

Speaker 1 ([00:00:01](#)):

Okay. Hello everyone. Good morning still. Welcome to polus 2024. Can our government meet the moment? I'm Mackenzie Elmer and I'm the environment reporter at Voice of San Diego. And it's great to be here with you today in case you're not familiar with us, voice of San, a nonprofit investigative news organization committed to holding public officials accountable and giving you the public the information you need to be advocates for good government. As a nonprofit, we depend on members and donors and sponsors like you to make our work possible. So thank you for your support. I'd like to take a minute to recognize our sponsors who've helped make politics possible. A special thanks to the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of San Diego for being our partner for a seventh year. Our thanks also to the Quan Band of Cobe I Nation, the United Domestic Workers Union, A A RP, the San Diego Foundation Business for Good Hit Ski Development, the San Diego Municipal Employees Association, and the Asian Business Association, planned Parenthood of the Pacific Southwest Atlantic Group, I'm sorry, Atlantis Group and SD Art Matters, and the Southern California Rental Housing Association.

Speaker 1 ([00:01:11](#)):

We'd also like to recognize KPBS and our new source, our par partners in Public Matters. And we are participating to share content, conversation and events like PFE to ensure all San Diego's understand their opportunity to participate in the democratic process, and that it means more than voting in an election.

Speaker 1 ([00:01:32](#)):

So if you're unable to attend any of the sessions in person, don't worry. We'll be posting the recordings to the politics page of our website next week. Um, we welcome your questions. So just, we have, uh, volunteers that will have a basket with note cards and pens. Just, um, raise your hand and they will bring you one, write your question clearly on a note card. Um, and then they will collect them, uh, to be read. Hopefully we'll try to get through as many as possible. You can also tweet along with the session and share your experience by using hashtag POL 24 on social media. Tag us on Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, whatever you use. Um, now allow me to, oh, also, I'm sorry. Cal Matters, um, has, uh, these fun worksheets they're passing out. So in case you want this to feel more like school on a Saturday, you can, um, play around with those. Um, and then now allow me to introduce our moderators. We have Deborah Brennan from Cal Matters and Voice of San Diego, and we have Wendy Fry, also from Cal Matters, both reporters who are going to educate us on propositions here today. So let me advance your slides.

Speaker 2 ([00:02:43](#)):

Yeah, thank you so much. Um, I am, like she said. I'm Wendy Fry. I am a reporter at Cal Matters, and we are a nonpartisan news site

Speaker 1 ([00:02:52](#)):

Like our friends at Voice of San Diego. We are also non-profit, which means we depend on donations to

Speaker 2 ([00:02:58](#)):

Do our job and also members. Uh, one of the things that we do, I, that's really popular with our readers is our voter guide. And that's what you're getting a little bit of sample of our voter guide that's online, where you can go look up all the propositions. We also have local ballot measures. Depending on where you are, you can type in your location, San Diego and all your local measures will come up a ton of information on that voter guide, like who's for and against each proposition, how much money has been raised on each proposition. So definitely check that out. Uh, if you like what you see there, please consider becoming a member. And, um, we are going to run through. Debra is also colleague. She does half, um, voices in

Diego and Half Cal Matters. We both have a newsletter that we love doing, and we're excited to tell you guys about these ballot measures today. So,

Speaker 3 ([00:03:51](#)):

Okay, so I'm going to start off with proposition two. So on this ballot, there are two blockbuster bond measures, um, both 10, \$10 billion each. The first one, measure two or Proposition two would authorize the state to issue \$10 billion in bonds to build new schools or in fix or upgrade existing schools. Most of that 8.5 billion would go to 2K through 12 schools. Another 1.5 billion would go to community colleges. Um, so campuses have to provide matching grants to get that money. Um, and the spending priorities include removing the lead, upgrading seismic safety, adding air conditioning and broadband access, and building career technical facilities. So these are a lot of nuts and bolts improvements that schools are in need of. Um, so the background on this is that school funding makes up the biggest chunk of the California State General Fund, but that only covers salaries and operational costs.

Speaker 3 ([00:04:52](#)):

It doesn't cover infrastructure, any infrastructure, any construction of new schools, modernization, upgrades needs to be paid through local and state bot. So that's where this comes in. Um, and there's, it's a little bit tricky because wealthier bigger school districts that have a larger property tax base have an easier time passing these bonds. Small, rural, low income school districts find it a little bit harder to get that money, um, through bond measures. Um, so the supporters of this include the California Teachers Association, the Community College League of Californian, and a number of other supporters that you can see in the Cal Matters, uh, ballot measure guide. Um, but those are some of the key ones. And basically what they're saying is that, um, thousands of California schools have leaky roofs, broken gas lines, faulty electrical lines in Fleming, and even lead or asbestos contamination. Um, students need a safe environment to learn and they perform better in clean modern spools.

Speaker 3 ([00:05:59](#)):

Um, so the opponents is basically the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association, and they don't necessarily refute the need for those improvements, but they disagree with the men are paying for it. Um, they say it is, bonds are an extensive way to build infrastructure. It will saddle California taxpayers with billions of dollars of debt for decades to come. And that these, um, improvements should be made through the general fund. Um, of course, that would require a wholesale whole scale, um, change to the way California pays for schools. So that's not on the ballot, but they're saying that the, um, that this isn't the best way to pay for schools. So the ballot measure is asking whether voters want to spend this 10 billion to upgrade California's campuses.

Speaker 2 ([00:06:49](#)):

Cool. And we were gonna talk back and forth a little bit about that was one of the things we were gonna do is just sort of chat about it. So \$10 billion sounds like an astronaut astrological number outta, you know, way a lot, but it doesn't mean that they have to spend it, right? I mean, right. It's gonna be on a ba on a case by case they're authorized to issue these bonds.

Speaker 3 ([00:07:09](#)):

They're, yeah, they're authorized to issue the bonds, and it doesn't actually specify either how much they'll issue or what the repayment rate will be. That depends on the, uh, prevailing interest rates when they issue them.

Speaker 2 ([00:07:22](#)):

Right. And then there's been some restrictions too. And Will and I did a story will Car Less, and I did a story one time for Voice of San Diego about the way they were structuring the bonds, and that's been kind of, um, limited now at the state, I think. So these bonds would be a better repayment structure, I think, for voters than, than they were in the past. Is that, uh,

Speaker 3 ([00:07:41](#)):

That's a good

Speaker 2 ([00:07:42](#)):

Question. Yeah, I have, we'll still check that out. But that's, those are the rundowns on that one. That's good. Yeah.

Speaker 3 ([00:07:48](#)):

Okay. So we're going to go on to next, the next one. Is it Prop five? Prop five. Prop

Speaker 2 ([00:07:55](#)):

Five. Okay. Thank you so much, McKinsey's. Flipping through the things 'cause we didn't put them exactly in order. So, okay. So this one's a big one for San Diego. So, um, prop five local bonds for affordable housing, it makes it easier for local governments to borrow money for affordable and supportive housing, um, and the infrastructure. So that would include, you know, water pro, you know, water lines or public safety facilities, utilities, parks, anything that goes with these new measures historically. Um, to, in order to pass something like this, you'd get, need to get two thirds of voters to approve for it. This would, this ballot measure says that we should lower the threshold from the number of people who approve the bond from two thirds voters to 55%. So it would still need more than a majority, but, um, the threshold is gonna be lowered.

Speaker 2 ([00:08:44](#)):

Um, so an earlier version of this measure that they tried to, tried to put forward to voters, uh, included also local taxes, sales tax, parcel tax, however they negotiated. And they, they eliminated those two, the tax and, um, the parcel taxes and scaled it back to only including bond measures. So it's been limited a little bit. The people that are in support or the organizations that are in support of this are the California State Building Construction Trades, California Housing Partnerships, and California Ybi. Um, and they, their argument for it is that it's undemocratic basically to allow a third of voters to hold up these projects that might, might bring more affordable housing. Obviously there's a huge housing crisis in the state, and they don't want, you know, a third of the voters to hold up these Public Works projects, um, or hold them hostage basically.

