

CALIFORNIA PROP 50

Changes California's congressional district maps

Purpose

Authorizes changes to California's congressional district maps in response to Texas's mid-decade redistricting through a legislative constitutional amendment.¹

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Background

In November 2008, California voters passed Proposition 11, which gave the California Citizens Redistricting Commission (CCRC), as opposed to the Legislature, the power to draw state legislative districts and Board of Equalization districts.² In 2010, voters passed Proposition 20, extending the power of the CCRC to draw districts for the U.S. House of Representatives.³

In June 2025, the Trump Administration began urging Texas Republican leadership to pursue a mid-decade redistricting plan to convert several congressional seats in the state from Democrat to Republican through partisan gerrymandering.⁴ In August, after a Democratic boycott, the Texas Legislature passed House Bill 4, the redistricting measure, by party-line votes.⁵ These redistricting efforts are expected to gain Republicans five seats in Texas, expanding the GOP's margin in the state's congressional delegation from 25-13 to 30-8 in next year's midterm election.⁶

California's Democratic leaders responded by proposing a counter-gerrymander designed to flip five of the state's congressional districts into the Democratic column.⁷ If the map works as expected, five incumbent Republicans would lose their seats in 2026—Doug LaMalfa (CA-01), Kevin Kiley (CA-03), David Valadao (CA-22), Ken Calvert (CA-41), and Darrell Issa (CA-48)—expanding the Democrats' advantage in the state's congressional delegation from 43-9 to 48-4.

Proposal

Proposition 50 would establish new, partisan congressional district maps in California through 2030, while directing the independent Citizens Redistricting Commission to resume drawing the state's congressional district maps in 2031.⁸

Fiscal Impact

According to the Secretary of State's Office, if Proposition 50 is approved, it would impose one-time costs to counties of up to a few million dollars statewide to update election materials to reflect new congressional district maps.⁹

The Commission's Response to Prop. 50

The CCRC issued a statement that it had "absolutely no involvement in the Governor's efforts to replace the state's Congressional maps." The Commission stated that it has "no official position on the Governor's proposed Congressional redistricting," further noting that individual commissioners may express their personal views on the current redistricting proposal, but that those views do not represent the official position of the Commission. In the statement, the Commission pointed out that the maps it issued in December 2021 incorporated more than 35,000 pieces of public input over a 16.5-month process. "The Commission is proud of the work that it has done to serve the people of California, and we stand behind our maps as a fair representation of the wishes of the people of California."¹⁰

SUPPORT FOR PROPOSITION 50

Supporters include:¹¹

- Governor Gavin Newsom
- Senator Alex Padilla
- Senator Adam Schiff
- Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi
- California Labor Federation
- California Teachers Association
- Planned Parenthood Affiliates of California
- SEIU California
- California Democratic Party
- California Nurses Association
- AFSCME International
- California Conference of Carpenters
- California Federation of Teachers

Arguments for Proposition 50¹²

Supporters argue the measure:

- Approves temporary, emergency congressional district maps to counter gerrymandering efforts in Texas.
- Reaffirms California's commitment to independent, nonpartisan redistricting after the next Census.

The proponents' official website is:

<https://stopelectionrigging.com>

OPPOSITION TO PROPOSITION 50

Opponents include:¹³

- Former Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger
- Former House Speaker Kevin McCarthy
- House Speaker Mike Johnson
- Charles Munger, Jr.
- California Republican Party
- California Manufacturers and Technology Association
- California Taxpayers Association
- California Farm Bureau

Arguments against Proposition 50¹⁴

Opponents argue the measure:

- Dismantles safeguards that keep elections fair.
- Removes requirements to keep local communities together.
- Eliminates voter protections that ban maps designed to favor political parties.

