

Chapter 3: Direct Democracy

Test Bank

Multiple Choice

1. The term “hybrid government” refers to _____.
 - A. a mixture of old laws with new initiatives
 - B. an efficient government
 - C. a blending of direct democracy with representative democracy
 - D. a group of elected officials who represent every manner of ethnicity and race, reflecting the state’s hyperdiversity

2. What is the most appropriate way to characterize California’s political system?
 - A. direct democracy
 - B. representative democracy
 - C. hybrid democracy
 - D. confederation

3. Which political party was able to get direct democracy embedded into California’s constitution over a century ago?
 - A. Republicans led by President Theodore Roosevelt.
 - B. Progressives led by Governor Hiram Johnson.
 - C. Democrats led by Assembly Speaker Jess Unruh.
 - D. No party; it was a nonpartisan effort led by lobbyist Artie Samish.

4. Citizens in California may propose laws via the initiative process _____.
 - A. at the local, county, and state levels
 - B. only at the state level
 - C. at the local level only
 - D. at the state level, but the legislature must review their proposals first and may reject them

5. An alternative to the state’s current direct initiative process is the *indirect* initiative, which would enable _____.
 - A. the courts to review the measure for constitutionality
 - B. the attorney general to incorporate it into state law
 - C. the legislature to make amendments to the proposed law or consider adopting it
 - D. Congress members to create a federal law based on the proposed initiative

6. The legislature can refer constitutional amendments, bond measures, and laws for the people to approve or disapprove at election time. These measures are known as _____.

- A. statutes
- B. primary bills
- C. legislatively referred measures
- D. none of these

7. Historically, have Californians used the initiative process more often, less often, or at about the same rate as other states with the initiative process?

- A. more often
- B. less often
- C. about the same

8. Thanks to Proposition 13 (in 1978), a _____ vote is required to raise taxes in this state.

- A. simple majority vote (50% + 1)
- B. 55% vote
- C. two-thirds vote
- D. unanimous vote

9. Citizens in California may propose laws via the initiative process at what level of government?

- A. federal, state, county, city
- B. state, county, city
- C. county and city only
- D. city only

10. Most proposed ballot measures fail because _____.

- A. not enough money is raised by the proponents to raise awareness about it
- B. the majority of initiatives deal with raising taxes, and people never vote to raise their taxes
- C. the legislature adopts them before the election is held, therefore eliminating the need for people to vote on them
- D. the measure's proponents don't gather enough valid signatures to qualify it for the ballot

11. If a proposition is adopted by the voters, how can it later be changed or amended?

- A. only by a vote of the people (through another proposition)
- B. either by a vote of the people or through the regular lawmaking process
- C. only through the regular lawmaking process
- D. only by the courts

12. At which point do most initiatives fail?

- A. during the preparation stage following the public review and comment period
- B. during the qualification stage when signatures are gathered and then verified
- C. before the election, because legislators may adopt the measure and remove it from the ballot
- D. postelection, when courts invalidate measures

13. Do all U.S. states offer some form of the initiative process?

- A. Yes
- B. No

| Map 3.1 States with the Initiative Process, 2017

14. Which office certifies ballot measures and assigns an official number to propositions?

- A. Attorney General
- B. Governor
- C. State Auditor
- D. Secretary of State

15. How long do petitioners have to collect signatures in order to qualify initiatives for the ballot?

- A. 1 month (30 days)
- B. 3 months (90 days)
- C. 6 months (180 days)
- D. 1 year (365 days)

16. After an initiative is drafted, what must the author of the ballot measure do in order to get a title and summary?

- A. Submit the measure to the Attorney General's office, pay a fee of \$2,000, and wait until the 30-day public comment period has ended.
- B. Wait for the legislature to hold public hearings about it.
- C. Secure an opinion from the state supreme court that it's constitutional.
- D. Submit % of the signatures that will ultimately be needed to qualify the measure for the ballot.

17. Does California law require the state Supreme Court to review initiatives before signatures can be gathered?

- A. Yes
- B. No

| Preparation Stage: Drafting, Public Review, and Titling | Qualification Stage: Circulating Petitions, Gathering Signatures, and Signature Verification

18. Does California law require at least one state judge to review initiatives before proponents can gather signatures?

- A. Yes
- B. No

| Preparation Stage: Drafting, Public Review, and Titling | Qualification Stage: Circulating Petitions, Gathering Signatures, and Signature Verification

19. After a ballot measure has been submitted to the Attorney General, the only point at which the language of a proposed measure can be changed is _____.