Speaker 2 ([00:09:38](#)):

Uh, and then Prop five would give local governments kind of more control over when they pass a bond measure. Uh, and the opponents of this are the California Chamber of Commerce, the Howard Jarvis Taxpayer Association, the National Federation of Indie Business. Um, and they, uh, of independent businesses, sorry, <laugh>. Um, so California, their argument against this is that California already has half a trillion dollars in state and local debt. And this measure could increase property taxes, um, it could hurt homeowners and the local economy businesses. Um, so those are the four. And against, uh, the spending on this, the spending on this is kind of interesting. So, um, one of the organizations that was against it in the beginning, because they had the local sales, the local tax included has since changed their position to neutral. But before they changed their position to neutral, they donated a bunch of money to the campaign to defeat it.

Speaker 2 ([00:10:38](#)):

And so this, the, the amount of money that's been raised, it's like 5,000,004 and like 30 million against. However, because the, I think it was the California Realtors Association changed their position. So now, you know, taking them out of the equation, they had given 19 million. So taking them out of the equation, it's probably about 5 million to 4 million or so as far as the spending or the amount that's been raised to defeat it. Uh, and according to a poll by the, um, public Policy Institute ca of California, it's very close. The amount of likely voters that support it is 49%. And the amount, uh, 50% are against it right now.

Speaker 3 ([00:11:20](#)):

Yeah. And this has kind of an interesting local angle as well. The San Diego City Council had considered floating a local bond measure to improve storm water systems to prevent the kind of flooding that occurred this last winter. But they pulled that because, um, it because there was another ballot measure that would've, um, affected this. And, and under the current circumstances, they didn't feel like they'd be able to pass it.

Speaker 2 ([00:11:50](#)):

Right. So this could have a lot of impact locally, basically is this is something that the city of Cal, San Diego has wanted to put forward to be able to clear out Joyous Creek and prevent the kind of flooding that we saw during the storms this past winter.

Speaker 3 ([00:12:04](#)):

Okay.

Speaker 2 ([00:12:05](#)):

We can move on to the next one.

Speaker 3 ([00:12:06](#)):

Yes. So, um, we're gonna move on to proposition three, the constitutional right to merit. Um, so what this does, it amends the California constitution to recognize the right to marry regardless of sex or race. And it removes language in the California Constitution defining marriage as a legal union of a man and a woman. Um, so this is basically a redo, um, of Prop eight, which was a 2008 state ballot measure that defines marriage as solely between a man and a woman. So, um, if, as you may recall from that era, if some of you probably worked holding up to be following it at the time, but many of us work, um, the, that was part of a complicated period in California history in which same-sex marriage was outlawed, briefly legalized following a state Supreme Court decision, outlawed again, and, um, banned when Proposition eight passed, shutting down same-sex marriage in California for years.

Speaker 3 ([00:13:07](#)):

Um, then in 2015, the Supreme Court legalize the sex marriage making California's ban moot. So fast forward to 2022 when the new conservative majority on the Supreme Court overturned federal abortion protections when it reversed Roe v Wade. Now, that didn't specifically affect same sex marriage, but it raised a lot of concerns that the court would revisit earlier decisions on privacy and due process rights. And in fact, justice Clarence Thomas argued in a concurring opinion that the court should review its rulings on contraception and same-sex marriage. So Prop three would preempt that by enshrining marriage rights in the California State Constitution, um, supporters include a CLU Planned Parenthood League of Women Voters. A number of healthcare and civil rights organizations are for this. Um, and their argument is that it removes discriminatory language from the California Constitution and reinforces California's commitment to marriage equality and the ability to marry the person you choose.

Speaker 3 ([00:14:13](#)):

Um, they say it would also signal California's commitment to support its L-G-B-T-Q Community. Community. Um, opponents, uh, include the California Family Council and the American Council of Evangelicals. Um, they say legalizing same-sex marriage could open the door to child marriages or polygamy. Now to be clear, that's not on the ballot. That is not part of this proposition. Um, so that's not what you're voting on. Um, but there's group, these groups are predicting that could happen down the line if, um, same sex marriage is officially enshrined in the Constitution. Um, they also argue that it's already legal, so it doesn't need to be, um, it doesn't need to be changed in the Constitution. Um, and then the funding for this includes, um, about nearly 3 million in support of it and no committees identified against it as, uh, the 17th.

Speaker 2 ([00:15:13](#)):

I'm definitely old enough to remember that. I think that was one of the first stories I covered as a reporter is going down to they were, uh, same sex couples were getting the licenses from the county to get married, and there was a protest, and I remember, um, when this was still a fight. Um, but yeah, so it's interesting that, uh, a lot of people might think like, what do we need this for? Right? We've, this has been going on, and what do we need to kind of codify it? But it's to the point of the Supreme Court could do whatever they want at some point.

Speaker 3 ([00:15:42](#)):

Yeah. It, it went back and forth for a few years there, and there were some people who married during that brief hiatus who, um, were kind of grandfathered in. But then after that, there was about seven years during which, um, people could not, um, formalize same sex marriages. So people are saying, this needs to be changed. It's outdated, discriminatory language in the Constitution, and it needs to be updated. Um,

Speaker 2 ([00:16:07](#)):

Cool. All right. And so I think we're, we're moving through these fast because there's a lot of propositions. So we wanted to leave enough time for questions and stuff. I think the next one, are we gonna prep six next? Yeah, yeah. Thank you, McKenzie. Okay. So this, uh, proposition six, this is part of a proposition that came out of the recommendations of the state reparations task force that I've been covering a lot for several years. Um, and, uh, it would amend the California Constitution to remove rules that allow jails and prisons to use forced labor. So basically, it's one of the last vestiges of slavery that's allowed in the con. The Constitution says, the California constitution says, um, you know, we do not allow slavery except for as punishment of a crime. And so, um, the reparations task force recommended that that language be removed.

Speaker 2 ([00:16:58](#)):

Uh, one of the arguments is like, how can we atone for the past of if we're not willing to like, make sure it's not happening right now? Um, and so it would prohibit discipline for inmates who refuse to work in the state prison systems. Um, and, uh, uh, again, this is aimed at sort of remedying the harms that, uh, California perpetuated for of slavery. And the state wasn't a slave state, as you probably know, but it does have a very big history of racial discrimination. And it allows jails and prisons to force inmates to work often for free or very, very minimal pay in jobs that are actually pretty dangerous. Like one of them is fighting fires, wildfires. Um, other states have banned forced prison labor. And the idea here is that they would, um, create like a voluntary system for people to work in the jails and prisons, and you would get credits or points or good behavior, different kind of incentive programs rather than, uh, rather than forcing a punishment or having to go to solitary confinement or something for refusing to do your job.

Speaker 2 ([00:18:01](#)):

Uh, the supporters of this, uh, as are the ACL U, the California Legislative Black Caucus, this is one of the bills that they backed in their 14 priority package, um, to start the process of reparations for California. Uh, also the anti Recidivism C Coalition, uh, and their argument is Prop six inns a last vestige of slavery and allows prisoners to turn down dangerous work that doesn't contribute anything to their future job skills. Uh, the opponents would be the Har Howard Jarvis Taxpayer Association, and they don't have any official, um, opposition statement, but they have, there has been lawmakers who have said that it would be too costly to pay inmates minimum wage. So that's why they negotiated this to create a voluntary program instead of, at one point the Department of Finance had come up against it, 'cause they said it would cost 11.5 billion to pay inmates a minimum wage, but so they negotiated this to more of a voluntary type program where people can get incentives, but there's still some lawmakers who say it'll make it harder for prison wardens to manage prisons or people, you know, correctional officers to manage people.

Speaker 2 ([00:19:09](#)):

Um, spending for this, uh, this is, we were just, I was just talking to my editor about this too, that there hasn't been a bunch one way or another, people, you know, supporting or trying to get people to vote yes or no on this. But the spending has been, um, uh, 955,004 zero against a statewide poll of likely voters by the PPIC says 46% of likely voters are, uh, planning to vote yes. And 50% are planning are, are a no on this measure at this point. Um, and just one more point about it is, like, of the 90,000 inmates in the state prison system, uh, about 40,000 of them are doing jobs like construction work, cooking, cleaning. They run the prison through that way, but the firefighting is also kind of a big, um, big part of this. They, uh, most earn 74 cents an hour. The inmate firefighters earn about \$10 a day.

