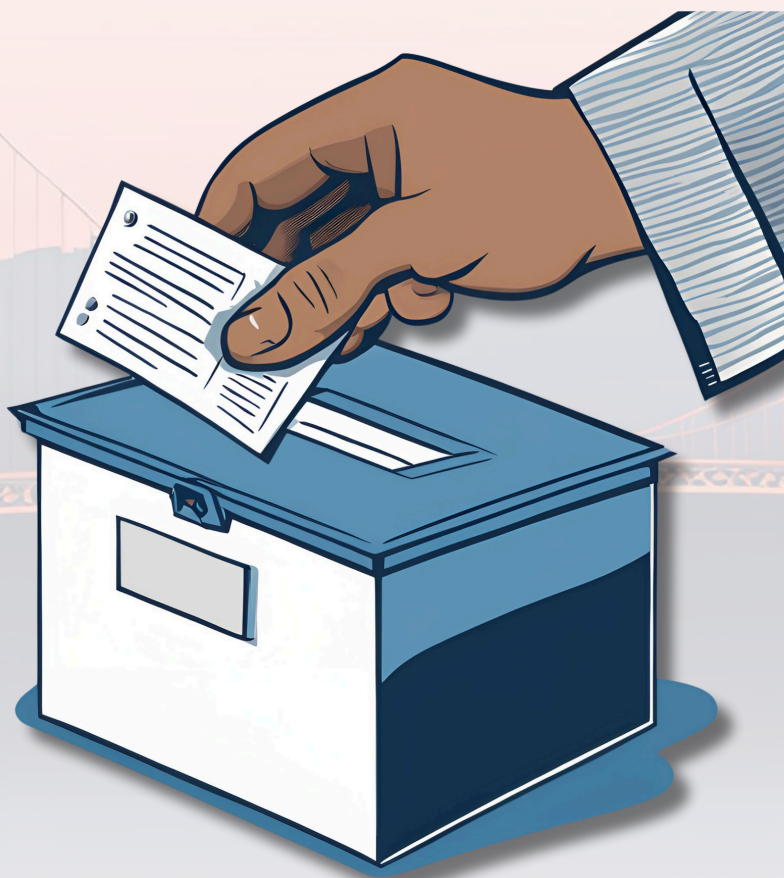




RUBICON PROGRAMS

2024 VOTER GUIDE

Rubicon's Stance on California Voter Propositions, along with additional information on Local Measures in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties.



RUBICON
PROGRAMS

www.rubiconprograms.org

Introduction

Rubicon Programs is an anti-poverty organization located in the San Francisco Bay Area.

We work at the individual and systems levels to remove barriers to economic mobility in our communities. We provide comprehensive workforce development and reentry services across Contra Costa and Alameda Counties to help participants build assets, income, wellness, and community connections. We live by our values of hope, justice, and humility in all of the actions we take.

About this guide

The following pages contain Rubicon's stances on California propositions and local measures that affect the communities we serve. Our positions were decided by Rubicon's Voter Guide Committee, which consisted of Rubicon staff and Participant Advisory Board members. For each recommendation, the Committee looked at the potential impacts of the proposed legislation, previous case studies, and the relevance to Rubicon's work, among other considerations.

We have included information regarding all California propositions, even if the Committee decided not to make a recommendation. We encourage you to read more about the measures on the ballot where you live and vote on them according to your own values and community needs.

Exercise your right to vote

- ☒ Register to vote or check your registration status before the October 21st deadline: Visit registertovote.ca.gov.
- ☒ Missed the deadline? You can still register and vote through same-day voter registration at any county elections office or polling location up until Election Day on November 5, 2024.
- ☒ Find your polling place: <https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/polling-place>

Proposition 2: Authorizes Bonds for Public School and Community College Facilities

Rubicon's stance: Yes

Proposition 2 would authorize a \$10 billion bond to be split between K-12 schools and community colleges in order to renovate and repair existing properties and to build new properties. Public schools depend on voter-approved bonds for repairs and renovations as the general budget does not include this type of funding. California has not approved such a bond since 2016.

