



Demystifying the Mysterious: California's Election Laws

Part 8: Extended Election Days/Election Day Holiday

The U.S. Constitution establishes ONE DAY for voting.

For over a century, American voters often had to travel long distances by horse or horse-drawn carriage to cast their ballot. And yet they cherished the right enough to embrace it and make a concerted effort to go and vote without complaint.

Now in California, most of us have a polling location close enough to drive to and often within walking distance. Over half of the counties have polling locations open from 4 to 11 days so that voters can go to the polls "at their convenience."

And yet, disastrously, most of us have been lulled by convenience and misleading assurances that our mail-in ballot is secure that many of us no longer see the value of going to vote in person! Instead, we put our ballot in an envelope and subject it to a no-chain-of-custody, hundreds-of-handlers system **where so much could go wrong.**

EIPCa has published a multitude of articles explaining the dangers of envelope voting. Please go to www.eip-ca.com/ to read our past articles, many of which deal with this topic.

We, along with most election integrity experts and think-tanks, assert that only voting in person with photo ID and a paper ballot that is counted by hand the same day will return us to full election integrity. Of course, a carefully managed absentee ballot alternative should be available for those who have a certifiable need.

However, because we live in a complex world with busy schedules, a single voting day, especially a week day, might pose an unreasonable barrier for some voters.

Therefore, it is reasonable to support opening the polls for FOUR days, Saturday - Tuesday, with the rest of the protections above intact.

People enthusiastic about increasing voter turnout often support making Election Day a holiday. The idea has actually been proposed twice so far in the California legislature.

However, the suggestion of establishing Election Day as a holiday is problematic in many ways.

1. There are federal elections, statewide elections, local elections, recall elections and special elections, each of which consists of a Primary Election followed by a General Election.
 - There is no way to make all of those election days a holiday.
 - Selecting only the General Election every two years for that status, as most proposals do, sends the wrong message that one election is more important than all others.

ALL elections are equally important to a thriving Republic.

2. An Election Day holiday only benefits state and/or federal employees and perhaps a few others.

- No other business can be ordered to or will shut down.
- Giving Election Day state or federal holiday status gives undue preference to a certain segment of the population and not the blue collar, working person.
- As such, the proposal would be discriminatory.

There is already a California law mandating employers to provide up to 2 hours of paid leave on Election Day to employees for the purpose of voting.

3. Efforts should be made to inform citizens so that all Californians will know they already have fair and equal access to vote, regardless of employment expectations. This could be done through PSAs, SOS announcements, required inclusion in all communications from ROVs, and ROV encouragement of all candidates and their parties.
4. It does not take all day to vote. With responsible division of precincts into legitimately manageable numbers of voters, everyone can easily vote in 10-30 minutes.
5. Almost half of CA counties (accounting for far more than 50% of the population) now operate under the Voters Choice Act, which grants 11 days to go to any Vote Center in the county to vote. There is no need for additional voting time for those voters.
6. Given the current voter mentality created by decades of propaganda and misinformation that voting by mail is easy (true) and safe (false), 75%+ of the population will continue to vote that way until they finally see the light.
 - For that huge percentage of the population there is no “Election Day”, only a “30-day season”, and an Election Day holiday would be meaningless and unnecessary for them.

7. Only 15-25% of voters would then remain as in-person, “Election Day” voters, and only a fraction of those work for the government and would actually be given a day off.

Given that voter turnout averages approximately 60% in most General Elections, proposing an Election Day holiday for 65% of a fraction of 15 - 25% of the people is clearly **symbolism over substance only**.

Equal and unimpeded access to voting for eligible citizens is non-negotiable.

But declaring a holiday only for the General Election every 2 years is a fatally flawed idea.

The American electoral process is broken in many ways and definitely needs fixing.

But regardless of what proponents of an Election Day holiday claim to believe, every citizen in this state **already has more than enough time** and opportunity to vote.

Let’s concentrate on fixing what is REALLY wrong with the system.

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