



# CALIFORNIA REPUBLICANS

*Reframing the Message*



[www.cagop.org](http://www.cagop.org) | 1001 K St., 4th Floor, Sacramento, CA 95814 | 916-448-9496



**When the California Republican Party endeavored down the road of exploring our brand it went through a rigorous pollster proposal process.**

We knew we needed a firm that shared our values and understood the complexities and nuances of our Golden State. Competitive Edge proved to share our values and their 31 year history of doing research in our state made the choice easy. John Nienstedt, Sr.'s discipline to truth seeking is uncompromising. We believe that our partnership with Competitive Edge will help our Party flourish for years to come.



## **The Performance Metric™**

Objective is to determine -- in a competitive environment -- the true effect of adopting new positions vs. retaining old positions

Computed among persuadable voters for each new Republican and each typical Republican position test

Range is from +100 to -100

Positive scores indicate the Republican position was persuasive

The net score shows the total power of switching from a typical to a new position

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## FINDINGS & OPPORTUNITIES

PAGE 2

### IN DEPTH: ISSUE MESSAGING

CLIMATE CHANGE	PAGE 4
EDUCATION	PAGE 6
WATER POLICY	PAGE 8
IMMIGRATION	PAGE 10
BUSINESS REGULATIONS	PAGE 12
TAXES SPENDING	PAGE 14
SOCIAL WELFARE	PAGE 16
HOUSING	PAGE 18
HEALTHCARE	PAGE 20
PUBLIC SAFETY	PAGE 22

## CONTACT

PAGE 24

# INTRODUCTION: CALIFORNIA REPUBLICANS

---

## WHY REFRAME THE MESSAGE?

The California Republican Party has launched an extensive research project to figure out the best way to attract voters back to the Party. Listening to key voter groups, we have identified their views on issues, parties, and politics.

We have examined the data and identified the messages that offer California Republicans a strong opportunity to reconnect with voters using reframed language.

Quite simply, we have learned that California voters need to believe California Republicans are trying to change things for the better. We can do this by adjusting positions, without abandoning principles. In some cases, this is as simple as changing a few words.

We need to become listeners and show people we care. Then, we can promote fresh ideas to make Sacramento work again for the people.

We face an uphill battle to reframe how Californians view Republicans and the California Republican Party, but this lays out a new way forward.

## CALIFORNIA REPUBLICAN OVERVIEW

---



### OUR GOAL:

Make the brand more modern. Why focus on swing voters if the brand is weak? A weak brand causes an increase in costs for outreach and voter registration.



### OUR TARGETS:

Over the last 18 months, we polled more than 1,800 active California voters, using a 20 minute survey via phone, email, and online. We also conducted over 30 focus groups throughout California.



### OUTCOME:

Our brand is unhealthy, but so is the Democrats'. People agree with our policies, but, as a whole, they don't like the current Republican messaging.



### TAKEAWAY:

Most voters base their current opinions of the California Republican Party on their impression of D.C. Republicans and President Trump.



### THE GOOD NEWS:

Republicans can win; there is a path to victory.



## FINDINGS & OPPORTUNITIES

---

- 1) Impressions of both Republican and Democrats are more negative than positive. Our findings show that messaging changes are vital to moving forward.
- 2) The national Republican brand is significantly worse in California than the California Republican Party. Part of the change must be to distinguish the California Republican Party from the national Republican image.
- 3) The two attributes the California Republican Party needs to embody most are that it has fresh ideas and that it cares about regular Californians.
- 4) Conveying that the California Republican Party cares about the needs of everyday Californians is critical to keeping existing voters and expanding our base.
- 5) New California Republican Party messages are persuasive when comparing to old Republican & Democrat messages. It leads to wins for Republican candidates. Particularly large gains are seen when adjusting the message on climate, education, water policy, immigration, and business regulation.
- 6) Altering the California Republican Party's messaging does not put the Party at risk of losing its current supporters.
- 7) While California is socially liberal, most voters are fiscally conservative, suggesting an open door to reach those social moderates unenthused about a liberal tax-and-spend agenda.



