

# Future of California Elections' Fall Forum 2015

Presentation by Kim Alexander, President & Founder  
California Voter Foundation

# Three big areas of change:

- New laws that will help ensure more vote-by-mail ballots are successfully cast and counted
- New disclosure resources that will help voters follow the money, especially on ballot propositions
- New online tools that will help voters discover what's on the ballot, find a polling place and check mail ballot and registration status

# Vote-by-mail changes were needed to reduce ballot rejection

- According to Pew's Election Performance Index, California has one of the highest mail ballot rejection rates of any state in the nation:

Mail Ballots Statewide		
	2014 Primary	2014 General
Total cast	3,187,110	4,600,523
Total rejected	91,006	86,196
Percent rejected	2.9%	1.9%

# Top Three Reasons why some mail ballots don't get counted:

1. Late arrival
2. No signature on ballot envelope
3. Signature on the ballot envelope does not sufficiently compare to the signature on file

# Mail ballot law changes in effect for 2016:

- SB 29 of 2014: requires counties to count mail ballots if they are postmarked by Election Day and received within three days of the election
- AB 477 of 2015: if a voter forgets to sign a mail ballot envelope, counties are now allowed to accept the voter's signature separately from the envelope (but not required to outreach in first place)
- SB 365 of 2015: establishes the right of counties to accept ballots at drop off locations and directs SoS to create best practices guidelines in regulations

# For more about the vote-by-mail process:

- See the California Voter Foundation's 2014 report,



## **Improving California's Vote-by-Mail Process: A Three-County Study**

Published August 2014  
by the California Voter Foundation  
Online at: [www.calvoter.org/votebymail](http://www.calvoter.org/votebymail)

# New disclosure resources will help voters follow the money, especially on ballot propositions

- SB 27 of 2014: requires proposition campaigns raising \$1 million or more to identify and report their top ten donors to the Fair Political Practices Commission; requires FPPC to publish Top Ten Donors list combining top donors for and against each proposition across all committees
- SB 844 of 2014: requires the Secretary of State to track and publish data showing the total amounts raised for and against each proposition on the ballot

# What's available from the FPPC:

<http://www.fppc.ca.gov/TopContributors/>





## 1613. (13-0022) State Fees on Hospitals. Federal Medi-Cal Matching Funds. Initiative Statutory and Constitution Amendment

Supporting				
	Contributor	State	Status	Total Contributions
1	California Health Foundation and Trust	CA	-	\$9,501,975
2	Sutter Health	CA	-	\$4,160,670
3	Childrens Hospital Los Angeles	CA	-	\$3,418,305
4	Adventist Health	CA	-	\$3,020,143
5	Loma Linda University Medical Center	CA	-	\$2,416,560
6	Children's Hospital Central California	CA	-	\$2,013,968
7	Community Medical Centers	CA	-	\$1,963,985
8	Memorial Health Services - Memorial Care Health System	CA	-	\$1,668,562
9	AHMC Healthcare, Inc	CA	NEW	\$1,388,422
10	Lucile Salter Packard Children's Hospital	CA	↓	\$1,344,858
Total from top contributors				\$30,897,448

Opposing
No committee opposing this ballot measure raised enough money to reach the reporting threshold for this list.

# From the Secretary of State:

## **State Fees on Hospitals. Federal Medi-Cal Matching Funds. Initiative Statutory and Constitutional Amendment.**

*In Support of this measure:*

<b>Total amount of reported contributions to this measure: \$48,356,004</b>		
<b>Individual Ballot Measure Committees Formed for this Measure</b>		
<b>Committee ID*</b>	<b>Committee Name</b>	<b>Total Reported Contributions</b>
1362973	<b>Californians United for Medi-Cal Funding and Accountability, Sponsored by California Association of Hospitals and Health Systems</b>	\$48,356,004


\*The law also requires ballot measure committees that raise \$1 million or more to report the Top 10 Contributors who have donated at least \$10,000 to the committee.

*In Opposition to this measure: Nothing at this time.*

Power Search – California Secretary of State

powersearch.sos.ca.gov

Reader



# California Secretary of State Alex Padilla

[Quick Search](#) [Advanced Search](#) [Frequently Asked Questions](#) [CAL-ACCESS](#)

## Welcome to Power Search

**Power Search**  
Contributions

Power Search is a privately developed, open source, search engine accessing electronically-reported, state-level campaign contribution raw data from 2001 to the present reported to the Secretary of State's CAL-ACCESS campaign finance filing and disclosure system.

