California Counts

By President Velma J. Butler

Every presidential election is unique, but the 2016 campaigns are already unforgettable and we’re still in the primaries. Although Donald Trump is now the presumptive Republican candidate, neither Hillary Clinton nor Bernie Sanders has locked up the Democratic nomination yet.

For the first time I can remember, California voters will decide which presidential candidates the country will choose between in November. For the first

Kamala Harris

A U.S. Senator who will fight to make college affordable

As Attorney General, Harris cracked down on for-profit diploma mills that left California students with no job prospects and a lifetime of debt. She also protected survivors of campus sexual assault. In the Senate, she will fight to make college more affordable to prevent students from drowning under massive debt.

“Meaningful access to education is a pathway to the American dream. We know the ladder of opportunity is broken when the national Class of 2015 is the most indebted in history.”

No wonder more than 600,000 Californians registered to vote or updated their information in just the first three months of the year, and many more will sign up before the general election.

This election is big in every way possible, but our future comes down to each one of us voting. Choices up and down the ballot are too important – and too close – for any Staff Guild member to sit this one out. Here’s how I see the big races:

• Who do you want to nominate the next three Supreme Court justices? I want Hillary or Bernie, not Donald Trump.

Velma J. Butler and Kamala Harris
Vote to Extend Prop 30

At stake is $94 million per year for LACCD

Since voters passed Prop 30 in 2012, the measure has pumped about $7 billion per year into public education and other state programs slashed during the Great Recession. Nearly $240 million went directly to LACCD.

About 15 percent of that revenue came from a one-quarter of 1% increase in the sales tax, which will expire at the end of 2016. The other 85 percent came from higher taxes on Californians making more than $250,000 per year. The CFT and other unions want to extend for 12 years the tax on the wealthy, which is set to end in 2018.

“We can’t afford to let Prop 30 expire,” says CFT President Joshua Pechthalt. “Without it, public education will return to the devastating years of budget cuts, layoffs, skyrocketing class sizes and tuition increases.”

Yes on Proposition 50

Cut off salaries and benefits to corrupt state legislators

Prop 50 would allow either house of the State Legislature to suspend members — with or without pay — by a two-thirds vote.

Prop 50 is a response to the cases of three state senators who faced legal troubles in 2014. Two were indicted on various corruption charges. A third was convicted of perjury and voter fraud for lying about whether or not he lived in his district. The Senate voted overwhelming to suspend the three lawmakers, even though the state constitution explicitly allows for only expulsion.

Darlene Richarte of Pierce College joined COPE to play an active role in extending Prop 30 and pass a higher minimum wage.

“It’s hard to part with the money, but when you realize the potential benefits, it’s well worth it.”

The California Constitution does not currently allow a lawmaker to be stripped of salary and benefits, so the Legislature placed Proposition 50 on the June ballot to ask voters for the power to suspend their members and dock paychecks.

If Prop 50 passes, the question will be if our legislators have the intestinal fortitude to clean up corruption.

Velma...

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Hillary Clinton v. Bernie Sanders

The American Federation of Teachers was the first national union to endorse Hillary Clinton, but many Staff Guild members are also “feeling the Bern” as the decision on who will lead the party comes down to the wire in California. Here is where the two candidates stand on issues that move many StaffGuild members:

**COLLEGE**

**Hillary**
- Ensure no student has to borrow to pay for tuition, books or fees to attend a four-year public college in their state.
- Allow Americans to refinance past student loans at current rates.
- Hold colleges and universities accountable for controlling costs and making tuition affordable.
- Students will contribute their earnings from working 10 hours a week.
- Families will make an affordable and realistic family contribution.
- The federal government will provide grants to states that commit to these goals, and cut interest rates on loans.

**Bernie**
- Make tuition at public colleges and universities free to students and paid for by taxing Wall Street speculators.
- Stop the federal government from making a profit on student loans; cut interest rates on loans; allow Americans to refinance past loans at today’s low rates.
- Allow students to use need-based financial aid and work-study programs to make college debt-free.

