



CapitolVoice

Sierra Club California —Your Voice in the State Capitol

Propositions 7 and 10: Sadly, No Real Alternatives

NO ON PROP. 7:

SO CLOSE, YET SO FAR AWAY

By Jim Metropulos, Senior Advocate, Sierra Club California

Normally, Sierra Club volunteers and staff would eagerly line up behind a measure proposing that half of California's electricity come from renewable sources by 2025.

But Proposition 7, an initiative on the November ballot, doesn't do enough to save our state and our planet from fossil fuel dependence. In fact, by cementing loopholes that would hold back the growth of the renewable energy industry, it actually could worsen our current energy situation.

Proposition 7:

1. Contains serious, inherent flaws that could get in the way of achieving its goal of 50% renewable fuels by 2025.
2. Actually works against Sierra Club-backed energy policies that would allow communities to choose the source of their energy.
3. Decreases environmental review of proposed power plants.

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NO ON PROPOSITION 10:

THE WRONG ROAD TOWARD CLEANER VEHICLES

by Jim Metropulos, Senior Advocate, Sierra Club California

Sierra Club opposes Proposition 10, The California Renewable Energy and Clean Alternative Fuel Act, because it would put California on the wrong road to cleaner vehicles.

Proposition 10 would provide \$5 billion in general obligation bonds for four main purposes: 1) alternative fuel vehicles rebates and research (\$3.425 billion), 2) renewable energy (\$1.25 billion), 3) renewable energy demonstration (\$200 million), and 4) "clean tech" education and training (\$125 million). The primary proponent and funder of the initiative is Clean Energy Fuels Corp., which, according to its website, is the largest provider of natural gas for transportation in North America, and also builds and operates natural gas fueling stations.

The initiative's backer would benefit financially from its passage, because the main thrust of the measure is to provide close to \$3 billion dollars in bond funds to be distributed as rebates to buyers of "clean alternative fuel vehicles."

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NOVEMBER 2008 PROPOSITIONS AT A GLANCE

PROPOSITION 1A YES

- Would fund an 800-mile high-speed rail system that will transport Californians quickly and safely while reducing pollution and protecting wild places.

PROPOSITION 2 YES

- Would reduce the density of farm animals, and therefore the intensity of the air and water pollution.

PROPOSITION 4 NO

- Would create a major obstacle to family planning services, likely resulting in dangerous amateur abortions.

PROPOSITION 7 NO

- Contains serious, inherent flaws that could get in the way of achieving its goal of 50% renewable fuels by 2025.
- Actually works against Sierra Club-backed energy policies that would allow communities to choose the source of their energy.
- Decreases environmental review of proposed power plants.

PROPOSITION 10 NO

- Would put California on the wrong road to cleaner vehicles by setting up faulty programs.



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CAPITOL PHOTO: MANZANITA PROJECT

Proposition 1A: Getting High Speed Rail on Track

By Bill Magavern, Sierra Club California Director

A zero-emission travel option, high-speed rail promises to create less global warming pollution, promote city-centered growth and preserve hundreds of thousands of acres of habitat.

Proposition 1A represents California's best hope for inter-city mobility and a chance to improve our state's air and atmosphere dramatically.

A zero-emission high-speed train system like that proposed by Proposition 1A will cut global warming pollution and help Californians move around without getting stuck in crowded airports and congested freeways. Sierra Club California recently decided to support the measure, which appears on the November ballot.

By replacing their driving and airplane flights with high-speed rail trips, Californians will reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by up to 12 billion tons and cut back on air pollution along freeways.

High-speed rail also represents California's best hope for smart, fiscally sound communities. As our state's population grows to as much as 50 million by 2030, the design of the proposed system will promote growth in cities while protecting wild places. In advocating for the legislation that put Proposition 1A on the ballot, Sierra Club California managed to secure protections for California's Grasslands Ecological Area — more than 100,000 acres of grasslands will be preserved.

At the same time, this 21st-century infrastructure will cost relatively less than investing in new roadways and airports would — without sacrificing convenience. When fully built out, the high-speed train system would take passengers from San Diego to Sacramento and the Bay Area. Reaching speeds of over 220 miles per hour, high-speed trains would make the trip between San Francisco's Transbay Terminal and Los Angeles' Union Station in just two and a half hours.

What's more, the entire system would run on zero-emission energy, not fossil fuels — promising convenience with an environmental conscience. Buying a high-speed rail ticket will mean buying a ticket to a greener California.



California High-Speed Rail Authority

Support Proposition 2 to Reduce Pollution From Chicken Factories

By Paul Mason, Deputy Director, Sierra Club California

Sierra Club supports Proposition 2, the Standards for Confining Animals initiative, which was formerly known as the Prevention of Farm Animal Cruelty Act. This Humane Society-backed initiative would set minimum standards for the way California treats its farm-raised animals.

Essentially, farm animals would be able to stand up, turn around and fully extend their limbs. This will most benefit California's approximately 19 million egg-laying chickens, which are packed into tiny 'battery cages' and are unable to extend their wings.