Public education is an essential vehicle to help people move out of poverty, and good education facilities are necessary to keep people motivated to engage with their education.

Proposition 3: California Constitutional Right to Marriage

Rubicon's stance: Yes

Proposition 3 would remove the language placed in the California Constitution by 2008's Proposition 8 that defines marriage as being between "one man and one woman" and replace it with "The right to marry is a fundamental right." Under federal law, California recognizes same-sex marriages despite the current language in the state constitution. Voting "yes" or "no" on this proposition will not change who has the right to marry in California.

Rubicon is a champion of diversity, equity and inclusion, and we believe this Proposition expresses our support of Rubicon's LGBTQ+ staff, participants, and community members.

Proposition 4: Authorizes Bonds to Fund Environmental Programs in Response to Climate Change

Rubicon's stance: Yes

Proposition 4 authorizes the State to issue \$10 billion in bonds to fund environmental programs, including water projects, wildfire prevention, coastal projects, land conservation, energy projects, parks, heat protection, and agriculture. At least 40% of the bond money must fund activities that directly benefit low-income communities and communities that are most vulnerable to problems caused by climate change.

Effects of climate change disproportionately impact low-income communities and communities of color. Environmental justice and environmental health are components of Rubicon's Wellness service area. Rubicon supports climate initiatives positively impacting the communities we serve.

Proposition 5: California Constitutional Amendment Allows Local Bonds for Affordable Housing and Public Infrastructure with 55% Voter Approval

Rubicon's stance: Yes

Proposition 5 is a California Constitutional Amendment that would lower the required voter approval threshold for local governments to borrow funds related to affordable housing and public infrastructure projects from 66% to 55%. This proposition does not fund any specific affordable housing projects; it changes the voter approval rules to increase the likelihood that future funding requests will be approved.

Housing affordability and availability are critically linked to Rubicon participants' stability, and are necessary elements to break cycles of poverty in the East Bay. Proposition 5 gives greater control to local voters and local communities and creates the opportunity for more affordable housing and infrastructure projects.

Proposition 6: Eliminates Constitutional Provision Allowing Involuntary Servitude for Incarcerated Persons

Rubicon's stance: Yes

The California Constitution currently permits the use of involuntary servitude as a punishment for a crime. Proposition 6 would amend the California Constitution to prohibit involuntary servitude for any reason. It would prohibit the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) from disciplining people in prison who refuse a work assignment and allow the CDCR to reduce prison time for people who voluntarily accept work assignments. If passed, California will join seven states that have repealed language that allows for enslavement or involuntary servitude.

Rubicon is invested in the successful reentry into the community of our participants, and allowing involuntary servitude to continue is contrary to Rubicon's values. Proposition 5 is a significant step forward because it would end forced labor for incarcerated people who have worked in prisons for pennies on the dollar, and it improves public safety by focusing on rehabilitation over punishment. This proposition would center incarcerated people's human rights and dignity.

Proposition 32: Raises Minimum Wage to \$18

Rubicon's stance: Yes

Proposition 32 would raise the state minimum wage for all employees from \$16 to \$18 an hour by 2026. The wage would be adjusted for the cost of living each year after 2026. California has already increased minimum wage for fast food workers to \$20 an hour, and California cities may set their own higher minimum wage laws.

This proposition falls in line with Rubicon Programs' mission to end poverty in the East Bay since it attempts to keep up with the rising cost of living in the state. This proposition promotes economic justice and empowerment and can improve the standards of living for our participants.

Proposition 33: Expands Local Governments' Authority to Enact Rent Control on Residential Property

Rubicon's stance: Yes, with qualifications

Proposition 33 would repeal the Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act, California's current state law that limits rent control in 3 ways: (1) it prohibits rent control on single-family homes; (2) it prohibits rent control on buildings built after 1995; and (3) prevents restrictions on how much a landlord can charge new renters. A "yes" vote will allow local governments to create their own rent control rules and would stop the state from passing any laws to limit local government from enacting their own rent control laws. Proposition 33 will not, itself, enact any specific rent control laws in any city in California. Additionally, local rent control laws must still allow landlords to make some profit each year.