- A. during a 5-day window after the month-long public review period
- B. at any point until the election ballot is printed
- C. never; if it qualifies, the measure that is initially submitted with \$2,000 must later be printed exactly the same way on the election ballot
- D. after the legislature holds a public hearing about it

20. The number of signatures needed to qualify an initiative for the ballot is based on _____.

- A. the total number of registered voters at the point in time when signatures are validated
- B. an estimate of eligible voters in the state
- C. a percentage of all votes cast for governor in the last gubernatorial election
- D. the number of voters who turned out for the last election

21. Which of the following government officials (or offices) are directly involved qualifying initiatives?

- A. Governor, Supreme Court Chief Justice, Secretary of State, Leaders of the Legislature
- B. Supreme Court Chief Justice, Secretary of State
- C. Secretary of State, Speaker of the Assembly, Governor
- D. Attorney General, Secretary of State

22. Which of the following must happen in order for an initiative to qualify for the ballot?

- A. A fee of \$5,000 must be paid to the Secretary of State.
- B. The state Supreme Court must declare that it is constitutional or not.
- C. The Governor must sign it.
- D. The Secretary of State must verify that enough valid signatures have been collected.

23. What kinds of initiatives tend to attract the most spending by opponents and proponents?

- A. immigration issues
- B. economic reform
- C. political reform
- D. issues that affect industry/business

24. How many votes are needed to pass an initiative or approve a recall?

- A. simple majority (50%+1)
- B. plurality (most votes)
- C. two-thirds supermajority
- D. three-fifths supermajority

25. A _____ vote is needed to pass initiatives; a _____ vote is needed to pass bond measures.

- A. supermajority; majority
- B. supermajority; supermajority
- C. simple majority; supermajority
- D. majority; majority

26. If two similar measures qualify for the ballot and both are approved, which measure takes effect?

- A. the measure that is listed first on the ballot, because it qualified first
- B. neither, because they cancel each other out
- C. the measure that receives more votes
- D. the state supreme court possesses the authority to choose the winner

27. Citizen initiatives may be included on the ballot in which types of elections?

- A. primary elections only
- B. primaries and general elections only
- C. general elections and special elections only
- D. special elections only

28. The legislature may place initiatives, constitutional amendments, or bonds on _____.

- A. any election ballot, including primary, general, or special elections
- B. primary election ballots only
- C. general election ballots only
- D. no ballot; the process is reserved for citizens only

29. The most common form of the referendum in California is _____.

- A. the petition referendum
- B. statutory initiatives
- C. the recall of local officials
- D. a bond measure

30. State law requires a vote of the people to borrow funds in amounts exceeding _____.

- A. \$100,000
- B. \$300,000
- C. \$1,000,000
- D. \$3,000,000,000

31. Which of these officials in California may be recalled?

- A. only local officials
- B. local officials and state officials
- C. local, state, and federal officials
- D. only federal officials

32. In California, citizens can recall elected officials _____.

- A. for any reason
- B. only for criminal convictions
- C. only after they have been accused of a serious crime, or indicted for wrongdoing
- D. only if the election results are determined to be corrupt or compromised

33. Citizens wishing to recall a governor must collect valid signatures equal to _____ of the votes cast in the previous gubernatorial election, or about _____ signatures.
- A. 8%; 500,000
 - B. 12%; 900,000
 - C. 25%; 2 million
 - D. 30%; 2.7 million

(Note: the 900,000 figure is based on the 2016 election and will change based on turnout for the 2018 election)

