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## Official Voter Information Guide

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# PROP 1 AUTHORIZES \$6.38 BILLION IN BONDS TO BUILD MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT FACILITIES FOR THOSE WITH MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE CHALLENGES; PROVIDES HOUSING FOR THE HOMELESS. LEGISLATIVE STATUTE.

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### ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF PROPOSITION 1

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*Vote YES on Proposition 1: Treatment, Not Tents*  
Why does California face a humanitarian crisis of homelessness, mental illness and substance abuse? *Our mental health system is broken.*

It goes back to the closure of the state's mental health hospitals in the 1960's and 70's when politicians dumped tens of thousands of patients into our communities and failed to provide alternative services to fill the gap.

Mental health treatment has been underfunded for decades, and the COVID pandemic only made things worse.

Proposition 1 will finally change that.

Proposition 1 combines *compassion and common sense*.

Proposition 1 authorizes \$6.4 billion in bonds and directs billions more annually to finally fix our broken mental health system and move people permanently off the streets, out of tents and into treatment.

- **EXPANDS COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES:** Prop. 1 will expand community-based mental health and addiction services across the state and serve tens of thousands of Californians each year.
- **BUILDS SUPPORTIVE HOUSING:** The initiative will create supportive housing settings where over 11,000 Californians with the severest mental health needs can live, recover, stabilize and thrive.
- **PROVIDES TREATMENT OVER INCARCERATION:** One in three California prisoners has a diagnosed mental illness. Today, we spend over \$100,000 per incarcerated person. Research shows it's costly and counterproductive. Prop. 1 will prioritize treatment not punishment for the mentally ill.

### ARGUMENT AGAINST PROPOSITION 1

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Governor Newsom's Proposition 1 is a nightmare for taxpayers, cities and counties, and people with mental illness.

Prop. 1 is so huge, expensive, and destructive, it's already attracted a BIPARTISAN coalition of opponents. Vote NO because:

**PROP. 1 WILL COST TAXPAYERS MORE THAN \$10 BILLION.** Prop. 1 puts taxpayers on the hook for DECADES to pay back new bonds. This isn't "free money!" It's credit card borrowing from Wall Street. According to Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association, bonds are the most expensive and inefficient way to pay for a government program. And with interest rates today, it's a VERY BAD TIME to be taking on new bond debt, adding at least 60% IN INTEREST COSTS, costing taxpayers an estimated \$10.58 - \$12.45 billion. This will take decades to pay back. The State should have prioritized spending through the budget process when we had a \$100 billion state budget surplus. Our children will be paying our debts, and their streets won't be any cleaner for it.

**PROP. 1 ISN'T A SOLUTION TO HOMELESSNESS.** The State has failed at reducing California's homelessness problem. Sacramento has already thrown \$20 billion at the crisis in the last five years without making significant progress. The number of unhoused people increased 6% last year. The State Auditor's Office is still trying to find where the billions went. We will indeed have more tents in our neighborhoods and fewer people in treatment if Prop. 1 passes.

If the state wants a grand solution for homelessness, it should attack the heart of the problem through the regular budget process—not expensive bond measures that RAISE TAXPAYER COSTS LONG-TERM. Californians are already some of the most over-taxed people in the country.

**PROP. 1 CUTS SERVICES FOR THE MENTALLY ILL.** In 2004, the voters passed Proposition 63, the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), which dedicated funds for community-based mental health services. Prop. 1 STEALS AWAY almost 1/3 of that guaranteed annual

- **HELPS HOMELESS VETERANS:** It is disgraceful that over 10,000 California veterans, many suffering from PTSD, are homeless and on the streets. Prop. 1 will provide \$1 billion to serve veterans experiencing homelessness, mental health and substance abuse issues.
- **ADDRESSES SHORTAGE OF MENTAL HEALTH WORKERS:** Currently, those with serious mental health issues can wait six months or longer just for an introductory appointment. Prop. 1 will help fund additional professionals so that people with mental health needs can get help in real time.
- **REQUIRES STRICT ACCOUNTABILITY:** Democrats and Republicans support Prop. 1 because it addresses mental health and homelessness without raising taxes. And Prop. 1 has strict accountability measures, including mandatory audits, to ensure that funds are spent as promised.

California has the most acute homelessness epidemic in the nation. Meanwhile, nearly 1 in 7 California adults experiences a mental illness.

This is a crisis only Californians can solve.

Join first responders, mental health professionals, California veterans, and organizations supporting veterans like the California Association of Veteran Service Agencies.

By voting YES on Proposition 1, we can finally establish a modernized mental health system that will serve the needs of all our residents, get our most vulnerable off the streets and offer every Californian a genuine shot at a brighter future.

Choose compassion and common sense.

Choose treatment over tents.

Vote YES on Proposition 1.

