



# VOTER GUIDE LOS ANGELES CITY AND COUNTY BALLOT MEASURES



**March 7, 2017 Primary Nominating Election  
Polls open from 7am to 8pm**

**This Voter Guide contains information on**  
LA County Measure H  
LA City Measure M and N  
LA City Measure P  
LA City Measure S

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY MEASURE H**  
**Los Angeles County Plan to Prevent and Combat Homelessness**  
***Sales Tax --- 2/3 Approval Required***

**The Question:**

To fund mental health, substance abuse treatment, health care, education, job training, rental subsidies, emergency and affordable housing, transportation, outreach, prevention, and supportive services for homeless children, families, foster youth, veterans, battered women, seniors, disabled individuals, and other homeless adults, shall voters authorize Ordinance No. 2017-0001 to levy a ¼ cent sales tax for ten years, with independent annual audits and citizens' oversight?

**The Situation:**

According to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), there were 115,738 homeless in California in 2015, over 20% of the nation's homeless, by far the most of any state. The estimate for one night in Los Angeles County was 46,874, up about 6% from 2014. Homelessness was named as one of the biggest problems in the County.

The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (a city agency) conducts counts of the homeless in Los Angeles County as well as in the city, counting both the sheltered and the unsheltered. Although the total dropped from 65,287 in 2005 to 38,602 in 2009, it has been climbing slowly since then. Estimates by the Institute for the Study of Homelessness and Poverty at the Weingart Center are much higher: about 254,000 men, women, and children homeless at some point during a year in Los Angeles County and approximately 82,000 homeless on any given night.

**The Proposal:**

Measure H would raise the county-wide Transaction and Use Tax (TUT) (i.e., the county sales tax) by ¼ cent for ten years, with the funds raised going to combat homelessness as specified in the measure. Application of Measure H funds would be under the direction of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors with oversight by a five-person Citizens' Oversight Advisory Board (COAB) that would semiannually review tax expenditures and annually publish an accounting. In addition, the County Auditor-Controller would prepare an annual audit of Measure H proceeds.

**Fiscal Impact:**

The County estimates that the ¼-cent Homelessness TUT will bring in approximately \$373 million per year. TUTs, whether general or specific, are capped at 2% countywide. Currently, prior to Measure H, the county levies TUTs that total 1% countywide. However, cities also have the authority to levy TUTs. For example, La Mirada, Pico Rivera, and South Gate have their own 1% TUTs, but would not lose that income because of the cap. If Measure H passes,

they would receive the revenue from the countywide TUT to replace their own TUT income, and county income would be reduced accordingly. The \$373 million estimate of Measure H income already takes into account the small amount that would be credited to those three cities.

**Supporters Say:**

- Daily, over 47,000 in our county are homeless, including many women, children, and veterans,
- The growing homelessness crisis disrupts nearly every community in the county.
- The longer we wait, the more expensive it will be to deal with the issue.
- The homeless need more than housing; Measure H is a broad-based approach, urgently needed.

**Opponents Say:**

- Taxes are already too high and should be reduced, not increased.
- A sales tax is a regressive tax that places the burden on those least able to pay.
- Localities are better equipped to deal with the problem than the county at large.
- Voters recently approved increases in county taxes and should not be asked for more so soon.

**Signers of Argument in Favor:**

JACKIE LACEY, L.A. County District Attorney

ELISE BUIK, United Way of Greater L.A.

MARY LESLIE, President, L.A. Business Council

YVETTE J. KELLEY, President/CEO, New Directions for Veterans

ALEX JOHNSON, Executive Director, Children's Defense Fund-California

**(No argument against this measure was submitted)**

**A YES vote means:** You want to raise the L.A. County sales tax by an additional 1/4 cent for ten years.

**A NO vote means:** You do not want to raise the L.A. County Sales tax by an additional 1/4 cent.

## LOS ANGELES CITY MEASURES M AND N

*There are two competing measures on the ballot dealing with regulation and taxation of cannabis (a.k.a. marijuana): Measure M, placed on the ballot by the L.A. City Council, and Measure N, placed on the ballot by citizen-sponsored ballot initiative. A majority vote is needed to pass either of these measures; if both measures pass, the one with the most votes would prevail.*

***NOTE: The citizen proponents of Measure N have abandoned their measure in favor of Measure M. Although Measure N remains on the ballot, its proponents say that they no longer believe that Measure N is in the city's best interest, and strongly urge everyone to vote NO on Measure N and YES on Measure M. Because proponents have in effect withdrawn Measure N, it will not be discussed here. A discussion of Measure M follows.***

### MEASURE M

#### **The Question:**

Should the city adopt regulations, taxation and enforcement procedures regarding cannabis, and require citizen input for any future such regulations?