34. The initiatives that are usually brought to voters at the local level most often pertain to _____.
- A. civil rights and civil liberties
 - B. public morality and transportation
 - C. health, welfare, housing, criminal justice, housing
 - D. funding for education, the political process, taxes, and land use

at the Local Level

35. How does the initiative process at the local level differ from the process at the state level?
- A. the volume of signatures required is higher at the local level.
 - B. city councils or boards of supervisors may vote to adopt a local initiative if enough signatures have been gathered
 - C. generally the paperwork and signature gathering processes are far more expensive
 - D. local initiatives can't be overturned by the courts

at the Local Level

36. Historically, which elected officials have been subjected to the most recalls in California?
- A. governors
 - B. county supervisors
 - C. state legislators
 - D. school board members

at the Local Level

37. Compared to statewide ballot measures, local ballot measures _____.
- A. have a much higher rate of passage
 - B. are adopted at about the same rate as statewide propositions
 - C. have a much lower rate of passage

at the Local Level

38. Are local initiatives more likely or less likely to be approved by voters than state initiatives?

- A. more likely
- B. less likely
- C. neither more nor less likely (about the same)

at the Local Level

True/False

1. If initiatives are on the ballot, then on election day every voting Californian is a lawmaker.
2. An initiative is a type of ballot measure, not a bill.
3. Ballot measures are permitted only at the state level, not at the local level.
4. California law requires the legislature to approve all initiatives before they reach the ballot.
5. Not only can California voters change public policy through the ballot box, but also they can change the rules for how state officials conduct their business.
6. The legislature can refer measures to the ballot for the people to approve or disapprove.
7. The California constitution allows the legislature to correct any mistakes or make changes to all initiatives before they reach the ballot.
8. Californians use the initiative process more often than residents in other states that have an initiative process.

9. If Hiram Johnson were alive today, he would be proud of the fact that most ballot measure campaigns are funded by legions of small donors, or those who donate anywhere from \$5 to \$1,000.

10. Small donors, defined as those who donate \$1,000 or less, account for just 2% of all contributions to ballot measure campaigns.

11. Direct democracy exists in all California counties and municipalities, meaning that citizens can write laws, and with enough signatures, their measure can be put to a vote of the people locally, either in cities or counties.

12. Once a title and summary have been assigned to a proposed law or ballot proposition, the text of law can be changed if mistakes are discovered.

Answer Location: Preparation Stage: Drafting, Public Review, and Titling

13. In order to qualify an initiative for the ballot, usually the signature gatherers must collect about twice the number needed because so many are found to be invalid.

14. For a signature on a ballot measure petition to be valid, the person must be a registered voter in the county where he or she signs the petition.

15. The signatures of any adult citizen, whether or not they are registered to vote in California, are considered valid signatures.

16. More signatures are needed to qualify a constitutional amendment for the ballot than are needed for regular, statutory initiatives.

17. In the United States, most of the states that allow citizen initiatives are in the West or Midwest.

Answer Location: Map 3.1 States with the Initiative Process, 2017

18. In the United States, no state on the east coast allows citizens to vote on laws without the legislature's prior involvement.

Answer Location: Map 3.1 States with the Initiative Process, 2017

19. Initiatives and propositions are the same thing.

| Qualification Stage: Circulating Petitions, Gathering Signatures, and Signature Verification

20. California is the only state with the direct initiative; in all other initiative states, only the indirect process is allowed.

| Map 3.1 States with the Initiative Process, 2017

21. All states in the United States offer some form of the initiative process.

| Map 3.1 States with the Initiative Process, 2017

22. Historically, Californians have rejected far more initiatives than they have approved.

| Figure 3.1 Number of Statewide Initiatives that Qualified and Voters Approved in California, 1912–2016

23. Fewer signatures are needed to qualify a Constitutional amendment for the ballot than are needed for regular, statutory initiatives.

24. Contributions to ballot initiative campaigns are capped at \$5,000; no person or entity may donate more than that amount to any one ballot measure in an election cycle.

25. There are no limits on contributions to ballot initiative campaigns; contributions may be in any dollar amount, and the typical donation is in the \$1 million range.

Location: Campaign Stage: Persuading Potential Voters

26. A two-thirds vote is required to pass any kind of bond in California.

27. Voters must approve bonds (state borrowing) totaling \$300,000 or more.

28. If voters disapprove of an existing law, no matter how long the law has been in effect, then they can try to collect enough signatures to prompt a referendum on it.

29. Once a law goes into effect, voters only have 3 months (90 days) to initiate a petition to hold a referendum on it.

30. Because of the interest that must be repaid, a bond typically can cost about twice the face amount that is borrowed. Thus, a \$5 billion bond may actually cost taxpayers almost twice that amount by the time it is paid off.