# CLIMATE CHANGE

*"THE FIGHT AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE IN  
CALIFORNIA GAINS AN  
UNLIKELY ALLY: REPUBLICANS"  
- THE LOS ANGELES TIMES*

## VOTER ALERT

A new climate change message has the most persuasive power to attract new voters in the California Republican Party. By acknowledging climate change, voters assign more credibility to Republicans and our messaging on the environment and other issues. But, if a Republican candidate denies climate change, our research shows the candidate losing to its Democrat opponent by 30 points on this issue.



### REFRAMED:

Accepts climate change is real and works to address it. It's time to incentivize innovative private clean energy companies to promote a strong economy and good jobs as we transition toward more renewable energy and less fossil fuel.

0



### TRADITIONAL:

Believes climate change is blown out of proportion and may be a hoax. We will concentrate on protecting jobs in all industries, including those that liberals say contribute to global warming.

-55

**Net increase in Performance Metric™  
from reframing the language**

55



## CLIMATE CHANGE

---

*“The California Republican Party believes in long-term responsible stewardship of California’s bountiful natural resources for future generations.”*

- CALIFORNIA REPUBLICAN PARTY PLATFORM

*“Our efforts to address climate change, however, should focus on providing incentives to innovative clean energy companies in the private sector. Such incentives would promote a strong economy and good jobs as we transition toward more renewable energy.”*

- SENATOR PAT BATES, SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

---

**Republicans support policies that...**

**SB 458**

Would expand recycling opportunities throughout the state

**AB 184**

Would require planning that prepare for and adapt for sea level rise

**AB 1073**

Would put zero or near-zero emission engines on the road by 2023

**CLIMATE CHANGE IS  
HAPPENING & CALIFORNIA**

*Republicans care*

**ABOUT PRESERVING  
CALIFORNIA’S NATURAL BEAUTY**

# EDUCATION

## VOTER ALERT

When a Republican candidate shows support in rewarding great teachers while investing in proven learning resources, the surveys shows the Republican candidate beating the Democrat candidate by 20 points on this issue.



### REFRAMED:

Believes every child deserves an education that prepares them for today's dynamic economy. Because California's students should be taught by the very best, we will pay good teachers more, let the few bad teachers go and invest more in programs proven to help kids learn.

14



### TRADITIONAL:

Believes public schools are failing our kids. School choice, vouchers, and local control are the best solutions to create competition and strengthen our education system.

-38

**Net increase in Performance Metric™  
from reframing the language**

52



# EDUCATION

## #InvestinCaliforniaKids:

Assemblyman Jordan Cunningham fights for CA Students. #AB445 replaces the K-12 CTE Program with a new infrastructure program to get people into middle class jobs. #CADeservesBetter



## LEGISLATION:

“The goal of **Assembly Bill 1482** was to enable parents to make the best decision for their children’s future by breaking down barriers that keep disadvantaged students from changing school districts. Many such students are currently prohibited from enrolling in the district their family prefers even when the district has agreed to a transfer. The consequence is that the California students most in need of educational opportunities often have the least ability to pursue them, and their life prospects suffer.

Despite this disappointing vote, I will continue working with reformers in both parties to ensure every child in California has an opportunity for a quality education, as our Constitution guarantees.”

-ASSEMBLYMAN KEVIN KILEY

Kevin Kiley retweeted



**The Sacramento Bee** @sacb...  
Opinion: Democrats reject an attempt to help kids in need of a break [sacbee.com/9PTH](https://www.sacbee.com/news/politics-government/capitol-alert/article238585881.html)



**CA Assembly GOP** @Assemb... 1d  
CA kids need edu that fits their needs. Language, status or learning ability shouldn't matter. #CADeservesBetter





# WATER POLICY



## REFRAMED:

Believes we should conserve as much water as possible while also developing new technologies. More efficient and effective water transport and new water storage capacity are critical to California's agricultural economy.

18



## TRADITIONAL:

Says we need a sensible water policy that puts people before fish. We will build more water storage facilities to ensure an adequate supply in drought years.

-29

---

**Net increase in Performance Metric™  
from reframing the language**

47



# WATER POLICY

## VOTER ALERT

A Republican candidate who is in favor of conserving our water, while developing new technologies that benefit our agricultural economy, will beat the Democratic candidate by 20 points on this issue.

