

Search Terms: **Rose Institute, Rose Institute**

FOCUS™

[Search Within Results](#)[Edit Search](#)[Print](#)[Email](#)[Document List](#)[Expanded List](#)[KWIC](#)[Full](#)[◀ previous](#) Document 6 of 6.Copyright 2005 The Press Enterprise Co.
Press Enterprise (Riverside, CA)

October 7, 2005, Friday

SECTION: EDITORIAL; Pg. B08b**LENGTH:** 437 words**HEADLINE:** OUR VIEWS;
Yes on Prop. 77**BYLINE:** THE PRESS-ENTERPRISE**BODY:**

Redistricting reform may sound boring to many voters, but it is crucial to honest elections in California. That is why we endorse Prop. 77 and consider it the most significant initiative on the Nov. 8 ballot.

By taking the authority to draw districts out of the hands of politicians and giving that power to judges, Prop. 77 would restore fairness to a process that is now rigged.

As it is, legislators draw the lines for the districts they represent - choosing their voters instead of the other way around. That is an obvious conflict of interest, and has brought the state a crop of arrogant policymakers whose tenure in office is all but guaranteed. That dynamic is a big reason legislators flout public opinion on a host of issues, from rejecting tougher regulation of sex offenders to approving driver's licenses for illegal immigrants.

Prop. 77 would create a bipartisan panel of three retired judges - picked at random from a pool of 24 jurists assembled by the governor and legislative leaders - to draw California's district lines for Congress, the Legislature and the Board of Equalization.

The measure requires that districts be compact and limits the splitting of cities and counties. Legislators now draw ridiculously elaborate lines that carve apart communities for no greater purpose than incumbent protection.

The result: Many state voters are effectively disenfranchised. In the November 2004 election, every one of California's 153 incumbents on the state and federal ballots retained his or her seat.

Prop. 77 would unstack the deck. A study published last month by the **Rose Institute** of State and Local Government at Claremont-McKenna College found that redistricting under Prop. 77 would boost the number of competitive seats in California to

10 in the House of Representatives (compared with zero today); seven in the state Assembly (vs. three); and eight in the state Senate (as opposed to one).

The measure would favor neither party but would threaten the stranglehold on power that incumbents in both parties now enjoy. That is why both Democrats and Republicans actively oppose Prop. 77.

But elections should be determined by the will of the people, not the cunning of politicians - especially politicians who go on to flout public opinion because they know voters in rigged districts can do almost nothing about it. Nothing, that is, except approve Prop. 77.

* * *

For a list of Press-Enterprise endorsements in the Nov. 8 election, please visit www.pe.com/localnews/opinion

LOAD-DATE: October 7, 2005

[◀◀PREVIOUS](#) Document 6 of 6.

[Terms & Conditions](#) [Privacy](#) [Copyright ©](#) 2005 LexisNexis, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All Rights Reserved