Rubicon Programs has historically supported rent control initiatives. Extremely high cost of rent contributes to housing instability for our participants. Prop 33 would allow local governments to determine their own rent control laws based on the communities they serve, local housing shortages or instability, high cost of rent and the overall socioeconomic conditions.

Qualifications:

Rubicon's Voter Guide Committee recognizes that rent control is not the only solution for the Bay Area's housing shortage, and lower rent is not the only factor contributing to housing affordability or availability. Local governments enacting more expansive rent control laws must also create intentional policies that motivate landlords to maintain their properties and incentivize housing developers to build more multi-unit properties. In addition to rent control, Just Cause eviction protections are critical in order to protect tenants.

Proposition 34: Restricts Spending of Prescription Drug Revenues by Certain Health Care Providers

Rubicon's stance: No Position

Proposition 34 creates new rules about how certain health-care providers can spend money earned from the federal discount drug program. If these providers do not spend at least 98% of the money on direct patient care, they could lose their licenses and be banned from receiving government contracts and grants. Analysis suggests that few entities would meet the criteria of this proposition.

This proposition does not seem to be particularly relevant to the work of Rubicon.

Proposition 35: Provides Permanent Funding for Medi-Cal Health Care Services

Rubicon's stance: Yes

Proposition 35 would turn a temporary tax on Managed Care Organizations (Kaiser, Anthem Blue Cross, etc.) that helps fund Medi-Cal into a permanent tax. It would also create new rules that require the tax revenue to be spent on supporting Medi-Cal and other health programs rather than being put towards the general state budget. Proposition 35 does not raise taxes on Californians.

Adequate access to health care for low-income communities is essential to the wellness and economic mobility of Rubicon participants. Many Rubicon participants and members of our communities rely on Medi-Cal for their health coverage. Increased funding for Medi-Cal, particularly increased reimbursement rates to Managed Care Organizations, will increase access to health care for low-income communities.

Proposition 36: Allows Felony Charges & Increased Sentences for Certain Drug & Theft Crimes

Rubicon's stance: No

Proposition 36 would reclassify some theft and drug misdemeanors as felonies and would lengthen sentences and increase other penalties for people with prior convictions. This proposition would roll back many of the criminal justice reforms of Proposition 47, which voters approved in 2014.

Rubicon provides reentry services to formerly incarcerated people, and this proposed law could affect current, former, and future participants. Prop 36 would increase barriers faced by justice-impacted individuals and communities. Expanding punishments, lengthening sentences, and contributing to mass incarceration is in opposition to Rubicon's values and mission to break the cycle of poverty.

LOCAL MEASURES : Contra Costa County

Richmond Measure J – Richmond Election Reform Act

Rubicon's stance: No

Measure J would change Richmond's current election structure from a plurality system to a primary system. Currently, mayoral and City Council candidates run in one municipal election at the same time as the statewide election in November, and whoever receives the most votes wins, even if it is not the majority of the votes. Measure J would require candidates to run in an earlier primary election and only the top two vote-getters would appear on the general election ballot, guaranteeing the winner would receive at least 50% of the votes.

Rubicon is invested in voting rights and encourages our participants to be civically engaged. Rubicon has two program sites in Richmond, and many of our participants live there. Local election processes and outcomes may affect their day-to-day lives. Requiring a local primary election will increase the cost of running a campaign and may reduce representation as primaries often have lower voter turnout than general elections.

Richmond Measure L – Instant Runoff Voting (IRV) Election Reform Act

Rubicon's stance: Yes, with qualifications

Measure L would change Richmond's current election structure from a plurality system (as explained above) to a ranked-choice system. Measure L would require voters to rank their first, second, and third choice candidates. If a candidate wins more than 50% of first choice votes, they are declared the winner. If not, the candidate with the fewest first choice votes is eliminated and ballots ranking this candidate first then get their votes distributed to their second choice. And so on until a candidate wins a majority.