31. Referendums (or referenda) are rare in California.

32. Regular, general obligation bond measures require a supermajority of two thirds to pass; however, there is a lower vote threshold for school bonds to pass (55%).

33. In California, citizens can recall officials for any reason.

34. All U.S. states allow their citizens to recall elected officials who commit crimes.

35. Citizens wishing to recall a governor should collect over 1 million valid signatures, because many signatures might be invalidated later in the process.

36. Although Californians may recall their state officials, they may not recall their U.S. House representative or U.S. Senators.

37. Californians may recall any elected official if they gather the requisite number of valid signatures.

38. A ballot measure at the local level can be an initiative written by a citizen or group of citizens.

at the Local Level

39. Local ballot measures generally have a high rate of passage--much higher than statewide ballot measures.

at the Local Level

40. Citizens may propose laws for California cities, towns, or counties.

at the Local Level

41. The process for passing an initiative at the local level is similar to that at the state level, in that a certain number of signatures must be gathered and verified by a local elections official.

at the Local Level

42. Only city council members or mayors may propose laws or ordinances for California cities, towns, or counties.

at the Local Level

Short Answer

1. The three types of direct democracy are: _____, _____, and _____.
Ans: initiative; recall; referendum

2. Californians can propose initiative _____ that establish new laws, or initiative _____ which add or amend the state constitution.
Ans: statutes; constitutional amendments

3. The supermajority requirement to pass a school bond is _____%.
Ans: 55 (fifty-five)

4. The supermajority requirement to pass a general obligation bond is _____.

wo-thirds or 66.66%

5. The percentage of votes required to pass an initiative in California is _____.

Ans: simple majority (50% + 1)

Essay

1. How does direct democracy challenge the theoretical assumptions of representative democracy?

Ans: Varies. The U.S. Founders believed that representatives working in competing branches (executive and legislative) would check each other with overlapping powers, would filter the passions of their constituents through a deliberative process, and would find compromises in their quest to make good public policy. The forms of direct democracy available to Californians are not suited for deliberation or compromise, or “checks” against the tyranny of the majority; they offer “take-them-or-leave-them” solutions that (with difficulty) can only be replaced with another alternative, not amended.

2. In simple terms, why did Progressive reformers establish direct democracy?

A. Reformers aimed to reduce the power of special interests and their lobbyists (i.e., to reduce the actuality and potential for corruption), and wanted to increase the power of individuals as a “check” against an unresponsive legislature or government. (Note: this answer builds on information contained in Chapter 2).

3. Describe the three types of direct democracy in California.

The direct initiative (or simply, the initiative process) gives Californians the power to propose constitutional amendments and laws that fellow citizens will vote on without the legislature’s involvement. The referendum is a vote taken to approve or reject a measure already passed by the legislature. Bond measures are a type of referendum. The recall allows voters to remove and replace elected officials between regular elections.

4. In what sense is California government a “hybrid” government?

Ans: Varies. Essentially, it combines the features of representative government (officials are elected to positions in competing branches, such as an executive and a legislature) and direct democracy, whereby the people have the power to make laws in a political process that is not checked by another branch (except sometimes the judiciary). Students should be able to demonstrate an understanding that the ability for citizens to participate in the lawmaking process negates the role of representatives, and puts voters in charge of decision-making.

5. What is the difference between the direct and indirect initiative, and which type or types exist in California?

The direct initiative (or simply, the initiative process) gives Californians the power to propose constitutional amendments and laws that fellow citizens will vote on without the legislature's involvement. The indirect initiative allows lawmakers to first consider citizen-initiated measures before they are presented to the public for a vote. Only the direct initiative exists in California at the state level. Both the direct and indirect initiative exist at the local level. There, petitioners can submit their measures along with the required number of signatures to a local governing board, such as the city council or board of supervisors, who have the option of considering it and adopting it as a local law or referring it to the voters.

| Direct Democracy at the Local Level

6. How do large donors practically monopolize the initiative system?

Ans: Wealthy entities, including corporations, interest groups, labor unions, or individuals, can gather the money needed to pay a firm to gather signatures for their proposed ballot measures, which typically costs millions of dollars (\$3 million on average). Also, almost all funds donated to initiative campaigns come from large donors. Fewer than 50 entities contributed half of the \$2.3 billion that was donated to initiative campaigns from 2000 to 2012.