### WHAT WE LEARNED ABOUT OUR MESSAGING:

Putting people before fish is not a messaging point that resonates well with voters. It is the **WRONG** messaging.

The **RIGHT** messaging still talks about water storage, but also emphasizes developing new technology and continuing conservation efforts.

### NEW MESSAGING IN USE:



Brian Dahle  
@BrianDahleCA

Today is #DamSafetyDay. The #OrovilleDam was an important lesson. I will continue working to ensure our dams are safe.  
#AD1#OrovilleSpillway

**“When you look at Sites, this benefits the entire state. There could be water for people north of the Delta and south of the Delta.”**

**- ASSEMBLYMAN JAMES GALLAGHER**

Senate Republicans unanimously supported the 2014 Proposition 1 water bond, which dedicated \$7.2 billion to new water infrastructure. This included the development of new drinking water and cleanup of groundwater in disadvantaged communities, recycled water systems, stormwater capture, desalination, increased water efficiency, new water storage, and habitat restoration efforts in existing waterways.





# IMMIGRATION

## VOTER ALERT

A Republican candidate that favors a pathway to the American Dream for hardworking people to follow will beat the Democratic candidate by 20 points on the immigration issue.



### REFRAMED:

Believes immigrants are an important part of our communities and our economy. We need to work together to create a real path to legal status so that good, hardworking people can come to our country to seek and achieve the American Dream.

18



### TRADITIONAL:

We need to get tougher on illegal immigration, build a border wall, and deport illegal aliens.

-21

Net increase in Performance Metric™  
from reframing the language

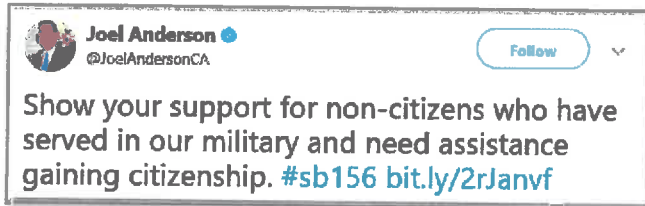
39



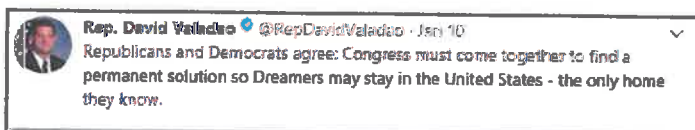
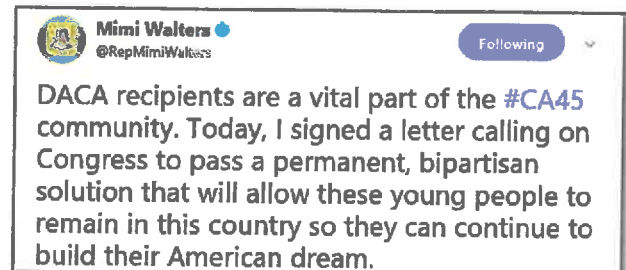
# IMMIGRATION

## LEGISLATION:

**SB 156 by Senator Joel Anderson** makes information regarding citizenship obtainment more accessible to non-citizens who serve or have served in the armed forces.



**Vidak: Congress needs to get off its posterior, protect 'Dreamers' and enact comprehensive immigration reform**



# DACA

# BUSINESS REGULATIONS

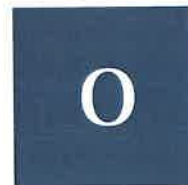
## VOTER ALERT

If the Republican candidate stands up to large businesses, while supporting the small businesses that provide job creation and economic growth, they will win against the Democratic candidate by nearly 10 points for this issue.



### REFRAMED:

Believes businesses help drive the economy and provide jobs, but some get too many breaks from Sacramento. We will stand up to big business and develop effective safeguards for consumers, while removing the regulations on small businesses that hinder startups and hurt job creation.



### TRADITIONAL:

Thinks current business regulations are strangling the economy. We will de-regulate some industries so red tape is cut and California gets back to business-friendly job creation.



**Net increase in Performance Metric™  
from reframing the language**



# BUSINESS REGULATIONS

## LEGISLATION:

AB 150 by Assemblyman Devon Mathis provides small business owners a six-month grace period to correct any Americans with Disabilities Act, ADA violations.



