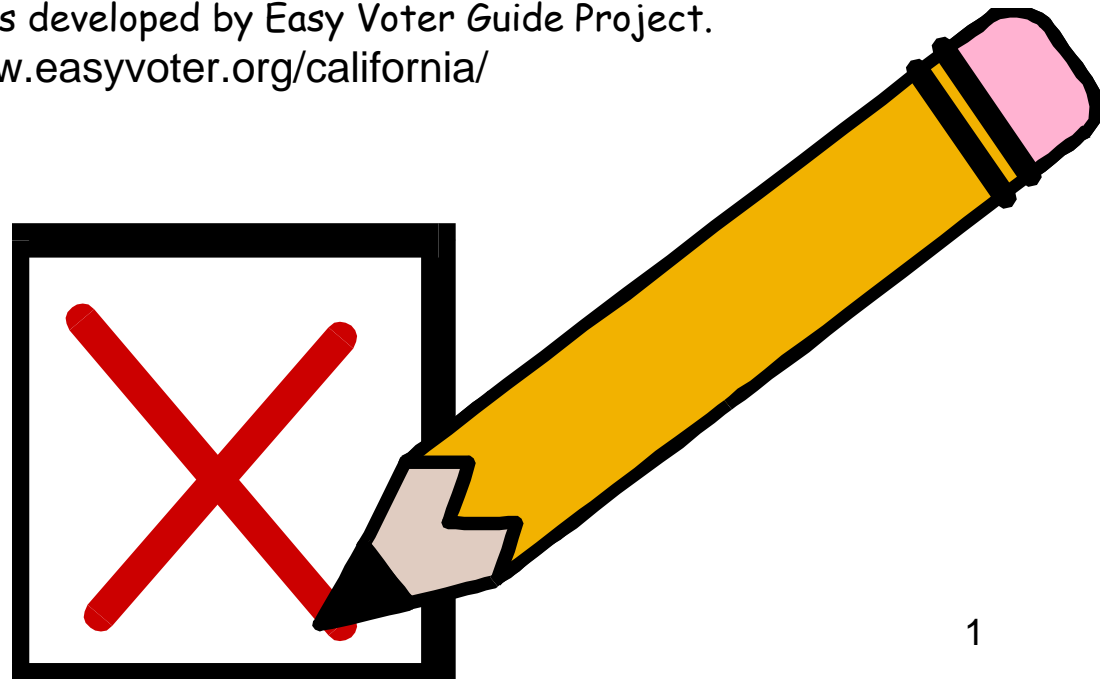


YOUR RIGHT TO VOTE

Margaret Jakobson

Protection & Advocacy, Inc.

Adapted from materials developed by Easy Voter Guide Project.
<http://www.easyvoter.org/california/>



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Introductions

- Name
- If you started a political party what animal would you use as your mascot?

Why Vote/Why Not Vote

- Why?
 - To make a change
 - Can't complain
 - Set an example
 - I care about the issue
- Why Not?
 - Inconvenient
 - Takes too long
 - Don't understand what I am voting for

What Do You Want to Change

- What would you like to change in your community?
 - More affordable housing
 - More transportation
 - More jobs
 - And?
 - And?

What Happens When Some of Us Do Not Vote?

- Stand by the issue you care about most
- In November 2002 election only about 1/3 of the people who could vote – actually voted
- Voting is easy!

Voting Eligibility

- To register to vote you must be
 - 18 years old or older
 - A U.S. Citizen
 - Not in prison or on parole for a felony
 - Not on a conservatorship that took away your right to vote
- Get a form from
 - Library, Regional Center, Post Office, PAI

Voting Registration

- When do I sign up?
 - At least 15 days before an election
 - You need to sign up again if you move, change your name or change your party
- Do I have to join a political party?
 - There are seven parties in California
 - You can pick one or "decline to state", which means "Independent"

What are the Parties?

- American Independent
- Democratic
- Green Party
- Libertarian Party
- Natural Law Party
- Peace and Freedom Party
- Republican

Regional Center & Voter Registration

- Regional Center must help you register
- Can't tell you what party to register under
- Can't tell you how to vote
- What to do if you have problems?

People with Disabilities Have a Right to Vote!

- You have a right to vote unless a court has said you cannot!
- If you use a wheelchair or have other mobility disabilities, the voting place must be accessible to you
- If you cannot read the ballot, you can have someone help you read the ballot
 - Remember though, they cannot decide how to vote for you! You must decide yourself!

What Types of Things Do We Vote On?

- People
 - Candidates who are running for elected office
- Plans
 - Ballot measures (propositions) that make or change state or local laws

Quick Vote Game

- Ice Cream Yes ____ No ____
- Toxic Waste Yes ____ No ____

Quick Vote Game (cont.)

- We should put a tax on ice cream
 - Yes ____ No ____
- We should clean up toxic waste
 - Yes ____ No ____

Why did your vote change?

Some Tools to Help Decide How to Vote

- Nonpartisan - just gives the facts and does not take sides - Examples: newspaper article, sample ballot, official voter information guide, easy voter guide, candidate's voting record
- Partisan - tries convince you how to vote - Examples: newspaper editorial, TV campaign advertisement, family, friends, endorsements from groups, mail advertisements

Go Vote!

Two ways to vote

1. At polling place
2. At home with an "absentee ballot"



What Happens When I Go Vote?

- What happens at the polling place?
 - You will be asked to state your name and sign a book
 - You will get a ballot to mark in private or a card to put into a voting computer
- What if I want to vote at home?
 - You have to apply for an absentee ballot in writing at least 1 week before the election
 - Mail in the ballot before election day or take it to any polling place in the county where you are registered to vote

Quiz

- You can vote at any polling place on election day?
- You do not have to bring an ID?
- You cannot bring any notes with you?
- If you make a mistake you can start over?
- Anyone can choose to apply to vote at home?
- If you vote at home you cannot also vote at the polls?
- You put your absentee ballot in the mail on election day?

The End!