7. Describe two types of initiatives that may qualify for the state ballot.

A proposed law is called a statutory initiative, and establishes a new law. A constitutional amendment changes the language of the state constitution, by adding new provisions or changing existing ones.

8. What is a "valid" signature on a ballot measure petition?

For a signature on a ballot measure petition to be valid, the person must be a registered voter in the county where he or she signs the petition. This means that only adult citizens who are registered to vote may sign the petitions, and the signatures are valid only if they are collected in the county where those persons are registered to vote.

9. What are three valid means of collecting signatures on ballot petitions?

Ans: Means of collecting signatures include *in person* in public places, such as in front of grocery stores or at churches using the "clipboard method" (by one person) or "table method" (one person sits at a table while a companion approaches passersby); *direct mail* (generally not cost-effective); and *door-to-door* (rare). Electronic signature gathering is not allowed.

10. What role does the legislature play in the initiative process?

After 25% of the required signatures have been gathered, the legislature must hold informational hearings on ballot measures. This is the only official role they may play.

11. Name three landmark propositions (initiatives) passed in California after 1965; use the proposition number and give a short title or description.

Ans: Proposition 1A, Constitutional reform, legislative professionalization; Prop 9, Political Reform Act (campaign finance reform); Prop 13, Property tax limitation; Prop 98, Minimum funding levels for education; Prop 140, Term limits (modified in 2012 with Prop 28); Prop 184, Three-strikes law; Prop 187, Ineligibility of illegal aliens for public services (overturned by courts); Prop 215, Medical use of marijuana; Prop 5, Tribal gaming; Prop 227, Elimination of bilingual education; Prop 11, Legislative redistricting; Prop 8, Definition of marriage (outlawed same-sex marriage; invalidated in federal court); Prop 14, open primary or “top two” vote-getter elections; Prop 67, Recreational use of marijuana. Others are possible; these are listed in the book.

Answer Location: Table 3.1 Selected Landmark Initiatives in California, 1966–2016

12. Briefly describe the three stages through which an initiative must pass in order to become law in California.

Ans: Stage 1, Preparation Stage, in which drafting, public review, and titling occur. A proposed law is written and given to the Attorney General’s Office with a \$2,000 filing fee. Measure is posted online for 30 days for public review, and (at end of 30-day period) authors have 5 days to change wording in response to public comments. Attorney General’s office assigns a title and summary. Stage 2, Qualification: Circulating Petitions, Gathering Signatures, and Verifying Signatures. Authors circulate petitions to gather enough signatures to qualify their measure within a given time frame. After the deadline, the Secretary of State verifies whether enough signatures are valid, and assigns it a number if it qualifies for the ballot (“Proposition #”). Stage 3, Campaign: supporters and opponents campaign to convince voters to reject or accept the measure. A simple majority vote is needed to pass initiatives; supermajority votes are needed to pass bond measures (two thirds).

| Campaign Stage: Persuading Potential Voters

13. Briefly describe the *four* stages through which an initiative must pass in order to take effect California.

Ans: Stage 1, Preparation Stage: Drafting and Titling. A proposed law is written and submitted with \$2,000 to the Attorney General’s office, which posts it online for 30 days for public comment. After the review period, the proposal can be changed or amended by authors during a short window of time (5 days), and then is given a title and summary by the Attorney General’s office. Stage 2, Qualification: Circulating Petitions, Gathering Signatures, and Signature Verification. Authors circulate petitions to gather enough signatures to qualify their measure within a given time frame. After the deadline, the Secretary of State verifies whether enough signatures are valid, and assigns it a number if it qualifies for the ballot (“Proposition #”). Stage 3, Campaign: supporters and opponents campaign to convince voters to reject or accept the measure. A simple majority vote is needed to pass initiatives; supermajority votes are needed to pass bond measures (two thirds). Stage 4, Postelection: measures take effect immediately, unless challenged in court. Many measures must survive court challenges in order to take

effect. (Astute students might also point out that public officials sometimes try to find ways around initiatives, and that opponents often try to overcome propositions with their own versions by trying to get them qualified for a future election.)

| Campaign Stage: Persuading Potential Voters | Postelection Stage: Court Challenges and Implementation

14. What happens at the preparation stage of the initiative process?

A new law or constitutional amendment is written or “drafted.” Lawyers may be consulted. Drafts are submitted to the state Attorney General with a fee of \$2,000. The AG’s office posts the measure online and allows 30 days of public comment. Authors then have 5 days to change their proposal in response to the public comments if they choose. AG then assigns a title and summary.