Power Search can be used to quickly search for contributions to candidates and ballot measures and contributions from individuals, businesses and other campaign committees.

Frequently asked questions (FAQs) are available to help you with Power Search.

Only electronically-reported, state-level, campaign contribution data is provided through Power Search. To search for electronically reported independent expenditures and campaign committee expenditures, lobbying activities, and non-campaign related committees (officeholder accounts and legal defense funds), please search using [CAL-ACCESS](#). Campaign and lobbying for cities and counties and federal candidates is not available through [CAL-ACCESS](#) or Power Search.

The results provided by Power Search may be limited by the quality of the data provided by filers.

Power Search Software by MapLight  
in partnership with the California Secretary of State

**MapLight**

# Coming in 2016: New Online Voter Tools

- California is one of only a handful of states that does not currently offer a statewide voter registration status lookup tool
- In 2014, the Secretary of State teamed up with Pew and Google to offer a “Find my Polling Place” lookup tool
- In 2016, the SoS is working with counties to also offer a tool that voters can use to obtain a list of all the contests on their ballot



[Home](#) » [Elections and Voter Information](#) » [Voting Resources](#)

## Find Your Polling Place



# Voting Information Project

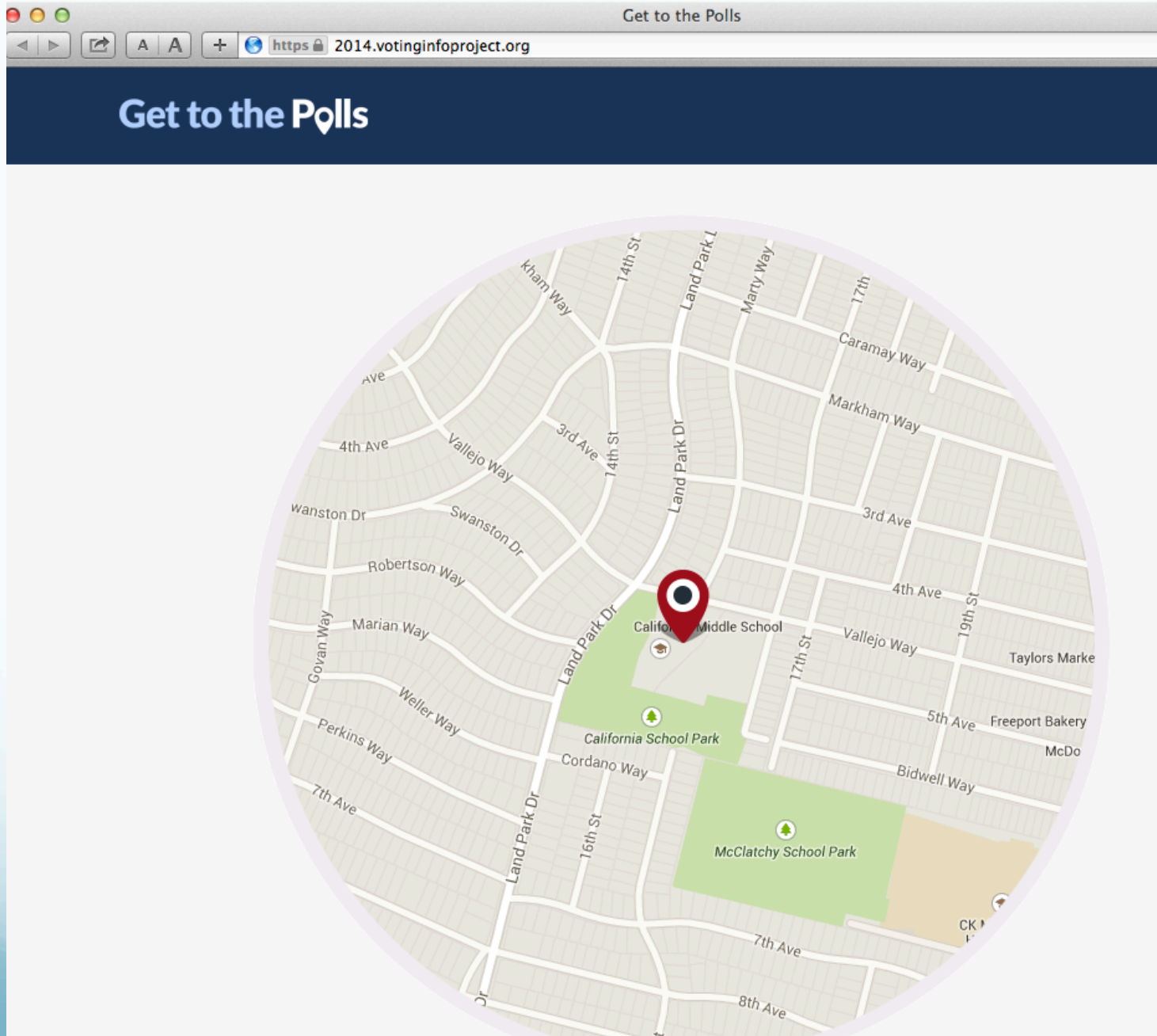
Voting Information Project

Enter Registered Voting Address



Find out where to vote, what's on  
your ballot, and more...





## General Election - November 4, 2014

### Official Certified List of Candidates

8/28/2014

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#### GOVERNOR

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**EDMUND G. "JERRY" BROWN\***

**Democratic**

2355 BROADWAY #407  
OAKLAND, CA 94612  
(510) 628-0202 (Business)  
WEBSITE: [www.jerrybrown.org](http://www.jerrybrown.org)  
**Governor of California**

**NEEL KASHKARI**

**Republican**

2404 P ST  
SACRAMENTO, CA 95816  
(916) 538-6502 (Business)  
WEBSITE: [www.neelkashkari.com](http://www.neelkashkari.com)  
E-MAIL: [inquiry@neelkashkari.com](mailto:inquiry@neelkashkari.com)  
**Businessman**

#### LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

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**GAVIN NEWSOM\***

**Democratic**

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WEBSITE: [www.gavinnewsom.com](http://www.gavinnewsom.com)  
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**Lieutenant Governor**

**RON NEHRING**

**Republican**

1015 OLD MOUNTAIN VIEW RD  
EL CAJON, CA 92021  
WEBSITE: [www.ronnehring.com](http://www.ronnehring.com)  