Speaker 3 ([00:20:13](#)):

So one of the que one of the questions about this too is, um, or one of the justifications for prison labor is that it gives people skills they can use outside. But some of the, um, inmates and their advocates say that that's not really the case, that they're given hard, dirty jobs that don't really build their skills. What, what can you tell us about that? Right. So,

Speaker 2 ([00:20:33](#)):

So definitely with the firefighting, I've been actually going through all the corrections emails for a couple months. I figured I got this huge dump of public records of like thousands and thousands of emails from the California Department of Corrections. And one of the things you see in there is like, you know, somebody will be sick and not feel like fighting a fire that day. You know, like, that's, that's very hard, heavy, sweaty, difficult, hard labor, right? And they'll have some kind of punishment or they'll be put, you know, it's, it's kind of like a retaliation that they aren't able to go do that hard job for the day. And then again, like you said, it's, uh, some of the jobs are, you know, cooking that might, you might be able to get a job as a cook after you get out of being incarcerated. But, um, it sort of depends on a lot of different factors in the system of who gets assigned to what job. And so, yeah, it could be very difficult work for the day or for long term.

Speaker 3 ([00:21:26](#)):

Yeah, and you brought up the point too, that, um, people are, um, disciplined or punished for not working when they're sick or when it's a dangerous situation. So that's one of the other concerns. It's not just that they aren't doing their job, but they are protesting the conditions under which they're required to work.

Speaker 2 ([00:21:43](#)):

Yeah, and I think the other really super big point, sorry, not to belabor this one. This is just the one that I've studied the most because I've been covering it, is just, you know, uh, because there's been this effort

at reparative justice, um, the lawmakers, the California Legislative Black Caucus and the lawmakers who are trying to put forward reparations legislation has said, you know, how can we say we wanna repair this past thing when we're still sort of allowing this forced labor to go on in our state? So that's a, it's sort of a little bit symbolic as well.

Speaker 3 ([00:22:14](#)):

Okay. So our next ballot measure is proposition for, um, which covers drinking water, wildfire, and climate response. Um, so this is another big ballot measure, another big bond measure that's on this year's ballot. Um, it would authorize 10 billion in general obligation funds for water wildfire prevention and protection of public land. Um, of that, about half would go to water and wildfire, 3.8 billion would go to improve water quality and protect California from floods and droughts to help stave off the water prices that's been worsened by climate change. Um, another 1.95 billion would pay to prevent wildfires, which have also become more frequent and destructive as the result of climate change. Um, the rest would protect parks, wildlife, coastal areas, estuaries and ocean resources and support, clean energy development and agriculture. So it's kind of a big grab bag of additional, um, uses for that bond money. Um, so background on this is, um, governor Gavin Newsom has made climate action one of his signature issues.

Speaker 3 ([00:23:26](#)):

He has since he came into office, he has championed renewable energy, electric vehicles and the like, but this year he scaled back some of the funding for that in order to cut back the states, um, projected \$68 billion deficit. Um, so as part of that, he slashed 9 billion from a 54 billion climate action package that the state legislature had previously approved. So, proponents of this bond measure say this would backfill this, that would help fill that gap. Um, and so there's wide agreement that California's infrastructure is in need of a makeover. Um, California's biggest water investment, the state water project began construction in the 1950s. So the state really hasn't had a big investment in water for about half a century. Um, and a lot of proponents argue that the, the state needs to update it to cha to adjust to changing patterns of precipitation and snow melt that also are the result of climate change.

Speaker 3 ([00:24:31](#)):

Um, wildfires have also gotten worse, um, and 7 million acres of burn in California over the past decade. So people are, so, the proponents say we need to put some major resources into preventing those or fighting those or preparing for them. Um, supporters include the National Wildlife Federation, California Professional Fire Firefighters, and Clean Water Action. Um, so they point out that about 1 million Californians lack safe drinking water, and more than half the state's, rivers and streams are polluted. Um, so spending money to improve water resources and prevent wildfire, saves money and protects California in the long run. Um, and protects the cal the residents of California as well. From those, those harms. Um, the bonds would cover infrastructure for water recycling, stormwater capture, and desalination of brackish water, um, which are always of expanding the existing sources of freshwater. Um, the opponents, again, is, includes the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association, as well as, um, state senate minority leader Brian Jones, uh, a San Diego lawmaker here. Um, again, they say that bonds are the most expensive way to fund public works projects and that these programs should be built into the general fund. And then, um, spending on this has been, um, 690 million, 690,000 in support and no committees in opposition. So this one hasn't attracted a lot of financing.

Speaker 2 ([00:26:11](#)):

The only thing I wonder about it too, though, is like, we have how many water districts in the state. We have like all these, some, some water districts that are super tiny, right? That, and then yet we still have so many people, more than a million, did you say, without safe drinking water in the state of California, you

just, it really makes you shake your head as far as you know, where you have like the sixth or the fifth largest economy in the world. And we have people who can't just turn on their faucet and drink water. It's,

Speaker 3 ([00:26:35](#)):

Yeah, exactly. There's just shy of 40 million Californians. So that means, um, more than 2% of people in the state don't have safe drinking water. So clearly, um, most parties can agree that's a problem. Um, but there just hasn't been the money to make those upgrades. Cool.

Speaker 2 ([00:26:56](#)):

Okay. And then going on, I think this is the next 1, 32. Are we doing, or Yeah. Is the next okay. Yeah. So raise the minimum wage. This one you probably have heard a lot about already. Um, this one raises the state minimum wage for employers with 26 or more employees. It raises it to \$17 now and 18 in 2025 for employers with 25 or fewer. It is 17 in 2025, 18 in 2026, uh, the state has adopted minimum wage increases. I'm sure you've heard of this, uh, 15 an hour in 2022, and then that rose to 16 an hour this year. Uh, and that's more than twice the federal minimum wage. But of course, that's offset by, we all all know that it's, there's a very huge cost of living in California. Um, fast food workers received that \$20 an hour for minimum wage and healthcare workers on April 1st, uh, or they're actually eventually 'cause the state they work supposed to get us, uh, a minimum wage increase to \$25.

Speaker 2 ([00:27:53](#)):

And the state has put that off. Um, and inflation again, has made those wage increases, not quite as, as big as they originally had seen. Uh, this one's the one that's interesting because both sides are arguing inflation. You know, ev the supporters and the opponents both say the inflation's a big problem. They just view it differently as far as, um, so the supporters, the California Labor Federation, one Fair wage, the California Democratic Party, uh, many minimum wage earners are the heads of their households, and they can't, uh, earn enough to support themselves or their families, um, even if they are working full time. And so supporters of this argue that it'll boost the local economy, give people more money in their pocket to spend, uh, opponents of this or the California Chamber of Commerce, the California Restaurant Association, um, and the California Growers Association. And they are also argue, they say that raising the minimum wage worsens inflation, um, and that the extra costs that the businesses have, they are gonna go ahead and pass those onto consumers, uh, to, you know, restaurant goers, people who are eating out and that small businesses suffer when this happens.

Speaker 2 ([00:29:00](#)):

So, um, this has been an ongoing debate throughout, you know, California for a long time, according to MIT living wage calculator, a person living in the cheapest county in, in California would need at least 20 to make at least \$20 and 32 cents an hour just to, for the basics. So that's just to barely get by. Um, support, uh, campaign four has raised 609, 600 and 609,000 and against its 65,000, uh, the PPIC poll of likely voters, it's a very close race on this one. Again, it's 50% of likely voters say they support this. 49% say they do not. Um, this, again, this has been something, they had this for years going on of, of the minimum wage and raising it. And so, um, that when it first started happening, there was all this, oh, everything's gonna close. All these restaurants are gonna close. But I don't think we've seen that happen as they've raised the minimum wage. So, um,

Speaker 3 ([00:29:59](#)):

Yeah, so it's interesting that both sides of this argument are playing the inflation card. So the proponents say we need a higher minimum wage to, um, keep up with inflation so that people who are relying on these minimum wage jobs can afford to live in the state. And the opponents are saying this will worsen inflation, it will raise costs for everyone and force businesses to close or eliminate jobs.

