



Election Integrity Project[®]*California*
EVERY LAWFULLY CAST VOTE ACCURATELY COUNTED

On Your Honor

Part 6 of 7



Our Founding Fathers had a deep understanding of human nature, and created a constitution that recognizes that unethical people are prone to create governments that do not respect citizens' rights. Because we know that about human nature, it is natural to have concerns that bad actors might rig our elections if they could. Citizens should expect state officials to recognize this possibility and design election systems with safeguards to prevent wrongdoing.

Not in California. Its “on your honor” vote-by-mail system Assumes that virtually everyone can be trusted.

Parts 1-5 in this article series discussed California's “on your honor” policies of

- [lack of citizenship verification](#)
- [using faulty voter rolls as the basis for mass mailing ballots](#)
- [furnishing everyone on the voter rolls with ballots through the mail, making it possible for ballots to not reach the intended voters and/or end up in the wrong hands](#)
- [steering voters to return their ballots through ways that operate outside the view of observers and the public](#)
- [accepting almost all signatures during processing ballots through subjective and inadequate verification](#)

As if the problems created by what we exposed in the previous articles were not enough, to add insult to injury the State has transitioned from having an Election Day – established in the Constitution – to an Election Season, including multiple weeks for voters to cast ballots before (and after) Election Day and multiple weeks for officials to count the ballots after Election Day.

This extended election season blurs the deadline for casting and counting ballots. Further, the “on your honor” system **trusts voters** to report honestly the date they voted, and **trusts counties** to reject ballots beyond a blurred deadline.

- California passed emergency regulations in 2020 – after a mere five-day comment period that it did not publicize – requiring counties to accept vote by mail (VBM) ballots 17 days late without reliable verification that voters cast them on or before Election Day. Several other states, believing it to be necessary in the COVID environment, passed similar regulations.
- Immediately following that election, most states, realizing the damage that had been done to election integrity and voter confidence, retreated to more reasonable regulations. But California’s legislature hurried to codify its harmful regulations into permanent law, settling on a 7-day grace period for ballot arrival.

California counties now must accept a VBM ballot when (quoted directly from the statute) “a VBM identification envelope has no dated postmark, the postmark is illegible, and there is no date stamp for receipt from a bona fide private mail delivery service, but *the voter has dated the vote by mail ballot identification envelope* or the envelope otherwise indicates that the ballot was executed *on or before Election Day.*” (emphasis ours)

- Therefore, even if a county cannot reliably determine (other than take the “voter’s” word for it) that a ballot was cast on or before Election Day, California requires counties to accept and process ballots received up to **seven days** after Election Day.

Blurred deadlines create an open invitation for election manipulators to submit additional ballots after Election Day to overturn the legitimate results, especially in contests decided by very few votes.

Individuals and organizations swayed by the temptations of power and money inherent in the political system will not think twice about exploiting the enormous loopholes provided by this deadline extension. We know from many news reports that it is none too difficult to:

- co-opt or bribe postal officials to post-date postmarks for late ballots.
- co-opt individuals driving for “bona fide” private mail delivery services to deliver ballots slipped in after the official deadline.

This potentially damaging policy is unwise and unnecessary. People understand deadlines and how to meet them. Arrive on time or you miss the movie, the plane, the bus, the train, the play, the appointment. There is no grace period.

Irresponsibility has unforgiving consequences in every arena in life, except, apparently, in the California electoral process.

Extending the time for receiving and counting ballots, trusting voters to honestly report the date they voted, and blurring the voting deadline allows bad actors to create and submit additional ballots to overturn election results.

These possibilities have contributed to the destruction of integrity and voter confidence in our elections.

Please stay tuned for the final article in this **On Your Honor** series.