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## Proposition 1B

Hi. I'm political analyst and Citizen Voice President Gary Dietrich to spend a few minutes with you now talking about Proposition 1B that's going to be on the May 19<sup>th</sup> California Statewide Special Election ballot. Proposition 1B deals with education funding repayment and joining us to talk about that today, the Yes on 1B campaign represented by Lindsay Shoemaker, the Communications Director for Kaufman Campaign Consultants. Lindsay, thanks for being with us today. And just so you know, friends, every once in a while this does happen, on your statewide voter pamphlet that you received from the Secretary of State, you'll notice there's no ballot argument against 1B. There are some reasons for that and we'll get into them later. We don't have a representative from the No side here today. I'll make sure the discussion is fair and applicable to all involved in both sides of the perspective.

I'm going to tell you a little bit about what Prop 1B would actually do. Prop 98, if you'll remember, passed in 1998 by voters set a minimum level for educational funding for K-12 and community colleges. What this proposition would do would be to say that the debt, and by the way, when that minimum level is met, that is believed to be now a debt that the state must repay, this would set that debt at a little under \$10 billion and says the state must begin repaying that debt with annual payments. One other interesting caveat is that Prop 1B, even if it passes, will not take effect unless Prop 1A, on this ballot, also passes. We'll talk a little bit more about that as well. I want to start by saying, why Prop 1B? Why do we need it on our May 19<sup>th</sup> ballot?

Lindsay Shoemaker: Well, Prop 1B is on the ballot because basically with the last budget cuts we've seen a lot of money come out of education. Public education, K-12 spending, as well as community colleges. We've had 27,000 pink slips go out to teachers, and these aren't tenured teachers. These are young, energetic, enthusiastic teachers that are in our classrooms at every single level. We've seen class sizes go up. We've seen programs get cut including health, physical education, music, art, textbooks are out of date, so we feel that its necessary to begin repaying some of these budget cuts that we've seen so we can get a better education for our children as well as the future workforce will be better educated for the state.

Gary Dietrich: Now, there are some people that have come out against Prop 1B, perhaps after the voters' pamphlet was printed and you all know who some of those people are. They aren't insignificant folks. The California Federation of Teachers, the California Nurses' Association, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, State Council. Why are these folks against Prop 1B?

Lindsay Shoemaker: I think that's a good question. Especially the California Federation of Teachers, the people that are for Prop 1B includes the California Teachers Association, the State PTA, and many, many sheriff's across the state. There are a lot of different organizations that are saying we can't continue to cut education. We can't balance this budget on the backs of our children. I'm not sure exactly why they've come out across. I think it has something more to do with the spending mechanism that is created in 1A and they don't like the increase of taxes over a longer period of time. But for 1B I think it's a very honest, we just need money back in our schools. I think that's what our problem is and that's why we urge a Yes vote on Proposition 1B.

Gary Dietrich: Now there's some I know who as part of those other unions, etc. feel like well here's the deal. We don't have anything against education but we're going to lock in now guarantees that almost \$10 billion are going to be paid back into schools. How about the other programs? I want you to address that because the nurses, the other state and county employees, are expressing now that the problem is that this only does one part of the budget and locking in guarantees of education but doesn't protect other portions that, in their view, might be equally deserving.

Lindsay Shoemaker: I find that a very interesting position because Prop 1B deals specifically with education, but Prop 1A which is also kind of hand in hand without passing it, it will put money back into public safety, it will put money back into healthcare, and specific programs that our important. Our basic level of government should be protecting education, public safety and healthcare. So I think especially for the future and our future economies, we need to educate smart, well-rounded workforce. We need to start young. We need to start in kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and give these students the money and the funding they need to become well educated members of the state.

Gary Dietrich: These same folks of course as you well know against Prop 1A also and their feeling is that's putting a cap on everything. They'd like to see no spending limit go through. They don't want Prop 1A and they don't want Prop 1B because their fear is if they get a spending limit and some of it is dedicated to funding, then they're really up a creek. That's the bottom line there.

Lindsay Shoemaker: Right. I understand that. But Prop 1A also creates a rainy day fund and it's a funding mechanism for Prop 1B so that if we go through these budget cuts and crises again we're going to have something saved away that we're not filling these drastic cuts with important things like education.

Gary Dietrich: Let me let you respond to some of the things that have come up and as you well know several major newspapers in the state have already come out against Prop 1B. I want to read you a quote out of the Oakland Tribune. They said, "Prop 1B commits the state to spending billions more than it can afford on education in coming years. It's wrong, heading. It's the sort of ballot box budgeting that exacerbates the state budget woes." I want you to address both of those if you can. First, this ballot box budgeting.

Lindsay Shoemaker: Ballot box budgeting, ballot box budgeting. But the problem is that we can't continue to cut education and so at this point we don't have any other option. We need to put money back in education. There have been 12 billion cuts from education in the last two years. There's nothing else on the table that's putting money back into education so this is our only option. This is the only thing we can do and we need to get the money back into our schools at the public local level.