Speaker 2 ([00:30:26](#)):

So you guys get to decide on that, how you wanna vote. Um, the next one, do we, are we

Speaker 3 ([00:30:32](#)):

35? This is healthcare spending. Um, this one is pretty straightforward. It regulates how the state spends money from a healthcare plan. So the state taxes, healthcare plans, and then this would, uh, govern how it uses that money. It would require the state to spend the money on medical services for low income Californians and people with disabilities. And it prevents the state from using the tax revenue to replace existing Medi-Cal funding. So they can't just back take this tax money and backfill it and then spend existing Medi-Cal money on something else. They would have to augment what they're spending on Medi-Cal. Um, so about a third of Californians use Medi-Cal for healthcare, but payments to medical providers have flatlined. Um, because of that, many healthcare providers won't treat Medi-Cal patients. So even though people have coverage, they find it hard to get a doctor to see them or get an appointment.

Speaker 3 ([00:31:29](#)):

Um, a group of doctors, hospitals and clinics put this issue on the ballot in hopes of raising reimbursement rates and making healthcare, um, access, um, improved, um, supporters include the California Medical Association, the California Hospital Association, California Dental Association. They say Prop 35 will reduce the months long wait time to see doctors prevent the closure of healthcare and clinics and reduce overcrowding of emergency rooms. Um, there's also been a lot of coverage recently about the closure of maternity wards in California. So that's, uh, another important healthcare issue. Um, and this measure is in the unusual position of receiving support from both political parties. Um, there are no, uh, official opponents that are listed with the Secretary of State, but Governor Gavin Newsom has signaled that he's not in favor of it. He, um, he said it hamstrings, the state's budgeting efforts and its flexibility during a period of deficit, and that it would, um, limit future legislatures from using money, tax money as they think is best. Um, the total amount reported for this, um, in support of this was 48.4 million. So, um, raised the, the amount raised in support of this was for was more than 48 million. Um, there are no opposition committees identified, so there's no official fundraising against it.

Speaker 2 ([00:32:57](#)):

Yeah, and I don't have a comment about this specific, specific ballot measure, but it just made me think, um, so we have this amazing data journalist Jeremiah, who pulls all this data from the Secretary of State, and he is developed a system to go through all the committees and find the committees and pull it all into one spot where you can just look up on our website on the voter guide, how much has been raised for or against. So that's a really cool tool. Um, and a lot of reporters, even not Cal Matters, are using it. So definitely check that out. If you're wondering how much money has been going this year has been less than years past. Um, but there still is a lot of money going into these campaigns. Yeah.

Speaker 3 ([00:33:32](#)):

And typically it's, it can be confusing to go through the Secretary of State database and try to pull all the funding on your own because it's categorized in different ways that make it sort of labor intensive and confusing. So it's great to have that resource where it's all in one place and easily accessible.

Speaker 2 ([00:33:51](#)):

And then I think we're going to prop 33 next. This is the one that has made, I think, the strange political bedfellows. Um, and it's also like, this is the third time a charm maybe, possibly, or is the third time a charm for this one? Uh, because it's been on your ballot, uh, several times, several different times. It would repeal an older law that limits rent control and allow, that's a very like, uh, important word there,

that it would allow cities to impose rent control. They wouldn't have to, but they could on any rental units, um, including single family homes and new apartments. So the background on this is that there's that co uh, Costa Haw law, the 1995 law that limits how cities can impose rent control. Right now, cities can't set it on single family homes or apartments that were built before in 1995.

Speaker 2 ([00:34:39](#)):

Uh, as we all know and have all probably felt that the housing costs are soaring in California, 30% of Californian spend more than half of their income on rent, which you're not supposed to do. You're supposed to only spend like less than a quarter of it. Uh, uh, Debra checked out the median income, uh, or the median apartment rent in San Diego, and it was more than \$3,000 a month, uh, median average just to rent, you know, a regular apartment that's per Zillow. So that is a ton of money. You'd have to make a ton of money to live here in San Diego. Um, the supporters are housing now tenants together, consumer watchdog. Uh, and that, that, that was their argument is that, you know, I I I think everybody involved in this debate agrees that more affordable housing is needed. I think that discrepancy here, or the disagreement or the thing that's being fought is what is the best way to get that affordable housing.

Speaker 2 ([00:35:31](#)):

The opponents of this, the California Small Business Association, the California Rental Housing Association, very oddly Senator Tony Atkins, um, are opposed to this. Uh, they, they say that it discourages developers from building new housing and it's gonna hurt, um, small mom and pop landlords. And I actually, I checked with, um, Senator Atkins before this to see, 'cause I wanted to make sure that I had exactly like exactly what her opposition was to it. And she said, um, that she, that, well, I'll look at it exactly so that I have it exactly what she said. And I don't mis misquote by memory, but I think it was about, um, allowing cities to, uh, skirt state housing law. So let me just read exactly what, 'cause I wanna make sure I get this right 'cause it was surprising to me that, okay, uh, the language in this measure can undo and allow cities to not follow state housing law.

Speaker 2 ([00:36:24](#)):

It could undo a decade of critical work to actually build more housing. So that was what her opposition. Um, so it's sort of created like these strange, you know, uh, bedfellows in politics you don't normally see, um, side, uh, demo. Such a strong Democrat citing with Republicans on an issue like this. Four is 41 million and against 67 million. So 67 million has been raised to defeat the Measure 41 to get it through voters. Um, like I said, apor, an important clarification is cities aren't gonna be required to set that rent control. It's just gonna lift an old law that keeps 'em from doing it. Now, uh, according to the P-P-I-C-A statewide pool of likely voters, 51% are currently in favor. 46% are no, and 3% are undecided right now.

Speaker 3 ([00:37:15](#)):

So that's obviously one of the hot button issues for funding. Those are some of the biggest numbers in terms of, um, campaign contributions for against that. That's obviously attracting a lot of attention from well, well-heeled donors.

Speaker 2 ([00:37:29](#)):

Right? And like I said, this has been on your ballot, I think two times in the past, and this is the third time. So the people, the backers of this have tried to, tried to get it through several times and have not been successful yet. Um, so it'll be interesting, definitely interesting to see if it gets through this time.

Speaker 3 ([00:37:45](#)):

So do you wanna go straight to Prop 35, since that's kind of the 34th?

Speaker 2 ([00:37:49](#)):

Th 34th is the like companion one, right? The person? Oh, yeah, yeah. So the, okay, so, and the, so there's like a little grudge match going on between 34 and 30, I mean 33 and 34. Um, the people that are against 33 have put forward this proposition 34 on prescription drug revenues that requires certain providers to spend 98% of their revenues from federal discount prescription drug programs on direct patient care. So, um, also it authorizes statewide negotiation, negotiation of Medi-Cal drug prices. So it's a, um, fight between state politicians and Michael Weinstein, uh, who's the president of the Los Angeles based AIDS Healthcare Foundation. So he's been a player in this state rent control efforts for many years. He's been, he's behind Prop 33, and the opponents say that he's using these revenues that he's getting from the Federal discount program to put to, to back this measure to try to get the rent control through. Um, and in a kind of the implication in kind of an improper way. So they're, he's using this revenue that he gets from the Federal Discount Drug Program to fund his political crusades and instead of caring for patients with aids, right? So that's what, um,

Speaker 3 ([00:39:06](#)):

That's what the

Speaker 2 ([00:39:07](#)):

People that are putting forward Prop 34 are saying. Um, and they are pointing to news reports that say Weinstein's arguing for rent control when his own foundation. I think there was a story just this week from Liam Dylan who, you know, he, he, his own foundation is operating its own substandard rental units. So they say that he could start with his own, own buildings and, and put, um, better, better apartments for his own tenants. Um, he says that this measure is just a political hit job, right? That they're just doing this targeting just him. Um, and it's backed by corporate landlords to silent his rent control efforts and his patient advocacy. Um, for 34, the supporters are California Apartment Association, the a LS Association, the Howard Jarvis Taxpayer Association. They argue that the federal government gives drug discounts to healthcare providers on the agreement that they use that revenue that they earn to care for patients and not to, uh, you know, put forward ballot measures.