E-MAIL: [ron@ronnehring.com](mailto:ron@ronnehring.com)  
**Small Businessman/Educator**



## Registered Voter Address

11107 Farragut Dr  
Culver City CA 90230

Edit

## Election Date

November 3, 2015



## Polling Location



## Voter Resources



## Ballot Information



CULVER CITY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Governing Board Member



ANNE ALLAIRE BURKE

SCOTT MCVARISH

KELLY KENT



# Many new tools will be available once VoteCal is operating

- Delays in implementing a new statewide database are the reason California is far behind other states in offering lookup tools
- CVF's recently published policy brief, "VoteCal and the Struggle to Modernize California's Voter Registration Data" was published in July and features a list of the laws and tools that are contingent on VoteCal becoming operational

<http://www.calvoter.org/issues/voterreg/votecalpolicybrief.html>

## policy brief

California Voter Foundation



July 22, 2015

### ***VoteCal and the Struggle to Modernize California's Statewide Voter Registration Database***

By Kim Alexander  
President & Founder, California Voter Foundation

#### **Executive Summary**

The story of California's efforts to modernize its statewide voter registration database is a long one, starting in 2002 with the passage of the federal Help America Vote Act. This policy brief explains how California's first statewide voter registration database came into existence; why the creation of a replacement database was initially delayed; efforts beginning in 2006 to create a new database called VoteCal; the cancellation of the initial VoteCal contract, followed by a second bidding process; a review of the current project status; benefits to voters and changes to the election process that VoteCal is expected to bring; and recommendations for ensuring the project's long-term success.

#### **Outline:**

- Executive Summary
- Background: A brief history of California's computerization of voter registration records
- CalVoter, California's first statewide voter registration database (1994-2002)
- The Help America Vote Act (2002-2005)
- The United States Department of Justice steps in (2005)
- An interim solution and the development of VoteCal (2006-2009)
- VoteCal contract terminated, back to square one (2010)
- A second attempt at VoteCal, a second audit (2010-2013)
- A new vendor, a new project (2013-2014)
- Current project status: on track, on schedule, within budget (2015)
  - Project staffing and oversight
  - Project costs and other struggling state IT projects
- Looking Ahead (2016-2017)
  - Statewide lookup tools & other voter conveniences
  - Laws awaiting implementation; bills under consideration
- Conclusion: Lessons learned and the need for greater transparency

