



# STATE ELECTION INTEGRITY SCORECARD

## CALIFORNIA

August 2023



The America First Policy Institute's (AFPI) Center for Election Integrity (CEI) has analyzed the extent to which each state has implemented five key election integrity policies. Each policy proposal is designed to ensure transparency, accountability, and security in elections and to increase Americans' confidence in their outcomes. The five tested and proven policies are to: 1) Require photo ID for in-person voting; 2) Require voter ID for mail ballot voting; 3) Ban Ranked Choice Voting; 4) Require all ballots to be received by Election Day; and 5) Ban ballot harvesting. Though CEI has also identified several other critical election integrity measures that would help make it easy to vote but hard to cheat, this scorecard focuses on these five policies when assessing how well a state is implementing efforts needed to protect legal votes and legal voters.

**10/100**  
possible points

**Ban ballot harvesting.** California does not have any guardrails on how many ballots can be returned by an individual on behalf of voters. This behavior constitutes ballot harvesting, which pollutes the integrity of elections. Any state that has no guardrails against mass collection and turning in others' ballots is documented to cause problems and erode voters' trust. California currently falls into this category.

**Require voter ID for mail ballot voting.** California does not require a witness for signature matching and/or does not require signature matching at all. Mail-in ballot voting is convenient, but without significant guardrails, it opens the door to voter fraud. A voter should be required to demonstrate that they, and they alone, filled out their mail-in ballot. Requiring a form of voter ID while maintaining voter confidentiality makes it hard to cheat. California fails this test.

**Require photo ID for in-person voting.** California allows unreliable forms of ID, including a poll worker verbally vouching for a voter and a voter signing an affidavit or other state form attesting to their identity. Alternatively, this state does not require ID at all. Photo ID is required for most activities, and claims about its negative effects have been proven false, so states have no excuse to not require photo ID to vote. States that fail to do so are failing their citizens and making it easy to cheat.

**Require all ballots to be received by Election Day.** California allows ballots to be received and counted days after Election Day. With the many conveniences of voting now available, states have no excuse to not require ballots to be received by Election Day. This change would mean faster election results and more confidence in elections.

**Ban Ranked Choice Voting.** California has not proactively banned Ranked Choice Voting (RCV). This system of voting has been documented to cause delays in counting ballots, has a track record of failure in elections, and creates a scenario in which every vote is not equal. Banning Ranked Choice Voting will proactively solve these problems.

### ADDITIONAL POLICIES

#### Has California...

...prohibited non-government funding in elections administration?

No

...banned non-citizens from voting?

No

...refused membership in ERIC?

✓ Yes!

...prohibited same-day registration?

No