

September 2004

Dear PTA Leader,

This special election mailing contains materials to assist you with activities to educate your members and others in the community about the many important issues on upcoming statewide November 2, 2004 General Election Ballot and to encourage voter participation in the electoral process.

PTA Position on Ballot Measures

According to the California State PTA Legislation Policies adopted by convention delegates in May 2004, the Board of Managers of the California State PTA is responsible for taking action on state legislation and statewide initiative petitions or propositions that have qualified for the statewide ballot. Legislative measures selected for action by the Board of Managers must be of statewide significance; and must fit within the Purposes of the PTA and within the framework of the Legislation Platform adopted by the convention delegates. All action on legislation taken by the Board of Managers must be reported to PTA districts and be available upon request to PTA councils, units and the membership. Procedures adopted by the California State PTA Board of Managers state:

When positions are adopted on state ballot measures:

- *The rationale for California State PTA Board action shall be prepared by the California State PTA Board of Managers and distributed to PTA districts, councils, and units;*
- *The position and rationale shall be presented to the membership by the units.*

The California State PTA has taken a position on three propositions that will appear on the November 2, 2004 General Election Ballot. In July the California State PTA Board of Managers voted to SUPPORT Proposition 61, the Children's Hospitals Bond Act of 2004, to SUPPORT Proposition 63, The Mental Health Services Act, and to OPPOSE Proposition 68, the Non-Tribal Commercial Gambling Expansion. Tribal Gaming Compact Amendments. Revenues, Tax Exemptions. Initiative Constitutional Amendments and Statute.

This action represents the official position of the organization and shall not be interpreted as representing the personal opinion or conviction of every individual PTA member. While PTA districts, councils, and units are not required to work actively for any position, they may not officially oppose a stand taken by the California State PTA.

Descriptions and analysis of Proposition 61, Proposition 63 and Proposition 68 are included in this mailing, along with background information and the rationale for California State PTA's positions. For additional information and updates, please visit the California Children's Hospital Association at www.savethechildrenshospitals.com for information on Proposition 61 and the campaign websites for Proposition 63 and Proposition 68 at www.yeson63.org and www.Stop68.com for more information and to download campaign materials in English and other languages.

To learn about restrictions on sending informational materials on legislative issues or advocacy materials home with students, please refer to Legislation Policy 11 on pages 126-127 of the *California State PTA Toolkit*. Also refer to Section 4.3 of the *Toolkit*, Election Campaigns and the Role of PTA, pages 127-130, for specific information on lobbying, candidates' forums and local school bond and other ballot measure campaigns.

On November 2 Californians will face one of the longest and most complicated ballots in the ninety years since the state embraced direct democracy. There are a total of sixteen propositions on the ballot, including three sets of propositions that compete with each other, one rarely used referendum to overturn current law, four propositions that were included by the Legislature. Another measure, Proposition 65, was placed on the ballot by local government to protect their funding, but it has since been abandoned by the sponsors. However, Proposition 65 will appear on a Supplemental Ballot along with Proposition 1A, which was placed on the ballot as part of the 2004-05 budget agreement. A new California Budget Project brief explores what Proposition 1A might mean for future state budgets. **The California State PTA does not have a position on either Proposition 65 or Proposition 1A.**

Voter Guides

A new resource from the National PTA, the "National PTA 2004 Voter Guide" is just out, and we have included a reproducible copy in this mailing. It is designed to assist members and non-members alike in becoming a more informed voter and advocate for children. The guide contains

- A list of questions that will help you learn about a candidate's position on the most pressing concerns and issues in public education today;
- Resources where you can find information on candidate's positions; and
- Information on how you can register to vote and where to go on Election Day.

Access the guide online at <http://www.pta.org/ptawashington/vote.asp> or download it as a PDF from <http://www.pta.org/ptawashington/guide.pdf>.

The League of Women Voters, with the generous support of the California Secretary of State's Office, has again published the Easy Voter Guide for the November 2 General Election. The guide provides statements from California's political parties, plus statements and photos of the candidates for President and U.S. Senate. It also features succinct summaries of the statewide ballot measures and voting tips. It is available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese and Russian, and can be downloaded at www.easyvoter.org.

California State PTA supports Proposition 61 and Proposition 63, and opposes Proposition 68 on the General Election Ballot. Remember to vote on November 2, 2004.

Sincerely,

Carla Niño
President

Cecelia Mansfield
Director of Legislation