Jordan Cunningham  
@Cunning\_Jordan

Proud to announce my bill AB 996 to improve transparency with state Contractor License Board passed out of cmte on bipartisan vote!

**AB 1174 by Assemblyman Matthew Harper** The right-to-work principle affirms the right of every Californian to work for a living without undermining personal freedom by mandating an employee must join a union.

Apr 18, 2017

## SANTA YNEZ VALLEY NEWS

**Cunningham  
introduces  
new legislation  
aimed at state  
contractors board.**





# TAXES & SPENDING



## VOTER ALERT

The Republican candidate who makes it a priority to eliminate unnecessary government spending while cutting our taxes and paying down our debts, will beat the Democratic candidate by more than 5 points for this issue.



### REFRAMED:

Believes it's time to rein in government spending. To trim the fat and balance the budget, we'll audit every state department, identify and eliminate state programs that duplicate what the federal government is doing, and conduct performance reviews of all administrative personnel.

0



### TRADITIONAL:

Believes Ronald Reagan was right and higher taxes hurt working families. We need to cut taxes, focus on building a budget reserve, and work to pay down our debts so future generations are not left with the burden.

-29

**Net increase in Performance Metric™  
from reframing the language**

29



# TAXES & SPENDING

## LEGISLATION:

With the passing of Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, 164 companies (and counting) have gone on record stating they are giving bonuses and/or pay raises to employees benefiting over 2 million workers. Businesses include: Apple, American Airlines, AT&T, Boeing, Comcast, multiple financial institutions, Pacific Power, Southwest, Visa, and Wal-Mart.

**CAGOP** @CAGOP · 22h  
More good news on why #TaxReformWorks → 90% of workers will receive bigger paychecks starting in February.  
More info: [goo.gl/nyHcvk](http://goo.gl/nyHcvk)

1 2 10

**Mimi Walters** @RepMimiWalters · Jan 8  
Thanks to #TaxReform, over 1 million American workers have received new bonuses, higher pay, and/or improved benefits. Now, companies are beginning to boost their 401(k) match - a big help to employees saving for retirement!

Visa and Aflac boost 401(k) match after tax overhaul  
Visa says it's making the change in the wake of the newly enacted Republican tax law.

**CAGOP Retweeted**  
**Brian Dahle** @BrianDahleCA · 13 Dec 2017  
Wow!  
Check out what you pay in gas taxes now because of #SB1.  
Retweet if you agree this is a #GasTaxtrophe.

TAXES YOU PAY ON A GALLON OF GAS	
BEFORE SB1	AFTER SB1
STATE GAS TAX	STATE GAS TAX
29.7¢	41.7¢
OTHER TAXES (FEDERAL & STATE)	TAX INCREASE
11.62¢	12¢
FEDERAL GAS TAX	STATE GAS TAX
18.4¢	29.7¢
TOTAL	TOTAL
59.72¢	71.72¢

**CAGOP** @CAGOP · 4 Nov 2017  
Today is #GasTaxtrophe Day! Taxpayers are protesting throughout the state. It's not too late to join the fight.  
[cagop.org/\\_gastaxtrophe01](http://cagop.org/_gastaxtrophe01)

Capitol Democrats' NEW \$52 BILLION GAS TAX increase has started.

JOIN US and SAY NO to the #GasTaxtrophe to help us fight Dems throughout the state.

# SOCIAL WELFARE

## VOTER ALERT

The Republican candidate who supports creating local community run organizations that give their residents effective resources to escape poverty will beat the Democratic candidate by more than 10 points on this issue.



### REFRAMED:

Says our state now has the nation's highest poverty rate, which proves current government programs don't work. We will offer people hope and lift them out of poverty with new and effective social programs run by local community organizations, not just the government.

0



### TRADITIONAL:

Opposes welfare benefits because they encourage a culture of dependence. Most social programs are political tools of liberal special interests and do not solve problems. We will reduce social service programs to balance budgets.

-27

Net increase in Performance Metric™  
from reframing the language

27

# SOCIAL WELFARE

*“They broke it, they own it. They want the 2018 campaign to be about Washington, D.C. And we’re going to make sure the 2018 campaign is about the Democrats’ abysmal record here in the state of California.”*

- CALIFORNIA REPUBLICAN PARTY CHAIRMAN JIM BRULTE



## California Republicans: The new party of the poor?

SACRAMENTO — Here's how one political party in California is charting its path to victory. More than 1 in 5 Californians live in poverty, the highest rate in the country when you factor in the higher cost of housing and living in the state. [...] they say...

