
* NOTE: There are 2 measures on the ballot regarding the death penalty. If both of them pass, the one with the LARGER VOTE TALLY will prevail.

In 1972, the California State Supreme Court ruled the death penalty to be unconstitutional. In 1978, California voters passed Proposition 7 which reinstated it. Then in 2012, voters rejected Proposition 34 which would have rescinded it again.

This issue has divided Californians for years. Both sides claim to have an ethical justification for their position. From my vantage point, each argument has some merit. Adding the financial considerations to the discussion provides a bit more clarity. Capital trials are more expensive if First Degree Murder is an option for sentencing (trials take longer, the State spends more money on discovery, hiring expert witnesses, etc). The housing of inmates on death row is also more expensive than for “lifers” and the average length of time for an appeal tops 15 years. So, when you add all of those features to the mix, it sounds like a compelling case for repealing it altogether. And if there were no other options on the ballot, Prop 62 just might have a shot at passing. HOWEVER . . . there IS another Death Penalty-related measure on the ballot: Proposition 66. It calls for “Amending – but not Ending the Death Penalty,” and provides what I consider to be a more sensible response to this situation. ***I recommend a “NO” vote on Proposition 66.***

**Proposition 63: Background Checks for Ammunition Purchases and Large-Capacity Ammunition Magazine Ban Initiative**

* A “yes” vote supports the prohibiting the possession of large-capacity magazines and requiring certain individuals to pass a background check in order to purchase ammunition.
* A “no” vote allows law-abiding citizens to continue to purchase and own guns and ammunition though in a more limited capacity than they were able to due to changes in California law passed and put into effect in July 2016.

The Left wants to feel safe at any cost . . . even if it means creating a more dangerous environment to do so. Prop 63 is right up their alley. California legislators have been feverishly working overtime to rid citizens of their guns in order to “prevent crime.” But the real tragedy is the fact that this bill would further punish people who are ALREADY OBEYING THE EXISTING LAWS. Prop 63 will not reduce crime but it will pad the pockets of state officials through a new slew of administrative fees and criminal fines.

(Remember how hard the Left campaigned for “commonsense reform” of sentencing laws in 2014? Proposition 47 reduced to a misdemeanor a robbery of less than $950 worth of merchandise. Thus, if a criminal stole a gun valued at less than $950, he would be charged with a misdemeanor. Well, if Prop 63 passes, that same criminal would be charged with a felony. So, if he stole a $700 computer, it’s a misdemeanor. But if he lifts a $300 handgun, it’s a felony. Talk about “justice!”)

While supporters of this measure will point to the “safety” features of the bill, opponents rightly note that this measure is far more punitive toward law-abiding citizens and creates more state-sponsored bureaucracy designed to “generate more income” for the sole purpose of . . . paying the people who work in that agency. I am not a gun-owner but I don’t believe this bill will make anyone any safer. ***I recommend a “NO” vote on Proposition 63.***

**Proposition 64: California Marijuana Legalization Initiative**

* A “yes” vote legalizes the sale of marijuana for recreational use by people age 21 and older under state law. Passage of the measure would also authorize the establishment of certain sales and cultivation taxes.
* A “no” vote keeps current state and federal law in place (cultivation, sale and possession of marijuana except for medicinal purposes is illegal).

Is the legalization of marijuana in California inevitable? Not exactly. Many prominent, influential individuals and organizations on both sides of this argument have weighed in. The “Yes on 64” crowd have raised 9 times as much money in support of this measure as the “No on 64” group have raised to defeat it. And yet, the most recent polls indicate that 51% of us support this, 40% do not, and the other 9% have yet to weigh in.

My perspective: The “war on drugs” has yet to accomplish what it promised. Recreational marijuana use is widespread and the black market for this drug is thriving. Lawmakers are hoping that, by legalizing marijuana for recreational use, they can “contain” this industry and even capitalize on it. Regulations could potentially curb dependency and generate tax revenue.