Answer Location: Preparation Stage: Drafting, Public Review, and Titling

15. What happens at the qualification stage of the initiative process?

Ans: Proponents circulate strictly formatted petitions to gather enough signatures to qualify their measure within a given time frame. Signature requirements are based on a percentage of all votes cast for governor during the last election: 5% for initiatives (more than 365,880 signatures) and 8% (more than 585,407 for a Constitutional amendment; note that these numbers will change after the 2018 election). Because so many signatures are needed, proponents usually hire a signature-gathering firm to help. After a deadline of 180 days, petitions are submitted to county elections officials, who verify whether the collected signatures are valid. If the Secretary of State certifies that the overall count of signatures is valid, the measure qualifies and the Secretary will assign it a number (“Proposition #.”)

16. What happens at the campaign stage of the initiative process?

Ans: Supporters and opponents campaign to convince voters to reject or accept the measure, which is now referred to as a Proposition, such as “Prop #.” If the measure is controversial, the measure may generate considerable interest and millions of dollars may be spent to promote or defeat it. (The most expensive campaigns exceed \$100 million in total spending.)

17. What happens during the postelection stage of the initiative process?

Ans: Measures take effect immediately (following the election), unless an opponent challenges it in court. Many measures must survive court challenges in order to take effect, and historically many high-profile propositions have been invalidated in part or in whole. (Astute students might also point out that public officials sometimes try to find ways around initiatives, and that opponents often try to overcome propositions with their own versions by trying to get them qualified for a future election. The only way to change or eliminate an initiative is to pass a new one.)

18. What are some of the perceived problems with today’s initiative process? What

remedies have been suggested to address them?

Ans: Opinions abound over whether and how to reform the initiative process, and there is considerable speculation over how effective those reforms may be. These issues are catalogued in Box 3.1, but some of them include: (1) Paid signature-gatherers are needed to meet signature requirements (remedy: give people more time to collect signatures). (2) Big money dominates the process (remedy: limit campaign donations; better disclosure of donor information needed). (3) Ballot measures are confusing and complex (remedy: make more information accessible and available online). (4) There are too many initiatives (remedy: allow the legislature to review or act on initiatives first; give courts a bigger role). (5) Initiatives are too difficult to revise once passed (remedy: allow the legislature to amend them after passage). (6) The state constitution contains overlapping and redundant measures because of the initiative process (remedy: require a revision process). (7) Too many initiatives are declared unconstitutional (require the legislature to review; involve judges who can evaluate their constitutionality; allow authors to withdraw measures).

| Box 3.1 Reforming the Initiative Process

19. Why do corporations and special interests find initiatives appealing?

allot measures that they sponsor or favor can translate into financial gain or friendlier regulations (and that helps them reap bigger profits or achieve their policy objectives).

20. Define "referendum."

Ans: (Wording may vary) A referendum is a vote held by citizens on an existing law. Within 90 days of a law going into effect, voters may challenge the law by first gathering enough signatures to prompt a referendum vote, and if enough signatures are collected and the referendum qualifies for the ballot, then the voters may reject or retain the law at election time.

21. Does direct democracy work as the Progressives intended it? Why or why not?

Ans: Varies. Students should address both the intentions and the consequences--actual or perceived--of direct democracy. The Progressives intended to reduce the power of special interests in the lawmaking process, and to empower citizens with that responsibility, particularly as needed to bypass an uncooperative legislature and to establish popular laws. However, the process at the state level is dominated by those who have the money and resources required to gather signatures and campaign hard for a measure. Average citizens may be confused by conflicting and oversimplified messages, misunderstand complex measures, be presented with choices that require no compromise among competing groups, and be faced with measures that cannot be easily altered once passed. Students should note the ways in which special interests dominate each stage of the process. A more astute student might also note that if Progressives valued a more efficient lawmaking process (as noted in Chapter 2), ballot-box lawmaking has had the opposite effect in some cases, negatively influencing how lawmakers do their jobs by creating rules that lead to stalemate and inflexibility. An astute answer would also consider institutional impacts, which include in an incoherent

and ever-changing set of rules for lawmakers, inflexible rules (such as supermajority vote requirements that hinder compromise), and institutional fragmentation, with processes having been pieced together over the years through unconnected efforts and without regard to long-term planning. Finally, students might point out that direct democracy at the local level can be more accessible to citizens because the signature requirements are much lower, but that local measures rarely generate much attention unless the issue is controversial or well-funded interests are at stake--which can mean (again) that citizens without money to promote their messages will be drowned out.

