

WHY YOU SHOULD VOTE “NO” ON PROPOSITION 16

What is Proposition 16?

Proposition 16 is a simple repeal proposition. The only thing it does is deleting this section of the California constitution:

“The state shall not discriminate against, or grant preferential treatment to, any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity or national origin in the operation of public employment, public education or public contracting.”

What is Proposition 209?

Proposition 209 added the section quoted above to the California constitution in 1996 to prohibit discrimination or preference based on race, sex, color, ethnicity or national origin in California state government. Proposition 209 is also known as the California Civil Rights Initiative.

What does a “YES” or “NO” vote for Proposition 16 really do?

A “YES” vote for Proposition 16 changes the California constitution to **allow California state government to discriminate** against or grant preferences based on race, sex, color, ethnicity or national origin in the operations of public education, public employment, and government contracting.

A “NO” vote against Proposition 16 keeps the California constitution the same as it is today, with the section added by Proposition 209, so California state government is not allowed to discriminate against or grant preferences on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity or national origin in public education, public employment, and government contracting. .

What is at stake with Proposition 16?

If Proposition 16 passes, **equal opportunity** and the **merit-based system** will be replaced by a race-based system for university admission and public hiring and contracting.

Today, California state employment and public universities are incredibly diverse, much more so than before Proposition 209, and at the same time California offers equal opportunity to all Californians regardless of their race, sex or national origin. **Proposition 16 would bring racial discrimination to California.**

How can society really help disadvantaged groups and individuals?

Disadvantaged or underserved groups and individuals need better housing and better K-12 education to help children succeed before they apply for colleges or government jobs.

Proposition 16 would discriminate against some applicants and in favor of others on the basis of race.

The solutions engineered by Proposition 16 in equalizing outcomes do nothing to solve the root causes behind achievement gaps and other structural disparities. Proposition 16 does nothing to truly lift up the underserved population, but instead takes away their self-agency to succeed.

As a society, we must work to empower all people under the equal treatment framework guaranteed by Proposition 209.