California's enormous chicken factories have serious air and water pollution impacts, in part due to the inhumane density of the animals. Prop 2 would reduce the density of the animals, and therefore the intensity of the air and water pollution.

Many family farmers who raise animals humanely support Prop 2, because the cruel (but profitable) practices of the large factory farms make it difficult for small farms to compete financially. Sierra Club supports family farming, and this initiative helps level the playing field by requiring big agri-business interests to apply some basic standards to their treatment of animals.



Laying hens in factory farm battery cages.

Photo: Courtesy of Farm Sanctuary / www.veganoutreach.org

Maintain Open Access to Family Planning Services: Vote No on Proposition 4

By Paul Mason, Deputy Director, Sierra Club California

For the third time in four years, Californians are faced with a proposed constitutional amendment that would create new notification requirements for women under 18 who are seeking an abortion.

Sierra Club opposes Proposition 4. For nearly 40 years, the Club has supported open access to family planning services, and Prop 4 creates a new obstacle to access. Prop 4 would require women under 18 to wait 48 hours before obtaining an abortion, and would require notification of parents or grandparents, or permission from the court, before proceeding.

The initiative attempts to create better family communication through a constitutional amendment. While legislating better communication is unlikely to succeed, it is likely that young women caught in abusive family situations will be put in an impossible situation, and will end up pursuing black-market amateur abortions.

Prop 4 is likely to end up sending young women to seek dangerous amateur abortions, which is why organizations such as the California Medical Association and California Nurses Association oppose the proposal.

For more information: <http://www.noonprop4.org/>

Proposition 7 *continued from cover page*

The lack of a sound, steady source of funding represents one major flaw that's sure to get in the way of a 50% renewables goal. Instead of setting up such a funding stream, Prop. 7 would force renewable power generators to depend upon an uncertain system of penalty monies. It also locks in energy rate raises to just 3% annually, even though there are no limits for nonrenewable power sources.

Existing loopholes in enforcement and archaic policies that tie the price of renewable energy to the price of natural gas-generated energy would be locked in place. In fact, Prop. 7 even lowers some penalties.

Prop. 7 also would obstruct Sierra Club's efforts to establish community choice for energy policy, since it removes local control over energy policy. Community choice promises to increase the energy-buying power of local communities, giving them more authority.

Consider how a neighborhood "co-op" store is able to stock more grocery choices because it has more buying power than a smaller store operated by one family. Similarly, a community that bands together could have more choice over what type of energy it chooses to buy.

Lastly, Prop. 7 would decrease environmental protections, in the guise of "streamlining" the permitting process for renewable power. Local chapters wouldn't be able to introduce new evidence of environmental harm when appealing a proposed permit.

Sierra Club isn't standing alone against this potentially harmful law. The Union of Concerned Scientists, California League of Conservation Voters, and Natural Resources Defense Council, among other groups, have taken a stand against Prop. 7. California's Democratic and Republican parties and major utilities also oppose Prop. 7.

Voters should defeat Prop. 7 and clear the way for real progress on renewable power.

Proposition 10 *continued from cover page*

The measure has several drawbacks. First, the initiative sets a low bar for "clean alternative vehicles," which it says must produce "no net material increase in air pollution" relative to gasoline or diesel. Vehicles that meet this standard would do little, if anything, to reduce air pollution or greenhouse gas emissions in the state.

Second, the state already provides significant incentives for natural gas and alternative-fuel vehicles, including a \$200 million clean fuels program paid for by fees.

Third, we question the use of bond funds for rebates. Traditionally, bond funds pay for large public works projects that would normally be too expensive for the state to afford. Proposition 10 doesn't set up a system to pay back the state's big borrowing; instead it relies on future state tax collections.

Last, we worry that Proposition 10 could lead to the creation of environmentally harmful dams, as it includes all classes of hydroelectric power as renewable energy. This conflicts with existing state law that generally limits the "renewable" designation to smaller hydroelectric installations, and to facilities that don't impound additional water. Defining dams as "renewable" could also create confusion in utilities' attempts to comply with the California Renewable Portfolio Standard law.

Prop. 10's promise of more clean alternative vehicles sounds good on its surface. However, the initiative would accomplish little to facilitate real, sound alternative energy or technologies, and its reliance on long-term borrowing for short-term benefits and potentially obsolete technology would put us on the wrong road.

Joining Sierra Club in opposing Proposition 10 are the League of Women Voters, California Nurses Association, California Federation of Teachers, Consumer Federation of California, Consumer Watchdog, the Utility Reform Network, and California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO.



We Are Your Environmental Savings Account

Supporting Sierra Club California is a great investment in your future.

Whether it's clean energy, setting aside wilderness, or protecting your family from toxics, we make sure your values are represented. *Please give what you can*, so that we can continue to be your voice in the Capitol, ensuring that California creates a healthier future.

TRUST US TO INVEST WISELY — WE WORK FOR YOU.

And thank you; we can't do it without you!