| Box 3.1 Reforming the Initiative Process | Conclusion: The Perils and Promises of Hybrid Democracy

22. How does the initiative process frustrate collective action?

ollective action generally requires compromise and bargaining in order for many people to work together to find solutions to their common problems. The initiative process thwarts compromise by allowing only one proposal to be submitted to voters for an up-or-down vote (a “take-it-or-leave-it” proposal), without any chance of changing it after it has qualified for the ballot or has been enacted. Opponents may have difficulty bankrolling a rival measure, or might have difficulty mounting an effective statewide campaign against a qualified measure because they lack resources.

23. What explains the increased use of the initiative process in the past few decades?

Ans: Varies. Mentioned in the book is the development of signature-gathering firms, which make it relatively easy for groups to collect enough signatures if they can afford the costs, which can run into the millions of dollars. With respect to California’s political culture, using direct democracy to exercise the “power of the people” (often to “get around the legislature”) is generally acceptable, a pattern that was re-established in 1978 with Proposition 13, the famous anti-tax measure. Also, vote requirements are regarded as being relatively low in a state as large as California, and signature collection is relatively uncomplicated (there are no requirements to gather signatures in every county, for example).

| Qualification Stage: Circulating Petitions, Gathering Signatures, and Signature Verification

24. In what ways does the initiative process in California advantage resource-rich, “special interests” and disadvantage average citizens?

Ans: Varies. The filing fee of \$2,000 may deter citizens from filing an initiative, but the higher hurdles lie at the signature-gathering stage. Because hundreds of thousands of signatures must be gathered (usually about twice the required number of 365,880) within 180 days, a signature-gathering firm usually will need to be hired to collect them--and they charge per-signature rates that are far higher than most citizens can afford. Average citizens typically do not have the know-how to run a statewide campaign or raise the millions of dollars needed to reach undecided voters. Campaigns can be costly, and a majority (two thirds) of all donations to initiative campaigns are in amounts of \$1 million or more. Finally, wealthy “special interests” may dominate the airwaves with their own carefully crafted messages, confusing or discouraging average citizens

who may not have time to become thoroughly educated about initiatives on the ballot.
| Preparation Stage: Drafting, Public Review, and Titling | Qualification Stage:
Circulating Petitions, Gathering Signatures, and Signature Verification | Campaign
Stage: Persuading Potential Voters
(Note: the 365,880 figure is based on the 2016 election and will change based on
turnout for the 2018 election)

25. How does the initiative process at the local level differ from the process at the state level?

At a basic level, the signature requirements are much lower in counties and municipalities (usually numbering in the hundreds or few thousands), and the process of signature verification is carried out by a local elections official, such as a county clerk. More importantly, citizens must first file a notice of intent to file an initiative petition, alerting local officials to the possibility that an issue will come before the voters. This step is not required at the state level. Moreover, local officials have the right to take action on proposed laws before citizens have a chance to vote on them; namely, city councils or boards of supervisors may adopt a proposal that has qualified for the ballot. This step is not allowed at the state level.

at the Local Level

26. What are parcel taxes?

Ans: Parcel taxes are additional taxes or assessments based on square footage of a property, number of units, or a house's or building's value that voters can impose on themselves to pay for local infrastructure projects, such as renovating schools. Typically these "piggyback" taxes are attached to a property tax bill.

at the Local Level

27. Suggest a few ways to reduce the number of initiatives on the ballot.

Ans: Require the legislature to vote on proposed laws first. After a public hearing on a measure, the legislature could vote on passing it, with or without any changes that the initiative's authors may approve or reject. Courts could be given a role in verifying that the legislature's version respects the authors' intent. Also, if a measure requires a supermajority vote of the legislature, require the same threshold for the ballot measure.

Answer Location: Box 3.1 Reforming the Initiative Process