But what kind of standards are already in place to enforce this law? True, the measure does make it illegal for a driver to “smoke pot while driving.” But what about the person has been “lighting up” for a couple of hours and then decides to hit the convenience store for some munchies? Is there a “breathalyzer” equivalent to determine how “high” a driver may be and still be allowed to drive a car or truck?

A good portion of the tax revenues go back into “prevention programs” which sound a bit suspicious to me. And even though Congressmen like Dana Rohrbacher and Tom McClintock support this bill, Senator Diane Feinstien opposes it (which is another red flag). I suspect that at some point in the future California WILL legalize marijuana use. It may even happen on a federal level during my lifetime. But Prop 64 does not appear to be the means by which it will or should happen in California right now. ***I recommend a “NO” vote on Proposition 64.***

**Proposition 65: Dedication of Revenue from Disposable Bag Sales to Wildlife Conservation Fund**

* A “yes” vote upholds SB 270 (the single-use bag ban) and would redirect funds collected from the sale of carryout bags from grocery or other retail stores to a special fund administered by the Wildlife Conservation Board.
* A “no” vote defeats the bag ban.

**Proposition 67: Plastic Bag Ban Veto Referendum**

* A “yes” vote upholds SB 270 and would direct funds collected from the sale of carryout bags from grocery and other retails stores back to the stores to cover the cost of producing and educating employees on how to create said bags.
* A “no” vote defeats the bag ban

I’m listing both Prop 65 and 67 together because they are attacking the same issue from two slightly different positions. Each measure is sponsored by the same organization (the American Progressive Bag Alliance) which makes me wonder whose side they’re really on. ☺

This whole conversation started back in 2014 when Senate Bill 270, the “Single-Use Carryout Bag Ban,” was passed. Simply put, the measure would have eliminated those flimsy plastic bags used by retailers and required them to be replaced by more “green-friendly” reusable bags. Retailers complained that this measure would hurt their businesses. So that APBA funded a campaign to raise awareness, gather signatures and put this issue to a vote. The end result is Proposition 67 which at least gave us voter/consumers the opportunity to weigh in on whether or not we want a statewide ban on single-use plastic bags.

A key provision in Prop 67 is a “back-up plan” of sorts for its opponents if it does pass. A “yes” vote on Prop 67 upholds the bag ban but insures that the money consumers pay (10 cents per bag) in state-mandated fees for having these bags goes back to the retailer. On the other hand, Prop 65 mandates that those fees be placed in a new special Environmental Protection and Enhancement Fund which in all honesty promises to do very little of either. ☺

If both measures pass, the one with the highest vote total prevails. If both measures are defeated, the same holds true. That’s why ***I recommend a “NO” vote on Proposition 65 AND a “NO” vote on Proposition 67.***

**Proposition 66: Death Penalty Procedures**

* A “yes” vote changes the procedures governing state court appeals and petitions that challenge death penalty convictions and sentences.
* A “no” vote leaves existing law as is.

Prop 66 is the second of two ballot initiatives regarding the death penalty in California. Prop 62 repeals it altogether. Prop 66 amends existing state law but keeps the death penalty in place.

The case for repealing the death penalty is somewhat compelling. Factor in the overall cost to taxpayers of trying, convicting and then housing death row inmates – not to mention the appellate process – and the charges can rack up in a hurry! Very few death row inmates are actually put to death in California (only 13 since 1978) but the Golden State features more than 700 inmates currently awaiting execution. The appellate process is cumbersome. The time limits are unreasonably long. But Prop 66 seeks to change all of that.

A key provision in Prop 66 is in how the appeals process would be handled. The trial court would make the appeal initially and there would be a five-year appellate period (rather than the current 15 years). Death-row inmates would be required to work during their appeal as a means of paying restitution to the families of their victims. Less time on death row brings a financial benefit to the state and reducing anguish for the victims’ families as well.

All in all, the “Amend, Mend but Not End” option makes the most sense. ***I recommend a “YES” vote on Proposition 66*** – and ***I recommend a “NO” vote on Proposition 62.***

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**CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE AND ASSEMBLY RACES**

**NOTE:** Democrats outnumber Republicans 52-28 in the State Assembly so losing any of the 8 seats currently in the balance would be even worse for the state.