**LABOR**

**Hillary**
- Raise the federal minimum wage to $12 an hour.

**Bernie**
- Raise the federal minimum wage to $15 an hour by 2020, and the tipped minimum wage to $15 by 2023.
- Put 13 million youth to work with the Rebuild America Act.

**JUSTICE**

**Hillary**
- Dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline.
- Strengthen bonds of trust between communities and police.
- Defend every American’s right to vote.
- Protect immigrants’ rights and keep families together.
- End the epidemic of gun violence in our communities.

**Bernie**
- Address the five central types of violence against black, brown and indigenous Americans: physical, political, legal, economic and environmental.
- Dismantle inhumane deportation programs and detention centers.
- Create a swift and fair road to citizenship for undocumented immigrants.
- Ensure our border remains secure while respecting local communities.
- Regulate the future flow of immigrants by modernizing the visa system and rewriting bad trade agreements.

**WOMEN**

**Hillary**
- Defend women’s health and reproductive rights.
- Defend and enhance Social Security.
- Provide quality, affordable childcare.
- Work to close the pay gap.

**Bernie**
- Fight for pay equity for women.
- Expand and protect women’s reproductive rights.
- Only nominate Supreme Court justices who support Roe v. Wade and women’s reproductive rights.
- Make quality childcare and Pre-K available to all Americans.
- Expand the WIC program for pregnant mothers and infants.
- Make healthcare a right.
- Expand Social Security.

Mary VanGinkle of the District Office joined COPE when she was elected secretary of the College Staff Guild in 2002.

“Politicians listen to us and try to get things done when they see us as supporters and constituents.”

Julio Ortiz of East L.A. College became active in COPE as budget deficits were threatening LACCD.

“I saw how we could help ourselves and the community by electing good candidates and passing good propositions.”

Leilani Piernas of Southwest L.A. College joined COPE about a year ago.

“I’m glad to help make sure we elect the right candidates.”
Election 2016 June 7 Primary

U.S. Senate
Kamala Harris

L.A. County Board of Supervisors
4 ......................... Janice Hahn
5 ......................... Kathryn Barger

Municipal Elections
El Segundo
City Council .............. Don Brann
Lawndale
Mayor .................. Robert Pullen-Miles

State Senate Districts
21 ....................... Jonathon Ervin
25 ..................... Anthony Portantino
27 ...................... Henry Stern
31 ..................... Richard Roth
33 .................... Ricardo Lara
35 ..................... Warren Furutani

State Assembly Districts
36 ...................... Darren Parker
39 ................ No Recommendation
41 ..................... Chris Holden
43 ..................... Ardy Kassakhian
44 ..................... Jacqui Irwin
45 ................ No Recommendation
46 ..................... Adrin Nazarian
47 ..................... Cheryl Brown
48 ..................... Bryan Urias
49 ..................... Ed Chau
50 ..................... Richard Bloom
51 ..................... Jimmy Gomez
52 ..................... Freddie Rodriguez
53 ..................... Miguel Santiago
54 ..................... Sebastian Ridley-Thomas
57 ..................... Ian Calderon
58 ..................... Cristina Garcia
59 ................. Reggie Jones-Sawyer
61 ..................... Jose Medina
62 ..................... Autumn Burke
63 ..................... Anthony Rendon
64 ..................... Mike Gipson
66 ..................... Al Muratsuchi
69 ..................... Tom Daly
70 ..................... Patrick O'Donnell

U.S. Congress Districts
25 ...................... Brian Caforio
27 ...................... Judy Chu
28 ...................... Adam Schiff
29 ..................... Tony Cardenas
30 ..................... Brad Sherman
32 ................ No Recommendation
33 ..................... Ted Lieu
34 ..................... Xavier Becerra
35 ..................... Norma Torres
37 ..................... Karen Bass
38 ..................... Linda Sanchez
40 ..................... Lucille Roybal-Allard
41 ..................... Mark Takano
43 ..................... Maxine Waters
44 ..................... Isadore Hall
46 ..................... Joe Dunn
47 ..................... Alan Lowenthal

These recommendations are drawn from endorsements by the California Federation of Teachers and California Labor Federation.

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