#### **The Situation:**

In 2015, the state passed the "Medical Cannabis Regulation and Safety Act," which created new licensing requirements for medical cannabis activities. Prior to the passage of that law, there was no such statewide regulation, and it was up to local governments to enact their own regulations. In March 2013, Los Angeles voters passed Proposition D, which restricted the operation of medical cannabis dispensaries in the city to a certain group of dispensaries.

Additionally, in November 2016, state voters passed Proposition 64, which legalized the recreational use of marijuana for adults, and established the right of local governments to regulate commercial cannabis activity in their jurisdictions. Because of these two new laws, the city can create new regulations for cannabis activities or prohibit them entirely.

#### **The Proposal:**

After January 1, 2018, it would be unlawful to engage in commercial cannabis activity without a license. There would be criminal and civil penalties for violations, including fees, nuisance abatement and possible disconnection of water and power services. Proposition D would be repealed on the same date (or another date specified by the Council), and dispensaries operating legally under Proposition D would be given priority licensing under any new city laws.

The City Council would have the authority to amend existing regulations, and adopt new regulations, regarding cannabis. Prior to the enactment of any new regulations, public

hearings with the participation of various stakeholders would be required. Stakeholders would include police, neighborhood councils, school officials, civic organizations, cannabis-related industries and many others.

Starting January 1, 2018, gross receipt tax rates for various commercial cannabis activities would be established. These rates are summarized in the Financial Impact statement below.

**Financial Impact:**

- The gross receipt tax on medical cannabis sales would be reduced from 6% to 5%.
- A gross receipts tax of 10% would be established for recreational cannabis sales.
- A gross receipts tax of 1% to 2% would be established for transportation, testing, research, manufacturing, cultivation, or other commercialization of cannabis.

The impact of these changes cannot currently be quantified. Revenue loss from decreasing the medical cannabis tax and additional regulatory expenditures could be offset by new taxes, permits and fees related to recreational and commercial cannabis activities.

Gross receipt tax revenues are deposited in the city General Fund and used for general purposes throughout the city, including police, fire, street services, parks and libraries.

**Argument in Favor:**

Measure M would ensure that the voices of all the people of Los Angeles are heard when it comes time to license, regulate and tax marijuana. The measure sets tough fines and penalties for unauthorized marijuana sales, helps police prevent crime, assures that the city will be able to close down illegal marijuana stores, and creates certainty and a regulatory framework for businesses that operate legally.

**Signers of Argument in Favor:** CRAIG LALLY, *President, L.A. Police Protective League*; CHARLIE BECK, *L.A. Chief of Police*; MINNIE HADLEY-HEMPSTEAD, *President, NAACP Los Angeles*; RUSTY HICKS, *Executive Secretary-Treasurer, L.A. County Federation of Labor*; JILL BANKS BARAD, *Founder/Chair, Valley Alliance of Neighborhood Councils*; MARY LESLIE, *President, L.A. Business Council*; YAMILETH BOLANOS, *medical marijuana advocate*; STEVEN K. LUBELL, *Commissioner (Ret), Supreme Court of California*.

**No argument against this measure was submitted.**

**A Yes Vote Means:**

You are in favor of the new regulations set forth in Measure M.

**A NO Vote Means:**

You are not in favor of these new regulations.

LOS ANGELES CITY CHARTER AMENDMENT P  
MAXIMUM TERM OF HARBOR DEPARTMENT LEASES  
Placed on the ballot by vote of the Los Angeles City Council.  
*A majority vote is required for passage*

**The Question:** Should the Los Angeles City Charter be amended to increase the maximum term for Harbor Department franchises, concessions, permits, licenses and leases from a maximum of 50 years to a maximum of 66 years?

**The Situation:** The Harbor Department, also known as the Port of Los Angeles, is a proprietary department of the city of Los Angeles. The Harbor Department oversees nearly 300 property agreements throughout the Harbor District, including concession agreements, leases, operating agreements and permits.