Speaker 2 ([00:40:08](#)):

Um, the measure would provide accountability to make sure that they do that. Uh, the opponents are his, his <laugh>, as you would imagine, his own foundation, his AIDS healthcare foundation is against this and consumer watchdog. Um, they say that this measure is just directed at his one organization at the AIDS Healthcare Foundation, and it seeks to weaponize the initiative process, uh, to punish his nonprofit for trying to lower housing costs. So this one's pretty comp, I mean, these two together, it's a, it's pretty complicated. 'cause you might, you know, any voter, you, you, you, you, you might feel one way about an organization using the revenues they get from Federal Discount drug programs. Um, you know, but not necessarily agree with not lowering rates. So, um, for it, the campaign for it is 26.8 million against it is 1.14 million polling data. 53%, yes. 43%, no, 4% undecided.

Speaker 3 ([00:41:03](#)):

So it looks like there's a decent, the reasonable majority of Californians who want to see rent controls in place, who wanna see rents stabilized, at least from their current astronomical levels. Yeah,

Speaker 2 ([00:41:16](#)):

Yeah. It's just a disagreement over how to get there. And then on this one, also like it looks like, yeah, 53% are in favor of limiting how much of the revenues are spent on actual direct patient care versus putting forward ballot measures.

Speaker 3 ([00:41:31](#)):

So, um, our final ballot measure will be Prop 36, um, that concerns retail theft and drug crimes. So if you were in the earlier recession in this room, that was entirely about Prop 36, you probably got a very thorough, um, understanding of what's at stake there and what the arguments are. But this is kind of the CliffNotes version. Um, so it does a bunch of things. It adds fentanyl to laws against trafficking hard drugs. It allows judges to impose longer sentences and send large scale drug dealers to state prison instead of county jail. Um, it reinstates strict penalties for dealers whose drugs kill or seriously harm a person. And it, um, as was discussed in the previous session, one of the big, um, features is that it authorizes court ordered mandated treatment programs for people convicted of drug events. So they can choose whether they, the, the judge can force them to choose whether they want to accept a felony offense with incarceration or go through treatment.

Speaker 3 ([00:42:36](#)):

Um, it also, so part of it deals with drug crimes. The other big part deals with what are called smash and grab robberies in shoplifting. So it allows judges to impose felony charges by combining smaller thefts that together total more than 950, 900 \$50 or thefts committed by groups of people. So several people are operating together to steal more than \$950 worth of merchandise. Um, they can be charged with felonies for that, even if their individual, um, thefts are less than that threshold. Um, so it basically combines two issues, the theft and robberies with the drug crimes. Um, so Prop 36, as you may have heard, seeks to reverse the 2014 ballot measure Prop 47, which downgraded some drug and theft crimes from felonies to misdemeanors. And the goal was to reduce prison overcrowding. Um, shoplifting and commercial robberies rose in the following years. Um, that's why you see razors in medicine locked up behind glass at pharmacies.

Speaker 3 ([00:43:43](#)):

Although there was some dispute between the two panelists and the last panel about how much they really rose and where they're at now, particularly in San Diego. Um, meanwhile, deaths from fentanyl poisoning also soared, um, as the potent opioid was added to street drugs. Um, recently there's been a few news reports like literally within the last week or so that say that for the first time in many years, they've seen a little bit of a decline. So there's some hope that, that, that trend may be, um, on its way out. But this would, um, reinstate stricter penalties to try to, um, prevent fentanyl sources from getting into the streets. Um, the supporters are big retailers such as Walmart, target and Home Depot, and a bunch of law enforcement groups, the California District Attorney's Association, California Correctional Peace Officers Association, and California Chamber of Commerce. Um, they say that Prop 36 offers a graduated approach to sentencing, theft, and drug crimes.

Speaker 3 ([00:44:46](#)):

Um, district attorneys such as Summer Stepan here in San Diego, say it gives judges and prosecutors some leeway. They can, um, decide to, um, those harsher charges or sentences on habitual criminals, but offer some second or third chances to occasional offenders. So they have, they say this gives them the flexibility to look at the individual circumstances of, um, the person who's being charged as well as what, what crimes they committed and decide where that falls on the spectrum of, uh, misdemeanors and felonies. Um, and they also stress that by, um, by requiring mandated direct treatment sentences, it can force people to get help before addiction that they wouldn't seek Cal four on their own. Um, deponents include Governor Gavin Newsom, the ACLU of Northern California, the Alliance for Safety and Justice. Um, if they argue that Prop 36 would mark a return to the field or on drugs, it would increase prison populations without necessarily addressing the root causes of why these crimes are committed or, or, or why people become addicted.

Speaker 3 ([00:45:58](#)):

Um, uh, they say it would raise costs by putting more people in prison and, um, restoring the incarceration cause. Um, and it would also reduce money that had previously been dedicated to, um, treatment programs and, uh, restorative program for crime victims. Um, because the money that was saved from the prison, um, the reduction in prison populations was mandated to be dedicated to schools, um, treatment programs and, uh, restitution for crime victims. So they're saying, if, if, if we're putting more people in prison, were saving less money, less of that money goes to these, um, social service programs that we want and need to re reduce these problems.

Speaker 2 ([00:46:49](#)):

Yeah, this one's like definitely one of the ones that's pulling more on emotional heartstrings, right? Because you have the mothers that are out there saying, you know, that they want people who have sold their children fentanyl to be prosecuted. And that's like a very big emotional argument. But I think what we heard in the last session, definitely from Attorney Joe's, right, is like to really look at, is it gonna do what, you know, is it gonna do what it says? And the thing that I was very surprised to hear too is her say that, you know, they do have the authority to, to, to put all these cases together and charge a bigger case if they wanted to. They're just not, um, sort of 'cause they wanna see prop 47 fail, I think is the, the point that she was, you know, that was the argument that she was making.

Speaker 2 ([00:47:29](#)):

Um, so, and then the other, the other emotional heart strength thing that they have too is, I mean, I'm sure like everyone in this room has gone into a CVS or a Target at some point and wanted to get some kind of personal care item and it's locked up behind A-A-A-A-A case. And, and, and I think the proponents of it like kinda want you to blame, you know, and say, ah, if you don't want this stuff locked up, you've gotta vote this way on Prop 36. But I think it was very interesting the last panel, maybe if you didn't catch it, watch it online just to, to hear if it's actually going to make the changes or if we're just kind of going back to the period of where we had war on war on crime warrant drugs.

Speaker 3 ([00:48:06](#)):

Yeah. And it was interesting because she, she was saying that the changes this makes are already within their authority. Um, the other thing that she brought up that was kind of a argument between them and I don't think it was resolved was, are these crimes becoming more common because, um, they're not being reported and they're just kind of allow it out, allowed to continue without being, um, enforced? Or are they becoming more rampant because police officers and sheriff's deputies aren't responding when they get the calls? So that's, that's kind of a big question that's, that's not exactly resolved in this measure and would require a deeper dive into the data. Um, and then another big issue that came up in that first panel that's worth considering is, is regards to the mandated treatment. So this would provide people with the option to seek treatment instead of going to jail or prison. But, um, both parties acknowledge there just isn't enough money for treatment programs right now. So that's gonna be a struggle. Whether or not this passes,

Speaker 2 ([00:49:14](#)):

I think we're done, we're done with all of 'em. You guys made it through. Congratulations. Thank you. Thank you for bearing with us through all of that heavy information.

