

California Faces 22 Ballot Issues, Including Chavez and Busing

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SAN FRANCISCO, Oct. 7—California's voters must make up their minds next month about 22 ballot measures, some of which touch on the most controversial social and political questions of the time.

For example, they will be asked to decide on a law making it legal to cultivate, possess and use marijuana, while still leaving untouched the law that makes the sale of marijuana illegal.

And two ballot lines above the marijuana initiative measure voters will have to decide whether to amend the state Constitution to reinstitute the death penalty statutes.

Three lines below the marijuana question, the voters must decide what to do about a proposed law that would seriously restrict the attempt to organize agricultural workers by the United Farm Workers Union.

And just before dealing with Cesar Chavez and the grape workers and lettuce pickets, the voters will face a proposed law that would prohibit assignment of students to schools on the basis of race, creed or color—a measure that would halt busing to achieve racial balance.

Pornography Measure

Yet another measure would attempt to tighten authority to prosecute for printing pornography by defining terms and by deleting the potential defense that the questioned material has redeeming social significance.

These five measures are among the nine placed on the ballot by use of California's initiative law, which provides that a proposed constitutional amendment will be voted upon if 8 per cent of the electorate (520,806 in 1972) signs petitions

asking for the vote. It also provides that a proposed statute will appear on the ballot if 5 per cent of the electorate petitions for the vote.

The initiative law, a product of the reforms of 1911, has been used many times in the state's history for special-interest legislation.

Legislature's Proposals

But the Legislature has also loaded up the ballot, with its list of 13 issues that range from asking authorization for issuance of bonds for community college construction to amending the workmen's compensation statutes.

Tucked away in this list of proposals put on the ballot by the Legislature are two on the environment.

The first of these would authorize the state to pay for pollution control devices and then rent them to industry. Revenue bonds would provide the financing. The second proposal would allow the Legislature to exempt industrial antipollution devices from ad valorem—according to value—taxes.

Most Bitter Campaigns

The most bitter campaigns, often overshadowing contests between candidates, are the product of the fights over initiative measures. For example, the proposal to regulate agricultural labor organizations has been challenged in court by Edmund G. Brown Jr., the California Secretary of State, who wants to be ordered to remove it from the ballot.

The allegation is that petition circulators gave false information to voters to persuade them to sign the petition.

It is also a question among political observers as to the effect on partisan races of the presence on the ballot of some measure that touches sensitivi-

ties. Many observers believed that in 1964 Pierre Salinger lost his United States Senate race because of his support of an open housing law that was being voted down in that same election.

This year the marijuana and capital punishment measures are thought to have strong influence on the potential vote in the Presidential race.

A good part of the state's Republican establishment, including Gov. Ronald Reagan and Attorney General Evelle Younger, took leading roles in promoting the constitutional amendment on capital punishment. Prison guards, policemen and others allied with law enforcement supported the proposal and will be out in force to vote for it.

At the same time, the marijuana initiative is backed by some organizations, including the California bar, that would normally be expected either to oppose the plan or take no position. Beyond that, the initiative has wide support among liberals and radicals who might be expected to vote Democratic if they are attracted to the polls to support the initiative.