



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

RECOMMENDS

November 8, 2016 GENERAL ELECTION

More info: www.lwvbae.org

BERKELEY MEASURES

MEASURE E1 **Berkeley Schools Excellence Program (BSEP) Parcel Tax** **YES**

Keep Berkeley schools strong and vote YES on Measure E1. The BSEP parcel tax has augmented state funding for our schools since 1986, and is up for renewal. The BSEP tax revenues currently provide 20% of the funding for the Berkeley Public Schools, including funds for a third of the teachers to keep class sizes small, 100% of all school libraries, music programs, support for struggling students, educational technology and professional development, middle school counselors, family engagement, and public information and translation. A 2/3 vote is required to pass.

MEASURE T1 **Infrastructure and Facilities Bond** **YES**

It is time we tackled our failing infrastructure. This \$100 million bond measure would be spent on needed capital improvements and major maintenance for Berkeley's parks, facilities, streets and watershed. Waiting will only increase costs; further, bond rates are at historic lows. The bond monies would be spent on highest priority needs ranging from seismic improvements, parks, street paving, storm water and watershed. The process, involving extensive public outreach, would be overseen by the Public Works Commission and Parks and Waterfront Commission. A 2/3 vote is required to pass.

MEASURE U1 **Rental Unit Business License Tax – City Sponsored** **YES**

This measure would increase the business license tax on owners of five or more residential rental units from 1.08% to 2.88% on gross receipts, prohibiting pass-through to tenants and providing various exemptions. The amount of additional revenue is estimated in the range of \$3 to \$3.5 million annually to the general fund, with direction to the Housing Advisory Commission to recommend affordable housing projects. Proceeds would facilitate about 25-35 affordable housing units per year, depending on revenue. New construction is exempted for the first twelve years to encourage building more rental units.

MEASURE V1 **Gann Appropriation Limit** **YES**

Measure V1 raises the Gann Limit for City of Berkeley spending, so Berkeley can spend the tax money already approved by voters, and any new revenue approved this year. The State Constitution requires that, every four years, voter authorization is required to raise the spending limit, called the "Gann Limit".

MEASURE W1 **Citizens' Redistricting Commission** **YES**

This amendment to the City Charter removes the City Council redistricting process from the political arena by forming a Citizens' Redistricting Commission – independent of city council – to redraw the City's eight district lines as required following each ten-year census. The proposed commission and process is patterned after the California state system. The process is designed to be open and transparent and to allow for public comment in the drawing of district boundaries.

MEASURE X1 **Public Campaign Financing** **NEUTRAL**

While not critical for Berkeley, this is a "good government" proposal. With this measure, if a candidate chooses to limit all contributions to \$50 or less, those contributions would be matched at 6:1 by the City, thus potentially providing funds to broaden the diversity of candidates – which is good. However, this measure is not critical because Berkeley already limits individual contributions to candidates to \$250, and prohibits donations from businesses – restrictions that are strong to limit money in politics. The League is neutral also because general fund costs, estimated at \$1-2 million per election cycle, are not currently provided for in the City's budget.

MEASURE Y1 **Youth Voting** **YES**

Research shows that bringing 16- and 17-year-olds into local voting, such as for Berkeley School Board Directors, helps to establish a life-long habit of voting and strengthen civic identity. Research further shows that the participation of their parents may increase 3-5%. This local measure requires that 16- and 17-year old voting can only be implemented if it is technically feasible. If and when this test is met, the School Board has set aside funding to implement this voting program according to the Superintendent's office.

MEASURE Z1 **Low Income Housing Authorization** **YES**

This measure authorizes local public entities to develop, construct or acquire additional units of low-rent housing for persons of low income to meet the requirement of the California Constitution. This measure does not approve specific housing projects or commit City funds to any housing project.

MEASURE AA **Rent Board Ordinance** **NEUTRAL**

This ordinance would amend the Rent Stabilization Ordinance for tenant eviction caused by owner move-in to one of her/his units. It is designed to aid tenants but burdens owners. It would increase the fee owners must pay tenants from the current \$4500 provided to low-income tenants to \$15,000-\$20,000 for any tenant, regardless of income level. The ordinance would further prohibit owner move-in evictions of families with children during the academic year, and adds some needed clarifications.

BERKELEY MEASURES, continued

Minimum Wage

There are two competing measures on the ballot. However, in the time since they were placed on the ballot, a compromise measure was reached and adopted as an ordinance by the City Council. This new ordinance increases the minimum wage to \$15 per hour in 2018, includes mandated paid sick leave (six days for small business employees, nine days for others), and phases out youth-in-job training.

Authors of both Measure BB and Measure CC recommend a “NO” vote on both.

MEASURE BB **Minimum Wage – City Sponsored** **NO**

MEASURE CC **Minimum Wage – Citizens’ Initiative** **NO**

MEASURE DD **Rental Unit Business License Tax – Citizens’ Initiative** **NO**

This measure was put on the ballot by the Berkeley Rental Housing Association, a landlords’ group, as an alternative to Measure U1. It proposes a business license tax of 1.5% on owners of three or more units. This is a lower rate than the 2.88% proposed in Measure U1, and includes owners of three or more units, i.e. smaller landlords. Like Measure U1 it does not allow pass-through to most tenants, but unlike Measure U1 does include new construction. The lower rate provides about \$1.4 million in revenue, and thus will facilitate perhaps 10-14 affordable housing units per year.

ALBANY MEASURES

MEASURE N1 **Measure D Reform** **YES**

Measure D, passed in 1978, requires two off-street parking spaces for every new residence, whether the residence is a studio or 3,000 square foot house. This requirement is increasingly out of step with decreasing car ownership rates, and unnecessarily limits flexibility for different types of housing. Passage of Measure N1 would allow the City Council to alter parking requirements following the usual public process for changing the Zoning Code, as is the case in most other cities.

MEASURE O1 **Tax on Sugar-Sweetened Beverages** **YES**

Scientific consensus agrees that current rates of sugar-sweetened beverage consumption are at least partially responsible for incidence of various health conditions, such as diabetes. Passage of this measure would add a tax on sugar-sweetened beverages in the same manner as Berkeley’s “soda tax,” with the exception that in lieu of a panel to advise the Council how to spend the revenue to improve public health, three existing Albany Commissions will provide this advice.

MEASURE P1 **Property Tax for Sidewalks** **YES**

This measure provides revenue to repair Albany’s sidewalks so they are safe. Even though sidewalks are public infrastructure, currently the adjacent private property owner is responsible for maintenance. Some owners do and some do not, resulting in irregular maintenance and safety hazards. This measure would give the maintenance responsibility to the City, paid for by an annual tax of about \$15 per apartment or condominium and \$38 per house, with exemptions for low-income home owners and a rebate for low-income home renters.

The League has no recommendation on Measure Q1 (Police & Fire Fighter Pension Board), Measure R1 (Civil Service Board), Measure S1 (School Board Term Limits)

There are no local measures for Emeryville on the November 8 ballot

For a full and balanced analysis of the measures see www.votersedge.org/ca and the websites listed below.

VOTE WITH THE LEAGUE NOVEMBER 8!



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