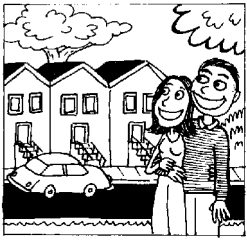


PROPOSITION 46

Housing and Emergency Shelter Trust Fund



This measure would allow the state to sell \$2.1 billion in bonds to fund 21 housing programs, including emergency shelters for homeless families with children, battered women's shelters, housing with social services for the homeless and mentally ill, home ownership assistance for veterans and others, and more. Some funds would be used to provide

developers with low-interest loans in exchange for reserving some units for low-income households. The measure also includes assistance to developers of housing for farmworkers.

ARGUMENTS FOR

Supporters of Prop. 46 point to statistics: 360,000 Californians are homeless and the number is rising; last year 23,000 women and children were turned away from domestic violence shelters because they were full; housing availability is at a historic low. "One of the most significant components of Prop. 46 is funding for emergency shelters that would not separate fathers from mothers and their children," says Julie Snyder of Housing California. Supporters say:

The biggest share of the money would go toward multi-family hous-

ing, including three- and four-bedroom units for large families. More shelters would keep kids in neighborhood schools and give them more space to do homework. More shelters are desperately needed: "90 percent of cities in California don't have battered women shelters," says Snyder. The distribution of funds would be subject to independent audits.

Supporters include: Housing California (916-447-0503), Congress of California Seniors, League of Women Voters, and the Association to Aid Victims of Domestic Violence

ARGUMENTS AGAINST

"If we want to improve housing availability in California, we first need to make it easier to construct new

homes [by removing] the red tape that homebuilders have to go through," says a statement by several Prop. 46 opponents. They also say:

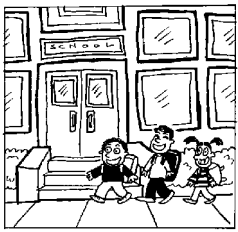
With the state's growing debts and budget deficit, California cannot afford to borrow more money. Only 15 percent of the money will be used to help new home-buyers with down payments, and then only in certain locations.

Opponents include: Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association (916-444-9950), Senator Ray Haynes, Assemblymember Anthony Pescetti

—Irene Moore

PROPOSITION 47

Kindergarten-University Public Education Facilities Bond Act



This measure would allow the state to issue \$13.5 billion worth of bonds to relieve overcrowded schools and repair older ones in K-12 systems, community colleges, and public universities. Funds would be spent on:

Construction—\$6.35 billion for new buildings, including about \$100 million for charter schools.

Modernization—\$3.3 billion to modernize existing buildings.

Critically overcrowded schools—\$1.7 billion for relieving districts with overcrowded schools.

Joint use projects—\$50 million for joint projects, such as a building for a school district and library district.

Higher education—Specific projects for university campuses, community colleges, and the California state library.

ARGUMENTS FOR

"Investing in our children's future is one of the most important investments the state can make to ensure California's economy stays healthy," says Michele Perrault of the California Chamber of Commerce. Supporters say:

This measure will reduce class sizes in overcrowded schools (sometimes 45 students in a classroom).

The funds will fix leaky roofs, repair bathrooms, install heating and air

conditioning, and improve earthquake safety as well as wire classrooms for the Internet.

The measure provides for audits and cost controls.

Supporters include: California Teachers Association (650-697-1400), PTA, League of Women Voters, California Chamber of Commerce, California Business Roundtable

ARGUMENTS AGAINST

"Because we've passed so many bonds in recent years, California has been assigned the third lowest credit rating in country...We should be extremely careful whenever we consider taking on more debt," says the National Tax Limitation Committee. Opponents say:

California has a growing debt and shouldn't sell more bonds, which is a form of borrowing money.

Schools with neediest kids aren't even obligated to begin building schools for six-and-a-half years; they just need to state their "intent," which would tie up money. The Los Angeles Unified School District is eligible for over 30 percent of new construction, though it accounts for only 12 percent of state's student population.

Opponents include: National Tax Limitation Committee (916-444-8294), Sen. William J. "Pete" Knight, Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association

—Irene Moore

For more explanation of the propositions, see page 2

Paid family leave for California?

A bill that would give California workers paid time off to care for a new baby or sick family member is headed for the governor's desk.

Federal law guarantees most workers up to 12 weeks of "family and medical leave," but few people can afford to take an unpaid leave, says the bill's author, Sen. Sheila Kuehl (D, L.A.), "We needed to find a way for people to take relatively short paid leave for those critical and rare times when you have a parent with a severe illness or a sick child who's in and out of the hospital."

The bill, SB 1661, would use the state's temporary disability system to provide income for people who take up to six weeks of family leave. At press time the bill had passed the Senate and looked likely to pass the Assembly, Kuehl said, so advocacy efforts are focusing on persuading the governor to sign the bill.

A few years ago, the idea of paid family leave seemed like a far-off dream to advocates for women and children. The backing of the California Labor Federation, along with support from women's organizations and child advocates, "pushed this issue more to the front burner" this year, Kuehl said.

Kuehl says she also agreed to key amendments to win the support of "a number of people in the Assembly who were concerned about the burden on business." The amendments shorten the leave to six weeks and call for funding it entirely by employee contributions. "I personally believe it's good for employers as well as employees," Kuehl said, "because people will come back to the job if they can leave to take care of emergencies."

For more information contact Senator Kuehl's office at 916-445-1353.

ELECTION CENTRAL: California Voices 4 Children

For comprehensive information and discussion of children's issues in this fall's election campaigns in California:

Check out the online discussion board at California Voices 4 Children.

Find out where the candidates stand on children's issues: Read their complete responses to questions from the *Children's Advocate* and *Children Now*—answers are summarized in this issue.

Discuss candidates and ballot measures with other advocates and providers.

Announce your own election-related advocacy efforts and get others involved!

www.4children.org/voices.htm