

# Prop. 54 will make Legislature more transparent, accountable

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*SPECIAL TO THE BEE*

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Assemblyman David Hadley, R-Manhattan Beach, yawns as lawmakers work late into the night to complete their legislative business before the end of their two-year legislative session on Aug. 31. RICH PEDRONCELLI ASSOCIATED PRESS

There are times when an issue is so important, people from all points of view come together to demand change. This is one of those times. [Proposition 54](#) will bring transparency to our state Capitol by putting voters first and reducing the influence of the special interests.

We learn in civics class how a bill becomes a law. However, while most bills follow this process, there are too many exceptions. A bill can be stripped of its original language and replaced with entirely new language on a different subject, mere hours before it's

rammed through for a vote. This maneuver, usually at the behest of a few special interests, often happens literally in the dead of night, before the public or even most legislators can read the new bill. These sneaky last-minute changes often result in ill-conceived policies benefiting only an exclusive few.

The public has every right to know what's in the bills that affect them, and it's time to demand more accountability and transparency from our state Legislature. That's why we are strongly encouraging voters to approve Proposition 54, a straightforward way to bring lawmaking out of the shadows and let voters more fully participate.

The measure accomplishes this goal by doing three simple things. It requires all legislation to be published in print and posted online at least 72 hours before a final vote in the Assembly or Senate. It requires all open legislative meetings to be audio-visually recorded and posted online within 24 hours and available for at least 20 years. And it grants the right to record and share videos of public meetings at the Capitol for any legitimate purpose, without criminal consequences.

These changes will result in better public policy by giving legislators and the public time to review and comment on changes to legislation. Citizens who can't take a day away from work or can't travel to Sacramento from faraway places now will be able to weigh in, right from their homes.

Proposition 54 has been endorsed by nearly all major California newspapers. Good government groups and organizations like ours from across the political spectrum have joined in support. Our diverse coalition includes the California NAACP, League of California Cities, California Common Cause, California Chamber of Commerce, National Federation of Independent Business, Hispanic 100, the Planning and Conservation League, California Senior Advocates League and the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association.

We all can agree that Proposition 54 levels the playing field so all Californians will have an equal opportunity to weigh in on issues we care about. Our democracy is stronger when more people participate.

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Taxpayers Association and can be contacted at [teresa@caltax.org](mailto:teresa@caltax.org). They both signed the official ballot arguments in [support of Proposition 54](#).

