

Prop 50 Campaign Updates
Brandon Zavala
MWD October 26, 2025 Meeting

Team, quick download on Prop 50 and where we stand. Big picture: we've got the wind at our backs, but we're assuming nothing and sprinting through the tape.

Where the race is now

Public polling continues to show Prop 50 leading. Recent surveys have Yes in the high 50s to low 60s with Likely Voters **57% Yes** in Emerson's late-October read and **62% Yes** in a CBS/YouGov sample; a mid-October co/efficient poll had **56% Yes**. That's real momentum from earlier-in-the-fall snapshots (Berkeley IGS was **~48% Yes** in August), but it only matters if we bank votes. [Emerson Polling](#)

Ballots out / ballots back

As of the latest Secretary of State update (Saturday, Oct. 25), **~4.44 million** vote-by-mail ballots have been returned statewide and **~4.39 million accepted**—with more arriving daily. That's roughly where we'd expect to be heading into the final week of a special, but we need to push younger, lower-propensity, and infrequent midterm voters over the line.

Message & momentum

Support is being driven by a simple frame: Prop 50 is a **temporary counterpunch** to GOP gerrymanders in places like Texas; Californians really don't like Trump, and that's motivating our voters. You've seen the **Obama spot**. That testimonial is in heavy rotation and is earning coverage. The Guardian, AP, and others peg the potential impact at **up to five seats** if we pass Prop 50, but they also underscore: nothing is guaranteed without turnout. [The Guardian](#)

Money & air war

On dollars, the **Yes** side continues to hold a commanding edge. Secretary of State roll-ups (latest compiled totals) have roughly **\$138.4M** to **\$80.4M** across committees; an enormous gap that's showing up on TV and digital. Independent analyses note this is one of California's most expensive ballot fights ever, with Democrats outspending Republicans significantly on broadcast in October. [California Secretary of State](#)

Field & voter contact

On the ground, our coalition is broad. We've had slate mail and canvass launches around the state; allied groups are pushing peer-to-peer, phones, and letter-writing. Vote Forward rolled out a Prop 50-specific letter program to Democrats, and labor plus grassroots orgs are moving people to doors and phones. The opposition is leaning into a "good-government" message and claims big peer-to-peer and handwritten outreach, so don't assume our message alone closes the deal...**we** do. [California Democratic Party](#)

Admin context / what to watch

DOJ says it will **monitor polling sites** in several California counties (including LA and Orange) on Election Day. Bottom line for us is to keep supporters focused on **returning ballots** and **curing signatures** if needed, so don't get distracted. [The Washington Post](#)

What we're doing this week

We are treating the lead as fragile and fighting for every ballot. Our plan:

- **Maximize VBM returns:** chase every supporter who still has a ballot at home—push drop boxes and vote centers, emphasize the **postmark-by-Nov 4 / received by Nov 12** window. But people should vote even earlier.
- **Targeted persuasion:** stick to two beats "temporary, targeted fix" and "meet the moment - don't let Texas decide our House." It cuts through.
- **Base turnout surges:** double down on L.A., the East Bay, and campus-adjacent precincts, where late-breaking youth and infrequent Dems can juice margins. (Current returns skew older, no surprise in a special, so we correct that with bodies and dials.)

How you can help—now through Election Day

1. **Ballot chase:** Text or call five friends **tonight** and ask if they've voted, then send them their nearest drop box or vote center info.
2. **Volunteer shifts:** Add one extra shift (phones or doors). Each hour equals dozens of contacts in a special.
3. **Amplify the message:** Share the Obama spot and our topline: *temporary fix, protect our voice in Congress, vote YES on 50.* [Politico](#)

We've built momentum: polling is favorable, ballots are coming in, and our side is winning the resource war. But specials are turnout elections. If we execute—one more call, one more knock, one more ballot in a box—we pass Prop 50 and send a message that California won't sit back while others rig the map. Let's meet the moment.

