

CTA Positions on Ballot Initiatives in the November 2008 Election

July 14, 2008

YES on Prop. 3 – Children’s Hospital Bond Act of 2008

- Prop. 3 is a statewide bond that provides \$980 million to modernize and expand the state’s children’s hospitals – including the five hospitals on UC campuses – to improve the health, welfare and safety of California’s children.
- California’s network of children’s hospitals provides vital health care services to children facing life-threatening illness or injury – regardless of a family’s ability to pay. These hospitals treat more than a million children with the most serious diseases each year and have increased the survival of children suffering from leukemia, cancer, diabetes, sickle cell anemia, cystic fibrosis and heart defects. Children’s hospitals also provide essential training for pediatricians, medical students and other specialists who treat children.
- Prop. 3 builds on the progress made by a similar bond passed in 2004. The money will be used to expand and renovate existing facilities, purchase state-of-the-art medical equipment to better care for sick kids, and upgrade university research facilities as these hospitals conduct critically important medical research that benefits all of California’s children.

NO (AGAIN!) on Prop. 4 – Protect Teen Safety

- Prop. 4 puts the health and safety of California teenagers at risk. Doctors, pediatricians, nurses and counselors, including the California Medical Association, California Nurses Association and the California Association of School Counselors oppose Prop. 4 because of the health risks it poses for teenage girls.
- Parents rightfully want to be involved in their teenage daughter’s lives, but not all teens live in homes where communication is possible. They come from homes where they can’t talk to their parents because of violence or sexual abuse. Prop. 4 forces these teens to delay or avoid critical medical care.
- Good family communications cannot be imposed by the government. If a teen can’t turn to her family, the most important thing is keeping her safe and providing professional medical care without delay.

- The real answer to teen pregnancy is strong, caring families and comprehensive sex education, including abstinence. Unfortunately, Prop. 4 provides no counseling services and forces our most vulnerable teens to go to court or file a police report before getting medical care.
- CTA policy states that “students have the right to appropriate counseling, guidance, and health services, and to have access to accurate information about themselves, free of negative judgment or bias.”
- California voters overwhelmingly rejected two similar initiatives within the last four years. The only reason Prop. 4 is on the ballot again is because two multi-millionaires with their own personal agenda spent thousands of dollars to buy signatures and qualify the initiative.
- Prop. 4 places these restrictions in the California State Constitution, which would make it impossible to change without another election. We should be fighting for greater and universal access to health care, not supporting health care restrictions.

NO on Prop. 6 – Runner Initiative

- Prop. 6 requires massive new spending as public schools face the worst budget crisis in history and educators organize to stave off cuts to education programs. Prop. 6 worsens the budget crisis by spending almost ONE BILLION dollars each year on ineffective programs that aren’t proven to reduce crime. Prop. 6 takes \$1 billion from the state’s general fund without providing one penny in new revenue, putting funding for schools, colleges, fire protection and effective public safety efforts at risk.
- Prop. 6 would require spending at least a half a billion dollars on new prison construction at a time when California spends four times as much per prisoner than per public school student.
- Prop. 6 would spend billions to put children in jail and keep them there longer as more 14-year-old kids would be tried as adults. That’s money that could be spent on proven programs to reduce crime like education and children’s healthcare. Prop. 6 pours taxpayer money into unproven programs with no real oversight or accountability.
- A large coalition of educators, public safety groups and civil rights organizations have joined to oppose Prop. 6. They include: California Professional Firefighters, California NAACP, Minorities in Law Enforcement, Service Employees International Union and the Children’s Defense Fund.

NO on Prop. 8 – Support *Equality for All*

- CTA believes that all people should be allowed equal protections under the law. California’s Constitution should guarantee the same freedoms and rights to everyone – no one group should be singled out to be treated differently.
- Equal protection under the law is the foundation of American society. In fact, teachers focus on the guarantees of equal protection when teaching history or discussing the Constitution. Prop. 8 mandates one set of rules for gay and lesbian couples and another set of rules for everyone else. That’s not fair. California laws should treat everyone equally.
- CTA policy states that “the legal rights and responsibilities of marriage and civil unions belong to all adults, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, religion or socio-economic status.”
- Marriage equality is about treating everyone’s family fairly. The freedom to marry is fundamental to our society. Gay and lesbian couples should not be singled out for unfair treatment under the laws of our state. Committed and loving couples who want to accept the responsibility that comes with marriage should be treated equally.

NO on Prop. 9 – Nicholas Initiative

- Prop. 9 is a costly, unnecessary and misleading initiative designed to exploit Californian’s concerns for crime victims. It preys on our emotions in order to rewrite the State Constitution in a way that will increase prison overcrowding and cost the state and local counties hundreds of millions of dollars each year.
- All Californians are understandably concerned about safety and sympathetic to crime victims. However, many of the provisions in Prop. 9 – including requirements that victims be notified and heard throughout the legal process – were approved by voters several years ago.
- Prop. 9 promises to stop the early release of criminals. The nonpartisan Legislative Analyst’s Office says this could potentially “amount to hundreds of millions of dollars annually.” But the LAO also points out that “the state does not now generally release inmates early from prison.”
- Prop. 9 was put on the ballot by one wealthy billionaire, Henry Nicolas III, who is now under indictment himself for drug and fraud charges, and is championed by politicians looking to make a name for themselves. According to the Marysville-Yuba City *Appeal-Democrat* newspaper “this initiative is about little more than political grandstanding.”