

...might not be Proposition 23, although I'm cheating somewhat because climate change is more about the *global* environment than the state's.

So maybe you're thinking of [Proposition 21](#), which raises the Vehicle License Fee by \$18 in order to fund state parks? Important, yes, but not *the* most important.

[Proposition 19](#), which supports the growing of, uh, weed? Nice try, but no.

The most important initiative is [Proposition 25](#), which reduces California's archaic and dysfunctional 2/3 requirement for the Legislature to pass a budget to a simple majority. It retains the 2/3 requirement to raise taxes. Essentially, it says: the minority can block tax increases, but the majority gets to allocate funds the way that it wants. That's called democracy, and it's a pretty good idea. For voters, the sweetener is that if the Legislature fails to pass a budget by June 15th, then legislators forfeit their salaries. The idea here is: we've given you the tools, now get the job done.

As long as California government remains dysfunctional, then it cannot protect or enhance the environment. Agencies go dark. Employees get furloughed. Contractors get stiffed. And most importantly, the minority holds the budget hostage.

Predictably, the antis are getting desperate, so they have resorted to the oldest trick in the book: straightforward medacity. The No forces claim that because the initiative reads in part, "Notwithstanding any other provision of law ... bills providing for appropriations related to the budget may be passed [by] a majority, it creates a secret back door for a tax increase.

That's really grasping at straws. Right up at the front, the measure reads, "This measure will not change the two-thirds vote requirement for the Legislature to raise taxes." That's also the ballot summary prepared by the Attorney General's office, as well as the position taken in the ballot argument, which courts defer to. The only reason for the language cited by the No forces is to allow for appropriations as part of the budget, and everyone knows it. So does the Court of Appeal, which held in August that "We find nothing in the substantive provisions that would allow the Legislature to circumvent the existing constitutional requirement of a two-thirds vote to raise taxes."

The other argument from the Nos is that the salary cutoff is bogus because it

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doesn't require the Legislature to pass a budget actually signed by the Governor. That's true, but irrelevant. The Legislature's budget shouldn't be held hostage by the Governor, and vice-versa. The point of the initiative is to fix one significant problem of California governance. It does that. That's why it should pass. And it's why the pro-Gridlock forces are having such a hard time fighting it.