# Laws that take effect once VoteCal is fully deployed:

- SB 113 of 2014 - allows 16 year olds to pre-register to vote
- AB 1436 of 2012 (and SB 439/Allen of 2015) allows voters to register and vote provisionally at county election offices or satellite offices on Election Day
- AB 306 of 2009 - allows voters to receive their state Voter Information Guide electronically and opt out of paper
- AB 1020 of 2015 - numerous changes including the ability of counties to automatically update a voter's address when they move between counties within California

Other potential changes contingent on VoteCal:

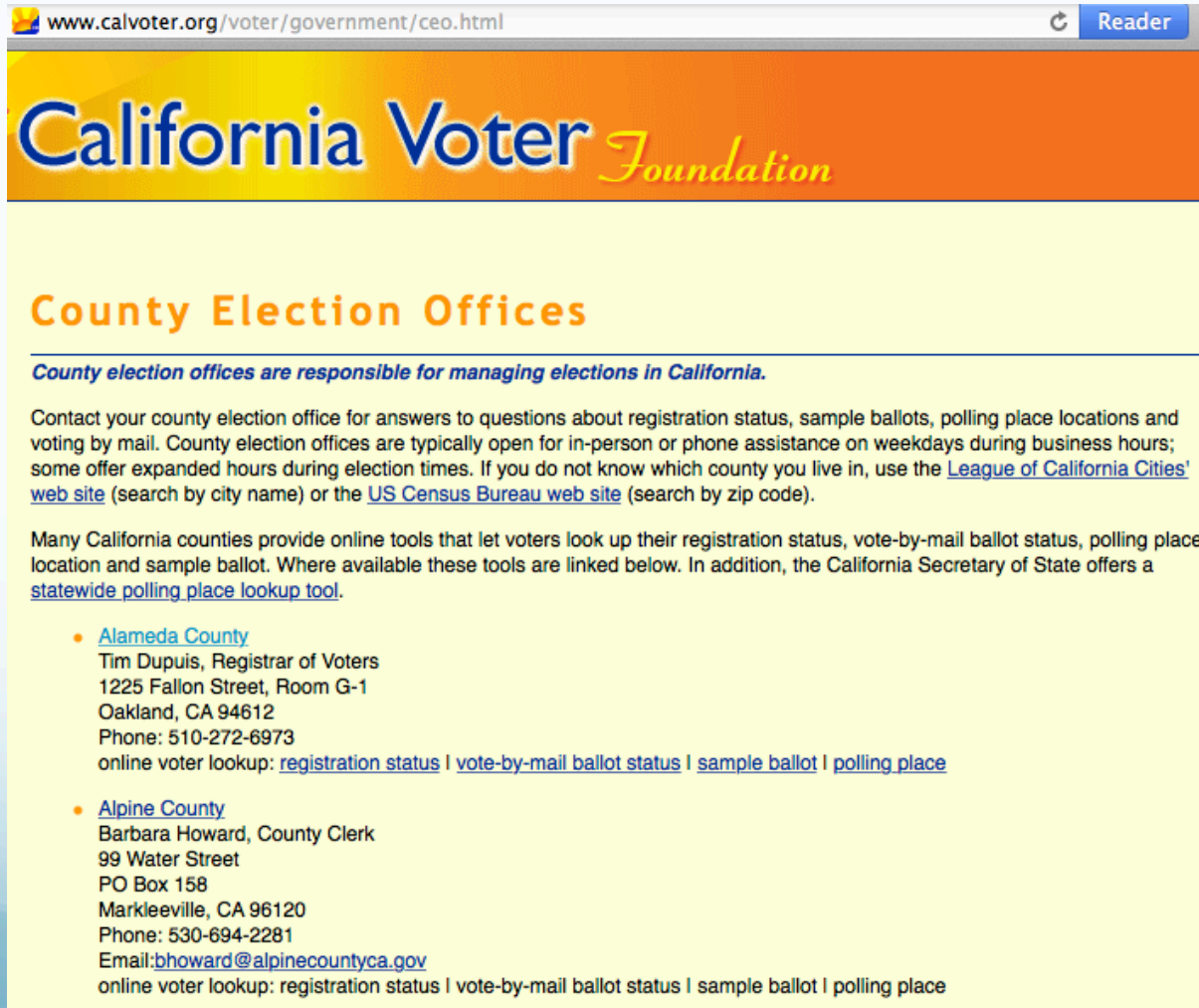
- SB 450/vote centers and Colorado-style ballot delivery option for counties
- Some provisions of AB 1461, the new Motor Voter law

