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**CAL-TAX: VOTES AGAINST 56 ARE VOTES FOR A STATE BUDGET AND TAX POLICY THAT ENCOURAGE BIPARTISAN CONSENSUS**

Larry McCarthy, president of the nonpartisan California Taxpayers' Association, issued the following statement reacting to the defeat of Proposition 56, the Blank Check initiative, on the March 2 ballot:

“California voters have sent Sacramento a message that they will not be tricked into changing the Constitution to give a Legislature dominated by a tax-and-spend majority the power to raise taxes and pass state budgets without bipartisan consensus. This is a tremendous victory for California taxpayers.

“Taxpayers will not be the line of least resistance when budgets are tight. Most voters want the Legislature to root out waste and inefficiencies in government. They do not want to adopt a measure that would actually reward the policies of misspending and mismanagement with even more tax dollars.

“The proponents of 56 outspent opponents 2 to 1 and tried to hide the fact that this measure was all about making it easier for the Legislature to approve higher taxes, reducing the threshold from two-thirds to 55 percent. The proponents, mainly public employee and teacher unions, would have been beneficiaries with more tax dollars to grow an even larger state government.”