City Charter Section 607 provides that the maximum length of Harbor Department franchises, concessions, permits, licenses and leases (hereafter, "Leases") is 50 years, consistent with state law at the time of the adoption of said Charter Section. In October of 2015, however, the applicable state law was amended to allow a maximum term of 66 years for such Leases.

**The Proposal:** The City Charter would be amended to allow for the new maximum length of 66 years for such Leases. The requirement that the City Council approve all such Leases would remain unchanged.

**Financial Impact:** Any financial impact cannot be determined until future agreements subject to this amendment are proposed. The measure potentially would impact the Harbor Department Revenue Fund; there is no anticipated impact to the city's General Fund.

**Argument in Favor:** This is a technical change that will assist in attracting private investments to upgrade the Los Angeles waterfront, creating jobs, sales-tax income and economic benefits to the communities of San Pedro and Wilmington. It is consistent with the lease terms of a majority of California ports.

**Signers of Argument in Favor:** JOE BUSCAINO, L.A. Councilmember, 15<sup>th</sup> District; ELISE SWANSON, President/CEO, San Pedro Chamber of Commerce; GARY TOEBBEN; President/CEO, L.A. Area Chamber of Commerce.

***No argument against this measure was submitted***

**A Yes Vote Means:** You want to allow the maximum length of time for Harbor Department Leases to be changed from 50 years to 66 years.

**A NO Vote Means:** You want to keep the current 50-year length of time for these Leases

LOS ANGELES MEASURE S  
BUILDING MORATORIUM; RESTRICTIONS ON GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENTS;  
REQUIRED REVIEW OF GENERAL PLAN  
Initiative Ordinance  
*A majority vote is required for passage*

**The Question:** Should the city impose a two-year moratorium on projects seeking certain General Plan amendments or zone or height-district changes, and adopt other new requirements regarding the General Plan?

**The Situation:** State law requires that all cities and counties prepare a general plan that includes such elements as land use, open space, housing, seismic safety and public safety. Los Angeles has a citywide General Plan and community plans in 35 neighborhoods. The plans include requirements for zoning, density and height; however, the plans are severely out of date, and don't reflect current situations. City officials expect to update the plans over the next decade, but in the meantime, developers often want to build projects that require amendments to the plans or variances in height or zoning requirements. Amendments and variances must be approved by the Mayor, City Council and Planning Commission and Planning Department officials. Some critics complain that these officials grant too many such amendments and variances, and that the projects approved are detrimental to the neighborhoods where they are built.

**The Proposal:**

Measure S, also known as "The Neighborhood Integrity Initiative," would impose a two-year moratorium on projects seeking General Plan amendments or zone or height-district changes if such changes permit more intense land use, density or height than what is currently permitted, or would change a zone from agricultural, open space or industrial to any other type of zoning. The moratorium would apply retroactively to projects already approved by the city.

- The moratorium would not apply to a project that consists entirely of affordable housing units and does not require a plan amendment, or to certain projects required by law, such as rebuilding after an earthquake.
- The moratorium would expire in two years from the effective date of this measure, or when the City Council adopts an updated General Plan and updated community plans, whichever occurs first.

Measure S would also:

- Require a review of the General Plan and community plans every five years.
- Prohibit project applicants from preparing their own Environmental Impact Reports.
- Require General Plan consistency for any amendments, project approvals and permit decisions.

- Require that any amendment to the General Plan encompass an area which has significant social, economic, or physical identity, as defined in the measure.
- Prohibit parking variances that reduce on-site parking (including by off-site parking) by more than one-third of the number of spaces required to be provided under the Municipal Code.

**Financial Impact:** According to the City Administrative Officer, Measure S would cost the city millions of dollars in lost revenue from permits, licenses and other fees that would have been charged to applicable projects. Services and community benefits funded through associated mitigation impact fees and other charges related to development would decrease by millions of dollars. To offset this revenue loss, the city might have to reduce existing staffing levels. The decrease in building, planning and public works activity during and immediately following the moratorium would determine the extent of revenue loss and staff reductions. The number of projects that would be subject to the moratorium and their impact on the local economy is unknown.

**Argument in Favor:** To reward billionaire developers, City Hall has jammed skyscrapers into once-affordable communities, destroyed our open space, severely increased traffic and overwhelmed our water, sewer and emergency services. Measure S will end this politically rigged system by establishing a reasonable two-year ban on “spot zoning” that will halt the huge negative impact on our neighborhoods created by a small pool of politically connected developers.