SFCHRONICLE.COM

Brian Malenschein  
@BMalenschein

Following

My bill, AB 236, was signed-clarifies that families reuniting with a child in foster care may be eligible for temporary housing assistance.



## In the 2017-18 Legislative cycle our members supported:

- AB 236 Helping homeless families get shelters
- AB 480 making sure low income babies have diapers
- AB 557 helping victims of domestic violence find a safe shelter
- AB 612 helping foster kids transition into adulthood

Heath Flora  
@HeathFloraCA

Following

Proud that today my bill AB 579 creating a firefighter pre-apprenticeship program passed the Assembly w/ unanimous support.  
#caleg @modbee



Asm Marc Steinorth  
@MarcSteinorth

Following

Proud to be part of legislation that brings health to our families and economic benefit to our community.

Scott Wiener @ScottWiener  
I'm introducing legislation (SB 900) to make fresh produce more affordable to #CalFresh (food stamps) recipients by providing financial incentives when they use CalFresh for fresh fruits/vegetables grown in CA. Makes it easier for low income ppl to eat healthy & helps CA farmers.

Assemblyman Lackey  
@TomLackey36

Following

Awesome bipartisan support today on our effort to increase funding to  
#KeepThePromise and the DDS community  
#caleg #ACR77



# HOUSING

## VOTER ALERT

The Republican candidate that supports making housing more affordable for the middle class and builders, while providing tax credits to renters, will beat the Democrat candidate by 5 points on this issue.



### REFRAMED:

Wants to make housing more affordable for the middle class. We will provide tax credits to renters, make it easier to build more rental units, and decrease taxes and fees on new housing, while protecting California's environment and our quality of life.

0



### TRADITIONAL:

Believes housing will be more affordable if we let the laws of supply and demand work for us. We will eliminate government red tape that adds costs and limits where developers can build.

-27

**Net increase in Performance Metric™  
from reframing the language**

27

# HOUSING

**“If we want to increase housing, we must reduce costs and eliminate the barriers (bureaucratic red-tape, legal hoops, inflated wage demands) that push up the cost of building projects...”**

**SENATOR PAT BATES**

Floor Speech on September 27, 2016



Rent just keeps rising. @TomLackey36's proposal would increase the renters tax credit and help folks afford CA. #CADeservesBetter #AB181



**Assemblyman Tom Lackey's AB 181** would extend and increase the renters' tax credit for Californians.

HOUSING GROWTH CONTINUES  
AT A SNAIL'S PACE



**Assembly Bill 53** from Assemblyman **Marc Steinorth** would allow couples to save up to \$20,000 tax free — \$10,000 for individuals — toward the purchase of a principal residence.

CA Assembly GOP @AssemblyGOP · May 26  
#CAHousingCrisis makes buying a home nearly impossible. @MarcSteinorth's #AB53 would make homeownership achievable. #CADeservesBetter





# HEALTHCARE

## VOTER ALERT

A Republican candidate who wants to give Californians more healthcare options that focus on preventative medicine and promotes a healthier population will beat the Democrat candidate by 10 points on this issue.



### REFRAMED:

Believes a healthier population, particularly in disadvantaged communities, benefits all Californians. We will give people more healthcare options and reorient the system toward preventative medicine, which is far cheaper.

1



### TRADITIONAL:

Believes there are too many insurance mandates and government programs that drive up the cost of healthcare for businesses in California. We will repeal and replace Obamacare and let the healthcare market work.

-21

Net increase in Performance Metric™  
from reframing the language

22



Mimi Walters  
@RepMimiWalters

Following

Congress is working to improve healthcare. CA leg wants to raise taxes & make it worse. Californians deserve better.

# HEALTHCARE

## NEW MESSAGING IN USE:

*"Access to quality health and dental care can turn a person's life around. I'm pleased that the Assembly took a step toward expanding these programs so that Californians can get the care they deserve."*

- ASSEMBLYMAN BRIAN MAIENSCHIN

## LEGISLATION:

**Assemblyman Brian Maienschein** proposed legislation to improve dental care for 13 million Californians, including 5 million children, and provide access to quality in-home nursing for children from families that cannot afford treatment.