Speaker 3 ([00:49:25](#)):

So, um, we're gonna open questions now. So I'm going to introduce our Aaron Price fellow. Um, you may, you've probably all gotten cards and if you had a question you could write on the card to pass it to

our host and, uh, moderators. Um, we're gonna have one verbal question and that will be from the Aaron Price Fellow, um, whose name I wrote down here, max. Max who's gonna come up and give the que and ask the first question, um, the, each year, the Aaron Price Fellows program selects 40 kind, inquisitive, open-minded ninth graders from a pool of 300 applicants for a three-year journey. They go behind the scenes to see how cities function, explore the role of community members in shaping society and develop empathy and skills for navigating a diverse world. The program is a high school leadership experience, started in 1991 by the Price family. Um, the mission of the Price Fellows program is to prepare a highly motivated and diverse group of San Diego public high school students to be responsible, engaged, and caring members of their community. Today there are over 1000 Aaron Price Fellows alumni with 500 locally carrying out the mission of the program by making a difference in their families, careers, and communities. So please welcome Max to ask the first question.

Speaker 4 ([00:50:50](#)):

Ellen, hello and thank you for that wonderful introduction. My name is Max Gaon and I am a senior at San Diego High School. As you mentioned, California voters have shut down proposition 33 twice already. What's different with housing this year that makes this legislation especially impactful? That might mean the measure passes.

Speaker 2 ([00:51:10](#)):

Yes. Thank you so much for the question. So, um, like I said, we do have, we have seen soaring rents that's been going on for a long time in California. I think this year also you're seeing sort of more media attention, more news coverage at least. Uh, we've done, uh, a few big stories about the corporate landlords. So these big huge giant private equity fund, Blackstone, gray graystar, um, huge funds that are coming in, buying in up a lot of, uh, apartments and then, uh, in some cases using, uh, software that sets the price for the apartment. So it used to be if you had an apartment complex that you had to get every empty built, any empty unit rented right away, like you didn't want, want a unit to sit there empty. Now they have a software that tells them exactly when, and they can leave it on the market until it's, it's a good time to, to rent it to someone at \$3,300 for a tiny little apartment.

Speaker 2 ([00:52:06](#)):

And so I think you're seeing more of the influence of corporate landlords. I will say, even though Atkins is against this measure, I know for sure that she's very much against these corporate landlords. 'cause she worked with us on the story a whole lot. Um, and so I think that the disagreement is what is the best way to address that to how, is there a rent? Is it rent control or is it, I mean, I think the Department of Justice is looking into this, the the real page company, the the price setting software company. But, um, yeah, so that is the decision before voters is how is the best way to, to address these soaring rents that have kind of gotten outta control.

Speaker 3 ([00:52:42](#)):

Rent control would also apply to single family homes, people renting, not an apartment, but, uh, a single, uh, family home. And there's also been some attention paid to, um, what some people call, um, build to rent developments where a subdivision of homes is built and immediately bought up by one of these equity firms that rents it. So they never go on the market for, um, individual homeowners to buy. And that kind of puts a choke hold on the housing supply because you have people who want to go buy their own home and move into it, but there isn't enough supply at a reasonable price for them to buy, which then drives up apartment red. So it's a kind of complex, busiest environment in which this is occurring

Speaker 1 ([00:53:27](#)):

Only.

Speaker 2 ([00:53:28](#)):

And definitely if you guys have any other questions, we have a lot of detailed information on our Bodo guide. Um,

Speaker 1 ([00:53:33](#)):

So okay, well we still have 20 minutes left. Okay. So I have a number of questions here from the audience and more incoming. Um,

Speaker 2 ([00:53:43](#)):

And we don't have to do all of them. We can go early to

Speaker 1 ([00:53:45](#)):

Lunch and let's no, we're staying through lunch <laugh>. Okay. I'm not precisely sure which prop this was referring to. You guys are the experts, but they were just generally asking how do the new bonds perhaps prop five. Yeah. Affect the taxpayer? Is the effect evenly spread or may some taxpayers may pay more than others.

Speaker 2 ([00:54:06](#)):

So it's only a property taxes one, one. Some of 'em, it depends on the way the bond is structured, right? So it depends on what they actually put forward to voters. And I mean, so, and the important part of this is that it, it just allows, um, the government, so it makes it easier for local governments to, um, to put forward a measure to ask you, do you want this bond? It doesn't mean that they can just do whatever bond they want. It means on each bond that they wanna put forward. So they have to come to you again individually with each of these bonds and say, do you wanna do a bond for water infrastructure? And this is what the bond would be. All it does is lower the amount of voters that have to approve that from where it has been historically very hard to pass these measures. Um, even in, unless it's a school bond, but it, even in, even in San Diego, it's very hard to pass these bond measures sometimes because you need to meet that two thirds threshold. This, this, uh, proposition would lower the threshold of 55% of voters.

Speaker 3 ([00:55:04](#)):

Right? So prop prop five would change the formula for passing local bonds. And depending on what city or county you live in, you might pay different amounts because it depends on how much, um, bonded deadness your local government has incurred. Um, but there's also the two, um, state bonds, the Prop two and prop four, which address, um, schools and water and wildfire. And those would be statewide. The state would take out the bonds and then they would pay be paid back with state revenue over the next several decades. Um, so they would have to, um, build that debt service into the state budget that wouldn't be paid individually by homeowners. That would, all taxpayers would contribute and it would come out of the state budget.

Speaker 1 ([00:55:54](#)):

Another prop five question, just 'cause it's, um, someone asked, does prop five apply to the 55 foot height limit west of the freeway? And that's a rule here where, um, no, go ahead. I, I, I

Speaker 2 ([00:56:06](#)):

Don't know for sure. Um, I wouldn't put that, I, I'm not a hundred percent sure on the answer to that. Um, I wouldn't think so. Uh, but again, I think on each individual it's not, it's not passing a bond. It's saying the government, the local government, your local government has to come to you with these bonds and say,

do you want yes or no? Do you wanna approve this? And now a less amount of people have to say, yes, we wanna approve this than before.

Speaker 3 ([00:56:32](#)):

Yeah. So it, it pretty much concerns government borrowing, not so much local zoning codes.

Speaker 1 ([00:56:41](#)):

Okay. There's a lot of questions on prop four, a lot of water people in the audience. Um, does, would prop four, um, will the new resources be conveyed through State Water Project?

Speaker 3 ([00:56:57](#)):

Um, that's a good question. From my reading of the ballot measure, it, it doesn't specify the exact projects that would be funded through this. It's, it's earmarked for various kinds of water improvements, but it doesn't specify exactly how the money would be spent or how the water would be conveyed. So it could be for a number of things. It presumably, some of the mon, some of the water potentially could be conveyed through the state water project, but there's other local things like, um, desalination, um, storm water capture that probably would be local water projects that don't concern that state infrastructure.

Speaker 1 ([00:57:41](#)):

Okay.

Speaker 3 ([00:57:42](#)):

But, but that would, the details of how the money would be spent and how the water improvements would be rolled out have yet to co proceed.

Speaker 1 ([00:57:51](#)):

Um, they asked has, uh, the Metropolitan Water District offered a position? I looked that up and they did vote to support proposition four. I'm just in case that wasn't directly on your cards. <laugh>. Um, and then would local water districts apply for these funds somehow?

Speaker 3 ([00:58:08](#)):

Typically the bond funds are, um, competitive. Um, that's a good question. We'd have to look and see what the, uh, provisions are for how, um, how different water districts or different local agencies would qualify for the bond money. But typically it's a competitive grant process.

Speaker 1 ([00:58:28](#)):

Okay. Um, prop 32. Oops. Um, okay. For Prop 32, do tax cuts and credits come with raising the minimum wage to make the transition easier for them? What do tax cuts do? Tax cuts and credits come with raising the minimum wage? Is this how Yeah, to make the transition easier for them? Easier for the workers? I assume so. For the, or for the business? For the business. Small business, yeah. Um,

Speaker 2 ([00:58:56](#)):

I do not see, I'm not sure about that one. I'm sorry. Uh, I did not see that written into the proposition. Um, I guess that could be something that the state could consider doing if, if small businesses were struggling.