Gary Dietrich: Alright now, the legislative analyst's office also said something interesting and I want to give you a chance to respond to this. This deals with the actual figure that \$9.3 billion that this proposition would say is owed to the schools under Prop 98 which voters passed. The leg analyst's office which you know is sort of like the official bean counters for the legislature and they're regarded as quite credible, has said "This \$9.3 billion is overly generous potentially providing billions of extra dollars each year." So they say that, okay, maybe you're owed money, but it sure ain't \$9.3 billion. I want to give you a chance to respond to that.

Lindsay Shoemaker: Well, my response is we're talking about education and so, why are we quibbling about billions of dollars. If we have the money we should be putting it in education. Currently, our education per pupil spending is 47<sup>th</sup> in this country. 47<sup>th</sup>! We used to be in the top 10 twenty years ago. We're talking about billions of dollars, but billions of dollars is needed to get our students well educated and a strong showing in the workforce. We need to be back in the top 10. We don't need to continue to sink to 50. Do we want to be 50? I don't want to be 50 and I wasn't 50 when I was through school and you weren't 50. So now we're putting these children with no choice, they're 47<sup>th</sup>. I think that's a dismal thing and as long as we have the money, we need to pass the money back into education.

Gary Dietrich: Quickly, let's deal with this notion that if we take this money and lock it into education in a deficit it's exactly the wrong time to do so. It's one thing to say, hey, good times, the kids need money and we want to make sure they're getting it, but right now, the state's in a big hole. In fact, this last time around, a \$40 billion hole after 2 years. Now they're saying if all these ballot measures pass May 19<sup>th</sup>, it will be at least an \$8 billion hole. Is now the time to lock in this additional almost \$10 billion that the state would be required to repay the schools?

Lindsay Shoemaker: I think any time is the time. I don't want to use the term lock in the money because I don't think it's locking it in. I don't think quibbling about what's being taken out and putting into education, it should be a no-brainer. We should always have a good steady stream of money going into our public education system and I think that's the bottom line. I think, yes, now, we're in a downward spiral in the budget, but in other times we'll have the surplus. So why do we continue to play a roller coaster in the ballot in cutting when we can with Prop 1B make sure that the education never has to fill this level of cuts again.

Gary Dietrich: So it's a way of protecting again, kids whether it's lean times or not. I want to give you a chance to talk about this linkage to Prop 1A. This is really an unusual deal here on this ballot. I want to make sure people understand that if they vote Yes on 1A, that will enable 1B to take effect, but if they vote No on 1A and it doesn't pass, then 1B, it doesn't matter if it got 95%, it will not take effect. Tell us why that was put together in that way because you represent California Teacher's Association. You represent Yes on 1A and Yes on 1B, but tell us why that linkage?

Lindsay Shoemaker: The linkage is because, for 1B to go into effect and to have the money to pay to the schools and pay to each local district, we need to have a funding mechanism. We need to have somewhere where this money comes from. We all know we can't just take this money out of nowhere. It doesn't come from trees, as much as we would love it all to. So Prop 1A creates by, it doesn't increase taxes because the taxes have already been increased, but what it does is it extends the tax increase through 2012. So 2 more years of a little bit higher tax on your income tax, your sales tax. And what it does is create the fund that will then pay for Prop 1B. So that's why the linkage is there.

Gary Dietrich: Alright. So that's why 1A has to pass in order for 1B to take effect because there won't be the dollars for 1B unless 1A also passes.

Lindsay Shoemaker: Yes. So the voters can pass 1B and say yes, we believe in education, we believe in public education for our children in the state, but without passing Prop 1A their vote is basically, I don't want to use the word useless because votes are never useless, but if you feel strongly about Prop 1B, you have to pass Prop 1A as well.

Gary Dietrich: Otherwise, Prop 1B. No \$9.3 billion. Finally, what would then happen in Prop 1A and Prop 1B don't pass? This deficit, this debt that you feel like the schools are owed under Prop 98, what would happen? How would that play out?

Lindsay Shoemaker: That's a good question and I don't believe at this point we have an answer. It would be devastating. We're going to continue to see cities like Vallejo, they're now bankrupt. It's not just the city, it's the school districts. So we're going to continue to see more and more layoffs. Not just teachers, but your nurses, librarians, all the other positions that are very important in your child's education. You're going to see higher class sizes, you're going to see out of date textbooks. We need to somehow find a way to get money back into our education. I think it's a no-brainer. I don't think we can continue to cut from kids who aren't asking for it. All they want to do is go to school and get a good education.

Gary Dietrich: Okay, Lindsey Schumacher who's with Kaufman Campaign Consultants. Thanks for being with us today. We've been talking about Prop 1B folks. It's on your May 19<sup>th</sup> California Special Election ballot statewide. You can find out more, not only get this video and audio, by the way of our discussion today, and transcription in English and Spanish, but you get summaries of all of these propositions and voter helps as well at [citizenvoice.org](http://citizenvoice.org)

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