He has also written bills to address similar issues. AB 15 will help children and families receive preventative and restorative dental care, and AB 654 will create an innovative program to provide medically fragile children and their families the medical care they desperately need.



**Brian Maienschein**

February 23, 2017 •

Currently 5 million children are enrolled in Denti-Cal, but in 2014, less than 38% of eligible children received any dental care. This absence of dental care can result in oral pain and discomfort, infections, and major dental problems, which often translate into missed days of school and lower academic performance. AB 15 will help provide California's children with the preventative and restorative dental care they are currently being denied.

Please click the link below to read more about AB 15 and what I'm doing to help fund the state's low-income dental care system.

**Senate Republicans Call on Governor to Increase Medi-Cal Rates for California's Most Vulnerable Citizens**

## PROPOSITION 52 (2016):

Will solidify existing legislation and carves out important guidelines for how things can be changed in the future – always good since things move pretty fast around here. Keeping this coverage up helps lots of people without putting an additional burden on the state's taxpayers. Healthy people can help California moving forward.

# PUBLIC SAFETY

## VOTER ALERT

The Republican candidate who believes that in order for crime rates to lower we must start by improving the lives and economic opportunities available in low-income communities will beat their Democratic opponent by more than 10 points on this issue.



### REFRAMED:

Believes reducing crime requires improving lives and economic opportunity in low-income communities. We need strong law enforcement to protect our communities and we support the police, but must hold them accountable for treating all people fairly.

0



### TRADITIONAL:

Believes public safety is a core government responsibility. In addition to providing front line law enforcement the tools to do their job, we must pass tough laws that put criminals behind bars and protect victim's rights.

-18

Net increase in Performance Metric™  
from reframing the language

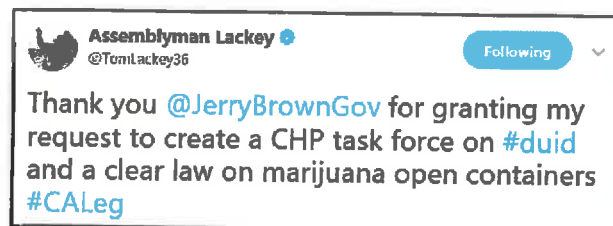
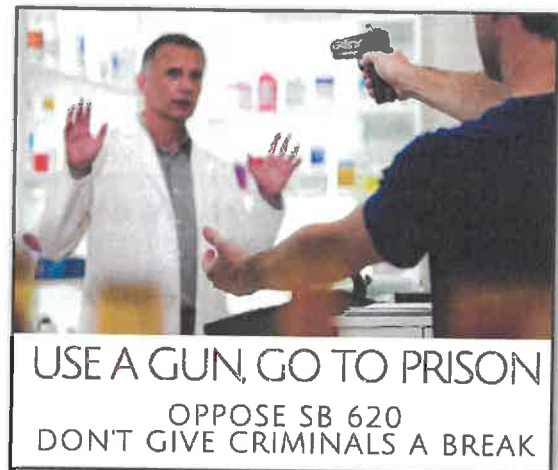
18

# PUBLIC SAFETY

## OPPOSING LEGISLATION:

*“I think we can all agree that we need to keep searching for new and better ways to solve the nation’s growing drug problem. However, making it actually easier for those addicted to drugs like heroin or methamphetamines should not be part of any program we sanction.”*

SENATOR PAT BATES  
Floor Speech on AB 186







## CONTACT

---

**SENATOR JIM BRULTE (RET.)**  
Chairman, California Republican Party

P. 916-919-3097  
E. SenatorJim31@aol.com

---

**CYNTHIA BRYANT**  
Executive Director, California Republican Party

P. 916-448-9496  
E. cbryant@cagop.org

---

**NITHIN MATHEW**  
Political Director, California Republican Party

P. 916-448-9496  
E. nmathew@cagop.org

---

**JANESSA PULIDO**  
Finance Director, California Republican Party

P. 916-448-9496  
E. jpulido@cagop.org