The opponents' websites include:

- <https://votenoprop50.org>
- <https://noonprop50.org>, and
- <https://www.reformcalifornia.org/campaigns/no-on-prop-50-defend-fair-elections/>

A YES VOTE ON PROPOSITION 50

A **YES** vote on this measure means: The state would use new, legislatively drawn congressional district maps starting in 2026. California's new maps would be used until the California Citizens Redistricting Commission draws new maps following the 2030 U.S. Census.¹⁵

A NO VOTE ON PROPOSITION 50

A **NO** vote on this measure means: Current congressional district maps drawn by the California Citizens Redistricting Commission would continue to be used in California until the Commission draws new maps following the 2030 U.S. Census.¹⁶

Endnotes

- 1 California Secretary of State, *Quick Reference Guide, Statewide Special Election*, p. 5, accessed September 30, 2025, <https://vig.cdn.sos.ca.gov/2025/special/pdf/quick-reference-guide.pdf>.
- 2 Institute of Governmental Studies, University of California, Berkeley, "November 4, 2008: General Election Summary," accessed September 30, 2025, <https://igs.berkeley.edu/library/california-ballot-proposition-guides/november-4-2008-general-election-summary>.
- 3 California Secretary of State, *Statement of Vote, November 2, 2010*, p. 7, accessed September 30, 2025, <https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/sov/2010-general/complete-sov.pdf>.
- 4 J. David Goodman and Shane Goldmacher, "Trump Courts Texas Redistricting for 2025," *The New York Times*, June 9, 2025, accessed September 30, 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/06/09/us/politics/trump-texas-redistricting.html>.
- 5 LegiScan, "TX HB4 | 2025 | 89th Legislature 2nd Special Session," accessed September 30, 2025, <https://legiscan.com/TX/bill/HB4/2025/X2>.
- 6 Harvard Kennedy School, "Explainer: Understanding the mid-decade redistricting push in Texas," August 22, 2025, accessed September 30, 2025, <https://www.hks.harvard.edu/faculty-research/policy-topics/politics/explainer-understanding-mid-decade-redistricting-push-texas>.
- 7 Kyle Kondik and J. Miles Coleman, "The Gavinmander: How We Would Rate the New California Democratic Map if Voters Approve It," *Sabato's Crystal Ball / Center for Politics*, August 18, 2025, accessed September 30, 2025, <https://centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/the-gavinmander-how-we-would-rate-the-new-california-democratic-map-if-voters-approve-it/>.
- 8 California Secretary of State, *Quick Reference Guide, Statewide Special Election*, p. 5.
- 9 California Secretary of State, *Quick Reference Guide, Statewide Special Election*, p. 5.
- 10 "Mid-Decade Redistricting Statement," California Citizens Redistricting Commission, accessed October 1, 2025, <https://we-drawthelines.ca.gov/mid-decade-redistricting-statement/>.
- 11 The Election Rigging Response Act / Yes on 50, "StopElectionRigging.com," accessed September 30, 2025, <https://stopelectionrigging.com>.
- 12 California Secretary of State, *Quick Reference Guide, Statewide Special Election*, p. 5, accessed September 30, 2025, <https://vig.cdn.sos.ca.gov/2025/special/pdf/quick-reference-guide.pdf>.
- 13 Emily Schultheis and Will McCarthy, "Can Donald, Kevin and Arnold agree on a No on 50 message?" California Playbook PM, *Politico*, August 25, 2025, accessed September 30, 2025, <https://www.politico.com/newsletters/california-playbook-pm/2025/08/25/can-donald-kevin-and-arnold-agree-on-a-no-on-50-message-00523769>; Caroline Vakil, "Speaker Johnson vows to fight California Democrats' 'illegal power grab,'" *The Hill*, August 18, 2025, accessed September 30, 2025, <https://thehill.com/homenews/campaign/5457576-johnson-california-democrats-redistricting-fight/>; No on Prop 50-Stop Sacramento's Power Grab, "Our Coalition," <https://votenoprop50.org/our-coalition>.
- 14 California Secretary of State, *Quick Reference Guide, Statewide Special Election*, p. 5.
- 15 California Secretary of State, *Quick Reference Guide, Statewide Special Election*, p. 5.
- 16 California Secretary of State, *Quick Reference Guide, Statewide Special Election*, p. 5.