Speaker 3 ([00:59:09](#)):

Yeah, I didn't see that as part of the proposition either.

Speaker 1 ([00:59:12](#)):

Okay. Two hot follow ups on that. What happens to workers already making \$17 and \$18 an hour? Do they get raises too?

Speaker 2 ([00:59:20](#)):

No. If they're making the minimum wage, then their minimum wage, is

Speaker 1 ([00:59:23](#)):

That a bummer? Yeah,

Speaker 3 ([00:59:24](#)):

The minimum wage, not progressively everybody's pay.

Speaker 1 ([00:59:28](#)):

And is there evidence that the price of goods will increase if the minimum wage is raised?

Speaker 3 ([00:59:33](#)):

The argument of opponents that if we raise the minimum wage that restaurants, grocery stores, other retailers will raise prices in order to cover the cost of the labor?

Speaker 2 ([00:59:44](#)):

Yeah, that's their argument. I, I mean, I think we've seen, I think that was their argument in the first place, and I, uh, so anytime that they've had the minimum wage increase, they, I think that the argument has been, oh no, everybody's gonna have to pay so much more and all the businesses are gonna close. I don't know if we've seen that happen.

Speaker 1 ([01:00:02](#)):

You guys are doing so good. I would be like, this is a lot. Okay. Proposition two questions. Um, do campuses have to provide matching grants to get the money?

Speaker 3 ([01:00:12](#)):

Yeah, typically ca um, local school districts have to provide matching grants to get the, the state money. And this ballot measure would also require that. Um, so what happens is they pass a local bond for a certain amount of, usually tens of millions of dollars, and then they would apply for matching state grants to help with whatever construction or modernization or repairs they need to do. Um, that's actually one of the sticking points of this ballot measure because as I mentioned, bigger wealthier districts have the property tax base that enables them to pass bonds. Smaller, lower income ones don't. And so there are actually some small and rural school districts who have opposed this bond because they say that the funding formula favors the bigger districts and that they're at a, they're at a disadvantage to compete for state bonds.

Speaker 1 ([01:01:06](#)):

Did you also say, sorry, what percent match would be required? Do we know?

Speaker 3 ([01:01:11](#)):

I, I'm sorry. I don't have that number off the top of my head, but that

Speaker 1 ([01:01:15](#)):

Okay. Um, another question on this. Um, what is the equity impact of requiring matching funds for school bonds? Is this unique to the prop or is it standard for school bond measures?

Speaker 3 ([01:01:27](#)):

Um, it is standard for school bond measures. And, and as we discussed there, there's definitely equity issues in terms of who is able to qualify for the matching funds and how the formula works and which districts it favors and which districts it disadvantages. So there's been some effort to kind of rewrite the formula to give a little bit more credit to smaller, uh, districts with less, um, less of a property tax base. Um, but it's, it's unclear if that satisfies the equity concerns.

Speaker 1 ([01:02:03](#)):

Okay. And this was an overall question on bonds. How well do bonds make the impact for which they were written versus become a misuse of money with little result? Yeah, that's a

Speaker 3 ([01:02:15](#)):

Great question. That, that is a really good question. Um, when I've covered local school bonds in the past, typically they will have a bond oversight committee that has to review all expenditures, all contracting, um, any hiring decisions that are made to, um, to make the repairs or construction that's, that the bonds are financing. Um, and, and those documents are all public records too. Um, so I am actually not sure if the state bond measures, you know, create a state oversight committee as well. Um,

Speaker 2 ([01:02:55](#)):

But it is a very good point. I've definitely covered many stories where in, in the Sweetwater school district where, uh, you know, the teachers are bar, uh, or the, not the teachers, but the administrators are borrowing from the funds for, that's meant for construction to pay teacher salaries. And we've done a lot of stories about that, um, in the past, in years past about sort of the misuse of the bond dollars. It is definitely something that happens. Um,

Speaker 3 ([01:03:17](#)):

Yeah, and the bond dollars are, there's kind of this firewall between infrastructure and operational costs. So just as the state doesn't pay for infrastructure through general, general fund revenue, for the most part, you cannot use bond money to pay salaries or any of their operational costs like that. You can't use it for benefit salaries, um, or, um, any kind of personnel costs. But, but there have been cases where that firewall is breached. Yeah.

Speaker 1 ([01:03:47](#)):

Okay. We have a prop 36 question, uh, where that, okay. How would cutting funding to services such as employment assistance, housing and school-based programs reduce crime? Because the bill would cut, I think a hundred million annually or something. Doesn't the new bill package signed by Newsom solve some of the crime issues?

Speaker 3 ([01:04:10](#)):

Um, yeah, the, the legislative analyst office said there would be a significant cost. If you were in the previous session, you heard Genevieve Jones, right? Say it's about a hundred million dollars a year. That's, um, dedicated to social services through, um, prop 47. If this were reversed, there would be a cost somewhere between tens of million and a hundred million or so a year, um, depending on how it's rolled out. So there's definitely cost, I I don't know that that helps job creation or, um, other goals. Um, uh, I think one of the arguments I did, I talked to Summer Step and about this bill, and she felt like there could be cost savings if you catch, um, people early in their criminal activity. So if you prevent people from ever getting, if you catch people when they're at the misdemeanor stage or at, um, the early stage of theft or addiction, you prevent them from becoming more hardened criminals or becoming more habitual, um, uh, substance abuse users. Um, and so she's saying, if we can catch that early, we can prevent these, um, criminal justice costs from rolling up in the first plane.

Speaker 2 ([01:05:29](#)):

To me, it kinda reminds me of that it's something they say in recovery a lot, which is like the one you feed, you know, like you're gonna have more attention to the thing, the thing that you feed. So if you feed the educational system, if you feed programs for job assistance and or in, you know, even neighborhood revitalization, um, you know that that's where, that's where your effort is going towards. And like, that's what you'll see flourish versus if you, you know, if you're putting all the funding towards criminal justice, if you're putting all of the funding towards cracking down, um, you know, that's what you're gonna see. You're gonna, you know, it's like what kind of, if the question is sort of philosophically what, which, what do you wanna feed?

Speaker 3 ([01:06:06](#)):

Uh, and that's a concern that this would, that reversing property seven would take money away from things that prevent people from, um, from committing crimes or becoming addicted in the first place.

Speaker 1 ([01:06:22](#)):

Okay. We have about nine more minutes. We're just gonna burn through the rest of these <laugh>. So prop 32 question. Um, again, so the person wanted to know why is this 17 or \$18 an hour still below a livable wage?

Speaker 2 ([01:06:39](#)):

Yeah, so they have a, a living cal, uh, what is it? MIT living count? Yeah,

Speaker 3 ([01:06:44](#)):

Yeah. Living wage

Speaker 2 ([01:06:44](#)):

Calculator. And so they basically calculate like, what's the lowest amount you could possibly spend on electricity, what's the lowest amount you could spend on rent in the, in the least expensive county, which I can't remember what it is. I think it's me, Merc, or I don't Central Valley Area County. Yeah. Um, I can't remember exactly what county, but if you live in that county, you're paying the lowest housing cost. Like how much do you need to make to just pay your basics, not take vacations or have any kind of, you know, extras, but just to pay your rent, pay your electric utilities, um, that kind of stuff. And that's the number that they calculate to be \$20 and 32 cents an hour. Uh, and so the people that push them in minimum wage increases are trying to get people to be able to make enough working full-time at one job to be able to meet their basic expenses.

Speaker 3 ([01:07:31](#)):

Uhhuh. So this is the idea would be to push the minimum wage closer to that threshold.

Speaker 1 ([01:07:39](#)):

Then we have a Prop 34 question. Why not simply make it all providers?

Speaker 2 ([01:07:46](#)):

Oh, so it is for all it, it would be for all providers. It doesn't say in the proposition. This is just, just for the AIDS Healthcare Foundation. The, the president of that is just saying the reason why they're coming with this proposition is just to target me. But no, it's not true. It says just the AIDS foundation is, oh, I'm so sorry. Uh, my apologies. So only the AIDS Healthcare Foundation.

