

VOTE YES ON PROPOSITION 23, the "None of the Above" ballot option.



NOTA votes will be counted and reported.

California voters deserve a choice at the polls: not just between candidates, but the option to express their dissatisfaction with all of the available candidates. Proposition 23, the "None of the Above" ballot option, gives voters that choice.

If you study the candidates and determine that none is worthy of your vote, you now have only two choices: don't vote (and be labeled apathetic) or hold your nose and vote for the least objectionable candidate. With our present system, winning candidates can (and do) claim mandates that don't exist. Negative campaigning is a viable option because a candidate only needs to ensure that voters dislike an opponent more than they dislike the candidate.

Here's how Proposition 23 works: in every federal and state election in California (except judges), Californians could vote for "None of the Above" instead of a named candidate. Those results would be tallied and reported along with all other election results, but the candidate with the most votes would still get the job. It's that simple.

Some might complain that Proposition 23 doesn't go far enough. They call for a system in which a win by "None of the Above" voids that election, forces a new race, and prohibits the losers from running again. Others have proposed a complicated voting system of first and second choices, instant run-offs and exotic math formulas to choose the elected official. These reforms

might be good, but they're costly and unwieldy. Most important, they're not on the ballot.

Second, some people are concerned that voting for "None of the Above" in any given election is just throwing away a vote. The point of Proposition 23 isn't that people will vote for None of the Above, it is that people will have the choice to vote for None of the Above. A candidate should consider themselves successful when the electorate has a None of the Above option, yet chooses not to utilize it. Another concern is that a vote for "None of the Above" signifies a voter who hasn't done their homework. In Nevada, which has had this ballot option for over 20 years, that hasn't been the case. "None of the Above" has won four times in Nevada, each time in hotly contested races where the vote for None of the Above was a deliberate choice to express dissatisfaction with the candidate choices.

We believe that Proposition 23 will accomplish several things: more citizens will register to vote (our initiative signature gatherers registered over 60,000 new voters), more registered voters will vote, better candidates will be nominated (what candidate or party wants to lose to None of the Above?) and negative campaigning will be reduced. Proposition 23 won't cure all voter participation problems, but it is a step forward, and the cost of putting it into place is negligible.

Voter reform doesn't have to be complicated.



Paid for by Friends of Ernest Political Action Committee

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