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California Council of Churches IMPACT urges Californians to Vote No on the September 14, 2021 California Gubernatorial Recall Election

The voters of the state of California have been through this before. In 2003 we voted to oust then-governor Gray Davis, followed by the election of Arnold Schwarzenegger as our successor governor. He won with just 3% of the vote in a very crowded field of contenders. Many may remember that the reason behind the recall was the state's energy cost crisis for which Gray Davis was blamed. However, after the recall, nothing changed. Why? No one could fix the problem any faster or better than Davis and the legislature was trying to do. What we wound up with was chaos, not competence. It did not serve us well.

Today the recall against Governor Gavin Newsom rests on similar pillars. He mandated public health measures during a pandemic. He supposedly hasn't fixed the immigration problem. Or the water problem. Or myriad other global problems. The same kinds of forces that hobbled Governor Davis now affect our current governor. They lie outside the capacity of any one person or state to correct. All we can observe is whether how the problems are being handled are as decent, democratic, and humane as we would wish.

Are mistakes made? Of course. Are the actions self-interested, crooked, detrimental to our populace? No, they are not. Recalls are not meant to deal with disagreements in policy, but malfeasance and rampant corruption. Such do not exist and aren't even being alleged. The fundamental principles underlying a recall are not made manifest by even the recall promoters.

There is a reason the adage, "Don't change horses in the middle of the stream" exists. When someone is coping with a set of dangerous and fearful issues, you don't yank that person out of power – or the horse out of the stream – in the hope of someone or something better. This time

the field of those running to be Governor Newsom's replacement are even less experienced, less competent, and less focused on the problems than the set offered to us in 2003.

We deserve to have stability in our government. A recall and possible radical shift in power to someone unknown and incompetent who could win with a very tiny plurality, could render our state massively unstable for years to come. This is neither the time nor the reason to recall our governor. California Council of Churches IMPACT **opposes** this action.

Even if you vote NOT to recall the governor, you may still pick a candidate to replace Newsom just in case. You do not have to choose a replacement.

For information on the list of candidates available if the recall succeeds, please go to *Newsom recall: Who are the candidates for governor? at CalMatters* at <https://calmatters.org/explainers/newsom-recall-candidates/>.

CCI does not endorse candidates. If your faith organization is interested in hearing from candidates, you may legally do so in an open candidates' forum so long as you invite ALL candidates. Even if one candidate declines to participate, document the invitation and receipt of that invitation to that candidate (such as a registered letter or record of the time and date of a phone call and the name of the party to whom you spoke), and you may still continue with the presentation.

If your candidate meeting is outside the church (such as a house party) and is billed as meeting with individuals as private citizens, it does not involve the church or faith institution, and there is no bar to your hearing from only one candidate. Even if your invitation list is all members of your faith group, it is still private and not an institutional function.

Please do not EVER campaign for anyone within your place of worship! If a candidate for public office is a member of your denomination or place of worship, remember that he or she is your friend first and foremost, and a candidate only outside those walls. You do not get a 'pass' on political support simply because you know that person.

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California Council of Churches IMPACT position: OPPOSE