**Key Congressional Race of Note:**

* GOP incumbent Darrell Issa might be in for a big surprise in the 49th District come November from challenger Doug Applegate.

**State Senate Races to Follow:**

**District 21** – ***Scott Wilk (R)*** vs Jonathan Levar Ervin (D) (Wilk got 47%; Ervin 33% Wilk should win but will apply pressure to make sure he does. This is an important election because a) current Republican State Senator Sharon Runner is termed out; and b) Wilk is giving up his Assembly seat in the 38th District to run for the State Senate.) Primarily Santa Clarita Valley but also Palmdale, Lancaster, Hesperia, Apple Valley and Adelanto

**District 29** – ***Ling Ling Chang (R)*** got 44%; Josh Newman (D) got 29% but narrowly defeated Democrat challenger Sukhee Kang (26%) Another important Senate seat because Republican Senator Bob Huff is also terming out) Covers Walnut, Cypress and Chino Hills (LA, OC and San Bernardino Counties) so it is very KBRT-friendly

**District 37** – Keeping an eye on John Moorlach’s bid for re-election against Democrat Ari Grayson (it was 55 – 45 in the primaries. Barring any unforeseen scandals he should retain his seat) Orange County district so good for local coverage

**State Assembly Races to Follow:**

**District 12** – Ken Vogel vs Heath Flora (Both Republicans and Vogel narrowly edged Flora out for the second spot. The wildcard in this race is that the next two spots were taken by Democrats and there’s no guarantee how they’ll vote. Will work to see which is the stronger candidate of the two and then support him to fend off any potential damage from disgruntled Dem or Lib/Indy voters. The district covers most of Stanislaus County. Modesto makes up 60% of the voting population. Also covers Turlock, Riverbank and Oakdale – so I’ll put extra effort in on this one to help KCBC with City of license issues)

**District 16** – Republican Catharine Baker took the primary against Democrat Cheryl Cook-Kallio. Baker is up for re-election here and is a bit of an anomaly as a Republican winning in Alameda County so we’ll take up the cause for her.

**District 36** – Republican Tom Lackey is the incumbent and won the primary against 3 Democrat challengers. But if the Dems unite, this could be an extremely tight race for representing the Mohave Desert area.

**District 38** – Democrat Christy Smith won the primary with 44% of the vote but if the GOP can rally behind second-place finisher Dante Acosta, they should have no trouble holding on the Assembly seat just vacated by Assemblyman Scott Wilk (who is running for the State Senate in the 21st District)

**District 40** – Republican incumbent Mark Steinorth lost the primary race to Democrat Abigail Medina by only 700 votes. We’ll work to make sure he wins his seat back. Covers Rancho Cucamonga, Redlands, Highland and parts of San Bernardino (good KBRT coverage area)

**District 55** – Democrat Gregg D. Fritchie won the primary but only because 4 Republicans split 2/3 of the remaining votes. Look for GOP frontrunner Philip Chen to emerge victorious in November (replacing current GOP Assemblywoman Ling Ling Chan who is currently running for the State Senate in District 29. This is Diamond Bar so it’s great KBRT country)

**District 68** – Look for a Republican winner here in November. Democrat Sean Jay Panhi won the primary but only received 32% of the vote. Republicans Steven Choi and Harry Sidhu are neck-and-neck for the second spot on the general election ballot; GOP should unite behind whomever comes out on top of that match-up. This is Don Wagner’s district and he is termed out. (He joined me on The Bottom Line to discuss the recent 40 Days for Life rally at Planned Parenthood in Orange – which is a big part of the 68th District. He is currently running for Mayor of Irvine.)

**District 72** – Republican incumbent Travis Allen faces a tough challenge in November from Democrat Lenore Albert-Sheridan. This another KBRT-friendly district serving Huntington Beach, Garden Grove and Santa Ana