**Signers of Argument in Favor:** MICHAEL WEINSTEIN, *President, AIDS Healthcare Foundation* (sponsor of Measure S); RICHARD J. RIORDAN, *Former Mayor of L.A.*; REV. ALICE CALLAGHAN, *Founder, Las Familias del Pueblo on Skid Row*; GLORIA ROMERO, *California State Senate Majority Leader (Ret.)*; SEAN CHANDRA ESQ., *L.A. Tenants Union*; RICHARD CLOSE, *President, Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association*; KENNETH S. ALPERN, M.D., *Chairman, The Transit Coalition*; MABEL CHANG, *L.A. City Planning Commission President (Ret.)*; OPAL M. YOUNG, *President, Baldwin Hills-Crenshaw Homeowners Coalition*; GRACE YOO, *Co-Founder, Environmental Justice Collaborative*.

**Additional Signers of Rebuttal to Argument Against:** DIANE E. WATSON, *U.S. Congresswoman (Ret.)*; JOYCE FOSTER, *Past President, Board of L.A. Building and Safety Commissioners*; GERALD A. SILVER, *President, homeowners of Encino*; ROBERT FARRELL, *L.A. City Councilmember, Planning and Land use Committee (Ret.)*; CARMEN TRUTANICH, *Former L.A. City Attorney*; ELENA POPP, *Co-Founder/Executive Director, Eviction Defense Network*; DICK PLATKIN, *L.A. City Planner (Ret.)*; XOCHITL GONZALES, *Westiders Opposed to Overdevelopment*; ANASTASIA MANN, *President, Hollywood Hills West Neighborhood Council*.

**Supporters' Website** (for additional information on Measure S and its supporters):  
[www.voteyesons.org](http://www.voteyesons.org)

**Argument Against:** We need to fix L.A.'s planning process, but Measure S goes too far. Measure S will eliminate \$3.8 billion in economic activity, driving our city back into recession. It will cost taxpayers \$140 million in lost revenue needed for police, firefighters and other vital city services. It will destroy 24,000 jobs, costing workers \$1.28 billion in lost wages, and will block the building of voter-approved homeless housing and affordable housing.

**Signers of Argument Against:** RUSTY HICKS, *Executive Secretary-Treasurer, L.A. County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO*; ELISE BUIK, *President/CEO, United Way of Greater L.A.*; GARY TOEBBEN, *President/CEO, L.A. Area Chamber of Commerce*; ALAN GREENLEE, *Executive Director, Southern California Association of Non-Profit Housing*; ANNE MISKEY, *CEO, Downtown Women's Center*; FRANK LIMA, *President, United Firefighters Of L.A. City*; PAAVO MONKKONEN, *Professor of Urban Planning, UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs*; JONATHAN PARFREY, *Executive Director, Climate Resolve*; CAROL NEWMAN, *Secretary, Lake Balboa Neighborhood Council*; JAY HANDAL, *Treasurer, West L.A. Neighborhood Council*.

**Additional Signers of Rebuttal to Argument in Favor:** ERIC GARCETTI, *L.A. Mayor*; RON MILLER, *Executive Secretary, L.A./O.C. Building & Construction Trades Council, AFL-CIO*; RABBI JONATHAN KLEIN, *Executive Director, Clergy & Laity United for Economic Justice*; LERON GUBLER, *President/CEO, Hollywood Chamber of Commerce*; MARTIN WACHS, *Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Urban Planning, UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs*; KEN CRAFT, *President/CEO, Hope of the Valley Rescue Mission*; MICHAEL MANVILLE, *Professor of Urban Planning, UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs*; MICHAEL MENJIVAR, *Treasurer/Chair, Planning & Land Use Committee, North Hollywood Northeast Neighborhood Council*; ANGUS BEVERLY, *Student Director, Westwood Neighborhood Council*.

**Opponents' Website:** (for additional information and a long list of opponents):  
[www.goestoofar.com](http://www.goestoofar.com)

**A Yes Vote Means:** You want to impose a two-year moratorium on projects seeking General Plan Amendments or zone or height-district changes, and adopt certain other new requirements regarding the General Plan.

**A No Vote Means:** You do not want to impose a two-year moratorium on projects seeking General Plan Amendments or zone or height-district changes, or adopt certain other requirements regarding the General Plan.