# VoteCal's Voter Lookup Tools

- **Voter Registration Status:** Once logged in, a voter will be able to see at which address she is registered, party affiliation, and whether she is signed up as a permanent vote-by-mail voter. If a voter wants to change any information on her record, she will need to complete a new voter registration form, either on paper or online.
- **Vote-by-Mail Ballot Status:** A voter will be able to find out if his vote-by-mail ballot was counted, and if not, why not. However, **it is unknown how quickly this information will be added to voters' records and whether it will be feasible for a voter to use the lookup tool to determine whether there is a problem with his ballot** in time to be able to correct such problems, such as a missing or bad signature, so that such ballots can be counted.
- **Provisional Ballot Status:** A voter who casts a provisional ballot will be able to find out if his ballot was counted and if not, why not.

# In the meantime, many counties offer similar tools

- CVF web site provides a comprehensive directory of these tools where available:



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying [www.calvoter.org/voter/government/ceo.html](http://www.calvoter.org/voter/government/ceo.html). The page has a yellow and orange header with the text "California Voter Foundation". Below the header, the main heading is "County Election Offices". A subheading reads: "County election offices are responsible for managing elections in California." The text explains that voters should contact their county election office for registration status, sample ballots, polling place locations, and voting by mail. It also provides links to the "League of California Cities' web site" and the "US Census Bureau web site". A paragraph mentions that many California counties provide online tools for registration status, vote-by-mail ballot status, polling place location, and sample ballot, with links to these tools. The page lists contact information for Alameda County and Alpine County, including their registrars and county clerks, and provides links to online voter lookup tools for each.

[www.calvoter.org/voter/government/ceo.html](http://www.calvoter.org/voter/government/ceo.html) Reader

## California Voter Foundation

### County Election Offices

*County election offices are responsible for managing elections in California.*

Contact your county election office for answers to questions about registration status, sample ballots, polling place locations and voting by mail. County election offices are typically open for in-person or phone assistance on weekdays during business hours; some offer expanded hours during election times. If you do not know which county you live in, use the [League of California Cities' web site](#) (search by city name) or the [US Census Bureau web site](#) (search by zip code).

Many California counties provide online tools that let voters look up their registration status, vote-by-mail ballot status, polling place location and sample ballot. Where available these tools are linked below. In addition, the California Secretary of State offers a [statewide polling place lookup tool](#).

- [Alameda County](#)  
Tim Dupuis, Registrar of Voters  
1225 Fallon Street, Room G-1  
Oakland, CA 94612  
Phone: 510-272-6973  
online voter lookup: [registration status](#) | [vote-by-mail ballot status](#) | [sample ballot](#) | [polling place](#)
- [Alpine County](#)  
Barbara Howard, County Clerk  
99 Water Street  
PO Box 158  
Markleeville, CA 96120  
Phone: 530-694-2281  
Email: [bhoward@alpinecountycalifornia.gov](mailto:bhoward@alpinecountycalifornia.gov)  
online voter lookup: [registration status](#) | [vote-by-mail ballot status](#) | [sample ballot](#) | [polling place](#)

Ex: Shasta County's mail ballot status tool:

Shasta County, CA Elections

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www.elections.co.shasta.ca.us/voting/voter-lookups/vote-by-mail-status/#Vote-by-MailBallotSearch

↻

Zip Code

96002

# 1 Vote-by-Mail Ballot Found

**2014 GENERAL ELECTION 11/04/2014**

Mail To: 19143 Smith Ln 96002

Status: Good

Events	Date
Ballot Issued	10/06/2014
Ballot Received	10/14/2014



# Another great tool for 2016: Voters Edge

The MapLight Voter Guide | Voter's Edge

votersedge.org

English  
Español

**VOTER'S EDGE**  
UNBIASED, NONPARTISAN INFORMATION TO HELP YOU MAKE UP YOUR MIND  
FROM MapLight

Enter your street address to view personalized election information:

Street Address

City State Zip Code \*

**SUBMIT**

Please submit your complete STREET ADDRESS including CITY, STATE and ZIP CODE.  
Example: 1526 H St, Sacramento, CA 95814  
Your address will be kept private and never sold or shared (see [Privacy Policy](#)).

Browse by state page ↕

# Challenges/Questions:

- Will VoteCal be completed on schedule? (current deployment date is June 30, 2016)
- Can we create a platform to deliver unified, official state and local voting information online?
- Is there funding to support government outreach/voter education work?
- Are there other cost barriers that are keeping candidate info from voters and can they be overcome?





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