Learn more at: ***treatmentnottents.com***  
(<https://treatmentnottents.com/>)

**Brian K. Rice**, President

California Professional Firefighters

**James Espinoza, MS**, President

The Veteran Mentor Project

**Jessica Cruz, MPA/HS**, Chief Executive Officer

National Alliance on Mental Illness—California

**REBUTTAL TO ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF  
PROPOSITION 1**

We work directly with people struggling with mental health. We urge you to vote "no" because Proposition 1 will cause EXTREME DAMAGE to existing mental healthcare programs.

funding from the "millionaire's tax" leaving already underfunded programs to fight for the remaining money. That's why CalVoices, California's oldest mental health advocacy agency, opposes it.

**PROP. 1 MANDATES STATE CONTROL OVER LOCAL CONTROL, WITH REDUCED OVERSIGHT.** California's 58 urban and rural counties all have different needs. Prop. 1 brings a one-size-fits-all program and puts a huge, unaccountable state agency in charge. The voter-approved MHSA was locally based, allowing counties to set their own priorities, with mandatory, independent oversight and accountability. Under Prop. 1, oversight and accountability are watered down, instead giving authority to the governor and his bureaucrats. This threatens effective programs that counties already offer.

Leave it to Sacramento to find a way to **INCREASE COSTS, CUT VITAL PROGRAMS,** and offer only **UNPROVEN IDEAS!** Far from being a magic solution, Prop. 1 is a multibillion dollar disaster that will hurt the very people it claims to help. And who's left holding the bag when Prop. 1 fails? The taxpayers, once again.

**THIS IS THE WRONG APPROACH. VOTE NO ON PROP. 1.**

**Senate Minority Leader Brian W. Jones**

**Assemblymember Diane B. Dixon**

**Heidi Strunk, CEO**

Mental Health America of California

**REBUTTAL TO ARGUMENT AGAINST  
PROPOSITION 1**

Opponents of Proposition 1 want to ignore the crisis of homelessness, mental illness and substance abuse plaguing communities across California.

Their position is isolated and extreme

Proposition 1 overwhelmingly passed the California Assembly and Senate with support from Democrats and Republicans because it's based on *compassion and common sense*.

- *Proposition 1 doesn't raise taxes.* Leading business organizations, including California Retailers Association, support Proposition 1 because it addresses the crisis for the long term without raising taxes.
- *Proposition 1 makes better use of existing money.* First responders and mental health experts support Proposition 1 because it provides badly needed reforms to the Mental Health Services Act by prioritizing housing solutions that get people off the streets and into care.

Supporters don't tell you WHERE Prop. 1 gets money to operate its programs, so we must: *Prop. 1 CUTS existing county-level mental health services!*

Prop. 1 DIVERTS one-third of existing funding from the *voter-approved* Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), allows many kinds of services to compete with mental healthcare for the remaining money, and sticks the state in charge of local programs and decisions.

The results will be DEVASTATING at the local level.

Cutting programs.

Firing healthcare workers.

Ending services for thousands of people.

Current MHSA programs are a LIFELINE for underserved communities and people without insurance. Many of these services WON'T SURVIVE Prop. 1's cuts.

Prop. 1's pricey bonds are a FALSE PROMISE on homelessness. *Two-thirds* of the money is for time-limited and potentially "locked" treatment beds, NOT PERMANENT HOUSING.

When people leave treatment, they'll be BACK ON THE STREETS, still disabled, unable to work, again without housing.

Prop. 1 also fuels a DANGEROUS trend toward forced treatment. Studies show it's ineffective and is associated with higher suicide risks. DISTURBINGLY, Gov. Newsom unveiled his Prop. 1 at L.A. County General Hospital, which FORCIBLY RESTRAINS patients at a rate 50 times the national average!

Prop. 1 doesn't "fix" a broken system, it BREAKS something that's WORKING: the MHSA.

*DON'T RAID current mental health programs to pay for Prop. 1. Please vote NO!*

**Heidi Strunk**, CEO

Mental Health America of California

**Andrea Wagner**, Executive Director

California Association of Mental Health Peer-Run Organizations

**Paul Simmons**, Executive Director

Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance of California

- *Proposition 1 strengthens local control.* Bipartisan mayors across the state support Proposition 1 because it gives local communities desperately needed mental health and addiction treatment services to manage the crisis on the ground.
- *Proposition 1 has tough guarantees.* Veterans support Proposition 1 because it was written with strict accountability measures, including mandatory audits, to ensure that funds are spent as voters intend.

We can finally fix our broken mental health system and put tens of thousands of Californians on a path to greater health and dignity.

Vote YES on Proposition 1: Treatment, Not Tents

Learn more at: ***treatmentnottents.com*** (<https://treatmentnottents.com/>)

**Stephen Peck**, Director

California Association of Veteran Service Agencies

**Jennifer Barrera**, CEO

California Chamber of Commerce

**Alan W. Barcelona**, Chair

Orange County Coalition of Police and Sheriffs (OC Cops)

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*Arguments printed on this page are the opinions of the authors and have not been checked for accuracy by any official agency.*

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