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*Expanding Participation.*

## FOCE INTRODUCES “VOTER’S CHOICE CALIFORNIA”

*MAY 22, 2017*

Future of California Elections announces the launch of Voter’s Choice California (VCC), a coalition of civil rights groups, advocates for effective government, and community-based organizations committed to advancing effective implementation of the [California Voter’s Choice Act \(VCA\)](#). **The policy, which state leaders enacted in 2016 with [Senate Bill 450](#), will modernize state elections, most notably by changing how, when and where many voters cast their ballots.**

Beginning in 2018, all registered voters in participating counties will receive a ballot at home and have the option to return it by mail, place it in a secured drop box, or cast their vote in person at any voter center in their county. Vote centers will be open for at least four days through Election Day with some open for a full 11 days. They will offer additional supports such as accessible voting equipment, language assistance and translated materials; some are expected to offer same day voter registration. The law authorizes 14 specified counties to offer the new system in 2018: Calaveras, Inyo, Madera, Napa, Nevada, Orange, Sacramento, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Shasta, Sierra, Sutter, and Tuolumne. Several of the authorized counties are tentatively planning to participate, and all will decide by Fall 2017. Other counties are authorized to make the switch starting in 2020.

The new voting process aims to provide voters with increased flexibility to vote when and where is most convenient for them. For example, voters in participating counties will be able to vote on weekends, at any vote center in their county, and by mail without requesting a mailed ballot in advance.

In the initial years of implementation, the law also presents the risk of voter confusion and reduced participation, especially among communities already under-represented at the polls. Voter’s Choice California aims to address these concerns by advancing effective voter education strategies and community involvement in the design of county voting plans. For



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example, if diverse Californians participate in local VCA implementation planning processes, election administrators will gain insight informing their placement of vote centers and dropboxes and their strategies for educating voters from specific language communities.

Fred Nisen, Supervising Voting Rights Attorney for Disability Rights California and a member of the VCC steering committee, says "VCC will be important in ensuring that all voters benefit from the changes to voting under the Voter's Choice Act, including those with disabilities. I am very pleased to be on VCC's steering committee to help work towards its mission."

Other organizations leading the VCC include: American Civil Liberties Union of California, Asian Americans Advancing Justice-California, California Common Cause, the League of Women Voters of California, and the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials Educational Fund.

The VCC, which will launch a website with comprehensive materials about VCA for voters and community leaders in Summer 2017, is currently building statewide and local coalitions to support effective implementation. A key goal of this effort is to coordinate and support the engagement of organizations and leaders interested in the VCA. **If you plan to participate in implementation efforts, we'd appreciate the chance to hear from you.**

We encourage all parties interested in VCA implementation to connect with the VCC at [VCC@futureofcaelections.org](mailto:VCC@futureofcaelections.org). We also welcome all interested parties to [join the VCC list-serve](#) to receive updates and materials throughout the implementation process.

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