



Proposition 47: Frequently Asked Questions



In a nutshell, what is Proposition 47?

The Kindergarten-University Public Education Facilities Bond Act of 2002 is a \$13.05 billion bond measure to relieve overcrowding, accommodate new enrollments, make overdue safety repairs and upgrade California's elementary, middle and high schools, community colleges and universities.

Relieve overcrowding?

California's independent Legislative Analyst reports that one in every three California school children attends an overcrowded school. By 2010, nearly 1 million new students will be added into the system. The Office of Public School Construction data shows we need 46,000 new classrooms, or 1,175 new schools, in the next five years to relieve overcrowding and accommodate new enrollments.

Higher education faces the same explosion in growth. The California Postsecondary Education Commission estimates that over the next eight years, more than 710,000 new students will be entering our colleges and universities – 64,000 of them to the University of California alone. This is greater than the current enrollments of UC Berkeley and UCLA combined.

Overdue safety repairs? Upgrading K-12 and higher education facilities?

Prop. 47 funds will help fix leaky roofs, repair broken bathrooms, upgrade inadequate electrical and fire alarm systems, install heaters and air conditioning and improve earthquake safety in our schools. It will also upgrade University of California classrooms, laboratories and research facilities, make necessary seismic and other life-safety improvements, and give students more access to the technology and computers they need to meet academic standards and compete in the modern workforce.

Will passage of Prop. 47 raise my property taxes?

No. The bonds will be repaid from state revenues over 30 years and would not increase or create new taxes.

Will any of the money from these bonds be used for salaries or other administrative expenses?

No. All of the revenue derived from sale of the General Obligation bonds that Prop. 47 would authorize must be used solely for construction, renovation, and repair of school facilities. Bond money cannot be used for salaries or administrative expenses.

How quickly will Prop. 47 funds be put to use?

Immediately. The University of California already has \$600 million in short-term capital needs over each of the next four years – far short of the \$408 million that would annually be provided by proceeds from this bond.

How will the money be divided?

Prop. 47's \$13.05 billion breaks down like this:

- \$11.4 billion will go to K-12 (\$3.3 billion for repair and upgrading of old deteriorating schools and most of the remaining \$8.10 billion for new construction to relieve overcrowding and make room for new students). Every district that's overcrowded or has schools in need of repair will be eligible for its fair share of Prop. 47 funds to build new classrooms and make safety repairs. No district will get more than its fair share.

- \$1.65 billion will be used to build, repair and upgrade our community colleges, the California State University and University of California. UC's share is \$408.2 million.

Didn't we just pass a statewide school bond measure? What happened to that money?

Back in 1998, California voters passed Proposition 1A. Those funds were put to good use constructing new classrooms and repairing school buildings for more than one million students, including \$840 million in projects for the University of California. Prop. 47 will take over where 1A left off to help fund additional projects now waiting in line.

Will Prop. 47 meet all UC's current needs?

No. Prop. 47 is a critical step, but it's actually half of a two-part school bond package that was placed on the ballot with bipartisan support from the Legislature. The second half, a \$12.3 billion bond measure, will be on the 2004 ballot.

How can we be sure Prop. 47 funds will be spent appropriately?

The bill authorizing the bond act includes provisions to safeguard against waste and mismanagement. These include amendments to the California Education Code that hold school districts and the university strictly accountable for the proper expenditure of funds.

The bill also includes other provisions, including requirements to increase energy efficiency in school buildings, to tighten seismic safety standards, and to establish standards for the distribution of school facility financing funds.

In light of current economic forecasts, is this really the *right* time to be approving another bond?

As the State Treasurer has put it: "It is critical that California make this substantial new investment in educational facilities to sustain the strength of our economy and social fabric in the years ahead." Investing in our children's future is one of the most important investments we can make to ensure a healthy California economy. Prop. 47 will make space for our kids, make basic safety repairs, and increase student access to computers and technology in the classroom. Embarking on a massive school construction program will also put thousands of Californians back to work.

How will Proposition 47 impact the state's bond credit rating?

The State Treasurer and respected bond rating services report California's bond credit rating is healthy and strong.

Who supports Prop. 47?

Supporters include the California State PTA, California Teachers Association, California Taxpayers' Association, California Chamber of Commerce, League of Women Voters of California, Congress of California Seniors, Californians for Higher Education, California Building Industry Association, California Business Roundtable and local teachers throughout the state.

Who opposes Prop. 47?

The opposition campaign is not yet organized, but signers of the ballot argument in opposition to Prop. 47 include State Senator William J. (Pete) Knight, the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association, and the National Tax Limitation Committee. For a full text of the opposition's ballot arguments, visit the Secretary of State's Web site at www.ss.ca.gov.

Note: These include just a few of the most common questions being asked regarding Proposition 47. Additional questions will be added in the future.