As stated above, Rubicon encourages its participants to be civically engaged. Ranked-choice voting requires only one election, may lead to a more diverse pool of candidates and may result in a more representative slate of elected officials. It is for these reasons that we support Measure L over Measure J.

Qualifications: There is no evidence that Richmond's current plurality system is not working. Voters could decide to vote "no" on both Measure J and Measure L and keep the plurality system. If both Measure J and Measure L pass with more than 50% of the vote, the Measure with the most votes will become law.

LOCAL MEASURES : Alameda County

City of Oakland Measure MM: Wildfire Prevention Financing Act of 2024

Rubicon's stance: No Position

Measure MM would pass a land tax in a wildfire prevention zone in Oakland covering over 26,000 homes for 20 years. This tax would implement prevention plans of vegetation management, enhanced fire patrols during high danger periods, and other fire management strategies. The annual rate would be \$99 for single-family homes, \$65 for multi-family units, and it is estimated to generate \$2.67 million in 2025-2026.

This measure does not seem to be particularly relevant to the work of Rubicon.

City of Oakland Measure NN: Community Violence Reduction and Emergency Response Act of 2024

Rubicon's stance: No

Measure NN would fund an expansion to Oakland's police and firefighter staffing. The measure would extend and increase an existing parking tax to 10% and an existing property tax to \$198 for single-family properties and \$132 for multi-family properties annually for 9 years. This is estimated to raise \$4.74 million every year. Sixty percent of the funds would go to Oakland's Police Department and 40% would go to Oakland's Department of Violence Prevention. If passed, this would replace Measure Z, which was passed in 2014.

Rubicon Programs acknowledges that increased police presence has not increased the safety of our communities, particularly for Black and Brown communities. The proposed measure does not require training for law enforcement officers to reduce police violence and lacks clarity on how it would fund community-empowerment programs and mental health services.

City of Oakland Measure OO: Revision to Public Ethics Commission Rules

Rubicon's stance: Yes

Measure OO proposes new changes to existing laws governing Oakland's Public Ethics Commission. This measure would update the Public Ethics Commission for the first time in 10 years. A yes vote would amend the Oakland City Charter to revise Public Ethics Commission rules to increase staffing, revise qualifications and restrictions for service and removal procedures, and specify the vote threshold for action.

Rubicon works to implement systems change that paves the way for policies that positively impact our participants. This measure is important because it serves to increase transparency and accountability within the Public Ethics Commission. This measure would increase the Commission's capacity to keep up with their important work of upholding Oakland's values and principles.

City of Hayward Measure K1: Transaction and Use Sales Tax

Rubicon's stance: No Position

Measure K1 would continue, without increasing, an existing half-percent sales tax in the city of Hayward for the next 20 years. This measure aims to continue providing essential services such as firefighting, emergency-medical response, police protection, pothole repair, street improvements, general City maintenance and modernization of aging City facilities. If passed, the measure would provide \$20,000,000 annually that cannot be taken by the State.

This measure does not seem to be particularly relevant to the work of Rubicon.

Additional Resources

Read the full text of statewide and local initiatives at the links below:

- ☒ California Propositions: <https://tinyurl.com/CAprops22>
- ☒ Alameda County Measures: <https://tinyurl.com/ACvote22>
- ☒ Contra Costa County Measures: <https://tinyurl.com/CCCvote22>

Connect with Rubicon Programs

- ✓ If you are a low-income resident of Alameda or Contra Costa County, Rubicon has resources that can help you grow your assets, income, wellness, and community connections.
- ✓ If you are an underemployed or unemployed resident of Alameda or Contra Costa County, Rubicon provides workforce development and training resources.
- ✓ Specific supportive programs and services are available for parents (custodial or non-custodial) and justice-impacted community members.
- ✓ We operate several locations in Richmond, Concord, Antioch, Oakland, and Hayward, with services available in person and remotely.

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