REBUTTAL TO ARGUMENT AGAINST PROPOSITION 18 (in favor)

17-year-olds already work and pay taxes, and they can enlist in the military. If young people at this age are volunteering to put their lives on the line for our country and contributing financially to society, they should be able to participate in a full election cycle the year they turn 18. Prop 18 allows 17-year-olds to vote in primary elections if they are 18 by the general election.

Figuring out how to vote, where to vote, and what is on the ballot is a difficult first-time process. Giving young people time to learn this the year they turn 18 ensures a successful first voting experience. Expanding young people’s opportunity to become civically engaged ensures that our future generations will adopt voting habits early on and take them as they go to college, join the military, or join the workforce.

In the March 2020 primary, which saw the most votes in a California presidential primary ever, only 38% of eligible voters cast a ballot. We have a civic engagement problem, and we need to establish a culture of voting for future generations sooner rather than later. Voting in one election can increase the probability of voting in the next election by over 25%. Issues like the climate crisis, student debt, healthcare, and our economic future will impact young people
the most, and it is our responsibility to provide them adequate opportunities to create lifelong voting habits. A vote for Prop 18 is a vote for our democracy.

Mary Creasman, Chief Executive Officer, California League of Conservation Voters (CLCV)

Senator Richard D. Roth, Major General, USAF (Retired)

State Senator Thomas J. Umberg, Colonel, U.S. Army (Retired)