Speaker 1 ([01:08:09](#)):

Uh,

Speaker 2 ([01:08:14](#)):

Oh. So it's specific, it doesn't name them specifically, but the criteria, it's clear that it's specifically targeted just for it. Okay. So I'm sorry, I I stand corrected. But yeah, so that is a good question is if that really was the true intent to just, why wouldn't they make it for everybody, for all,

Speaker 1 ([01:08:31](#)):

All

Speaker 2 ([01:08:32](#)):

Providers,

Speaker 1 ([01:08:34](#)):

There was one that I could not read. So I'm gonna try to read what it sort of says. And if you wanna speak up and correct me something, something are not \$3,000, where does that come from? Oh,

Speaker 2 ([01:08:48](#)):

The apartments.

Speaker 5 ([01:08:50](#)):

This if you, right? Yeah. Oh,

Speaker 2 ([01:08:52](#)):

Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 6 ([01:08:54](#)):

That can be, yeah, unless new on market.

Speaker 2 ([01:09:00](#)):

Uh, so according to Zillow,

Speaker 3 ([01:09:01](#)):

That's the number that I've, oh, no, I've looked into apartments recently for, for my son. No, this, this was a number that came off of V Zillow. That's the median for all apartments of all size, can see anywhere from one bedroom to several bedrooms. Um, and that's the number they cite. Now, I, I don't have access to the data behind it, but I know from looking at rent recently for a child that a one bedroom in the San Diego area runs out or close to 2000. Right?

Speaker 6 ([01:09:32](#)):

Oh,

Speaker 2 ([01:09:32](#)):

Okay. No,

Speaker 3 ([01:09:33](#)):

No, no, no. That's, it's

Speaker 6 ([01:09:34](#)):

A one bedroom

Speaker 5 ([01:09:34](#)):

Apartment for real. We just What, one creek

Speaker 6 ([01:09:38](#)):

3000 number is like,

Speaker 2 ([01:09:40](#)):

No, no. Inflated

Speaker 3 ([01:09:41](#)):

The 3000 addresses apartments of all sizes, not just one bedrooms. I'm saying a one bedroom is around 2000. Bigger apartments presumably cost more.

Speaker 2 ([01:09:54](#)):

Okay, so you're saying

Speaker 6 ([01:09:56](#)):

Number

Speaker 2 ([01:09:56](#)):

Of 3000

Speaker 6 ([01:09:59](#)):

Tiny apartment,

Speaker 2 ([01:10:00](#)):

Okay.

Speaker 6 ([01:10:01](#)):

Thousand might need take.

Speaker 1 ([01:10:02](#)):

No, no, you should be North Park.

Speaker 2 ([01:10:04](#)):

Well, I, I just know. Yeah. And then I know the apartment that I was renting was a one bedroom apartment. It was 3000. I rented it for a year, and then they tried to raise it to 3,300. She did some, uh, research on the median cost for Zillow. I, there are apartments that are less for sure, but they are going up. The, the, the amount is going up very quickly.

Speaker 6 ([01:10:25](#)):

Rent are now flat. They, they, they're now

Speaker 2 ([01:10:28](#)):

Flat. They're now flat. Okay.

Speaker 5 ([01:10:31](#)):

T nice article about, all I'm say is you guys only your response,

Speaker 1 ([01:10:37](#)):

Zillow says the, the median rent for all bedrooms and all property types in California is 28 50. Okay. Median rent, 28 50.

Speaker 5 ([01:10:45](#)):

But that's so, and I don't know what, how, have to look into how Zillow that, so what they,

Speaker 2 ([01:10:50](#)):

Okay, so you're saying it's lower than, than what we're saying?

Speaker 5 ([01:10:53](#)):

It's little simple itching very west another,

Speaker 3 ([01:10:59](#)):

Yeah, I think

Speaker 5 ([01:11:01](#)):

The housing, we did the housing started 3000 and go five to six.

Speaker 1 ([01:11:06](#)):

Okay. Don't make me pull up Craigslist,

Speaker 6 ([01:11:09](#)):

<laugh>.

Speaker 3 ([01:11:10](#)):

Um,

Speaker 2 ([01:11:10](#)):

So apartments are that high.

Speaker 3 ([01:11:12](#)):

Okay. Well, I can't, we're, we're quoting One Source. We're not saying we independently researched that, but based on our personal experience, the apartments are in that range, and we're citing Zillow. So you can take issue with their calculation, but this is the number that they're saying.

Speaker 5 ([01:11:28](#)):

That's why.

Speaker 1 ([01:11:31](#)):

Okay. Uh, it's all properties. So

Speaker 2 ([01:11:33](#)):

White is my, they're lower. A little bit lower than, okay.

Speaker 1 ([01:11:39](#)):

There's a lot of, yeah, there. rent.com has the same number, uh, even higher. There's, there's a lot of, I think they're kind of falling in the same area. So give or take \$200. I, I

Speaker 6 ([01:11:48](#)):

Know the data

Speaker 5 ([01:11:49](#)):

And I know that it all augmented odds cooked in here.

Speaker 2 ([01:11:53](#)):

Okay. So

Speaker 5 ([01:11:57](#)):

Here,

Speaker 1 ([01:11:58](#)):

So quick

Speaker 5 ([01:12:00](#)):

Talking about the cost of living and stuff like that. Probably you and <inaudible> for yourself with no roommates to go was the law of, of distortion. That's when you throw up bucket.

Speaker 2 ([01:12:14](#)):

Okay.

Speaker 5 ([01:12:16](#)):

Ipsy dairy.

Speaker 1 ([01:12:19](#)):

Okay. So the last question, um, I'm gonna throw at you. Ha ha ha. It's a prop four question. Um, the climate bond, I was just curious, so if we don't get this 10 million, or sorry, 10 billion in borrowing for the climate things we need to handle, what happens? Like what do we lose? Do you know what's at stake?

Speaker 3 ([01:12:40](#)):

Well, I think the proponents would say that what's at stake is our ability to adapt to climate change in terms of up updating our water systems and, um, uh, bolstering our ability to fight wild virus. And I think proponent, or, you know, opponents would say we just have to tighten our belt in a time of deficit and maybe find other ways to pay for those necessities. Um, they, they also point out, I should, I should note that the opponents point out that, um, they agree that clean water and fire safety are necessities. They're not luxuries, and that that's not something we can go without. But they're saying the state needs to find other ways to pay for it rather than, um, passing a bond that would provide debt. Um, of course the proponents are saying we have provided other ways to pay for it, but we had to cut them back because of the deficit. And so we need to make up that gap.

Speaker 1 ([01:13:38](#)):

Okay. Um, we only have like a couple minutes left. Um, there's, uh, I guess I'll just squeeze this in since we're going for it, um, on prop three six. Okay. Prop three six and other proposals have offered solutions for the haves and not the have nots. All these proposals don't provide, for example, expanded drug recovery facilities. There's a lot of incentive only to create law enforcement jobs and record breaking prison populations. Please comment. So that's not a question that was more of a statement, but they wanted you to comment on that,

Speaker 3 ([01:14:14](#)):

On prop 36,

Speaker 1 ([01:14:16](#)):

That the, that the proposals offer solutions for more of the haves and the have nots. They don't like provide drug recovery facilities, um, but they do, you know, crack down on people breaking the law, for instance. I think, well, that

Speaker 3 ([01:14:29](#)):

Is the argument against it, and that's what you may have heard Genevieve Wright Jones, um, discussed saying that there, the, you know, that this would actually take money away from treatment, that there isn't enough treatment capacity right now. So that, that's her argument.

Speaker 1 ([01:14:49](#)):

Okay. Well thank you for the spicy debate everyone. Um, <laugh>, thank you for joining us. The next session starts at one 30. Uh, it will be me actually in here talking about the Tijuana River and whether the government can fix that. Um, help us spread the word by sharing our website, voice of san diego.org. If

you even enjoys today's session, sign up for our weekly newsletters. Deborah has one called the Sacramental Report, for instance. Um, and yeah, thank you again to everybody and our volunteers.