

STATE OF CALIFORNIA ASSEMBLY

STANDING APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

AUGUST 2025

TRANSCRIBED BY: MARY ANN SCANLAN, CSR



Certified Shorthand Reporters

P.O. Box 330366, San Francisco, CA 94133

o / 415.834.1114 f / 415.399.9266

e / info@scanlanstone.com w / scanlanstone.com

1 CHAIR WICKS: Good morning. Welcome to
2 the August 2025 Assembly Appropriations Hearing
3 Committee. We have 274 bills to consider this
4 morning as part of our regular order hearing.

5 I encourage the public to write written
6 testimony before the hearing by visiting the
7 Committee website at apro.assembly.ca.gov.

8 Please note that any written testimony
9 submitted to the Committee is considered public
10 comment and may be read into the record or
11 reprinted.

12 The hearing room is open for attendance.
13 All are encouraged to watch the hearing room from
14 its livestream on the Assembly website.

15 We will accept public comment on any bill
16 placed on the suspense file by the Committee
17 today and for which the author waived
18 presentation before the close of the regular
19 order hearing.

20 Testimony on any such bill will be limited
21 to the statement of name, organization, if any,
22 and position on the bill.

23 The Committee will allow no more than 40
24 minutes of testimony in total.

25 And for each bill, each member will be

1 allowed five minutes of questions of witnesses
2 only, and I will be timing that.

3 As you came into the hearing room today,
4 the sergeants directed your attention to the
5 rules for public attendance and participation
6 which were posted outside the door. I encourage
7 members of the public who are in attendance to
8 observe those rules and follow them.

9 Please be aware that violation of these
10 rules are violations of general courtesy or
11 decorum and may subject you to removal or
12 enforcement processes. And I will say it is our
13 expectation that everyone acts like adults in
14 this Committee. Thank you.

15 With that, I'd like to establish a quorum,
16 if one is present. Please call the roll.

17 THE CLERK: Wicks?

18 CHAIR WICKS: Here.

19 THE CLERK: Wicks present.

20 Sanchez?

21 Arambula?

22 Calderon?

23 ASSEMBLY MEMBER CALDERON: (Inaudible.)

24 THE CLERK: Calderon present.

25 Caloza?

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER CALOZA: Here.

2 THE CLERK: Caloza present.

3 Dixon?

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER DIXON: (Inaudible.)

5 THE CLERK: Dixon present.

6 Elhawary?

7 Fong?

8 ASSEMBLY MEMBER FONG: Here.

9 THE CLERK: Fong present.

10 Mark Gonzalez?

11 ASSEMBLY MEMBER GONZALEZ: Here.

12 THE CLERK: Mark Gonzalez present.

13 Hart?

14 Pacheco?

15 Pellerin?

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER PELLERIN: (Inaudible.)

17 THE CLERK: Pellerin present.

18 Solache?

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER SOLACHE: Present.

20 THE CLERK: Solache present.

21 Ta?

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TA: (Inaudible.)

23 THE CLERK: Ta present.

24 Tangipa?

25 Jeff Gonzalez?

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER GONZALEZ: (Inaudible.)

2 THE CLERK: Jeff Gonzalez present.

3 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you. We have a
4 quorum.

5 First we would like to hear from Mr. Isaac
6 Bryan, who is going to be presenting ACA 8. You
7 are up.

8 We have a motion and a second.

9 And you can begin when you're ready.

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: Thank you, Madam
11 Chair and Colleagues. I'm here to present ACA 8
12 on behalf of Speaker Robert Rivas, Pro Tem
13 McGuire, and over a dozen of us who are
14 co-authors in this effort to protect democracy.

15 We're living through an unprecedented
16 moment in American history where our democracy
17 faces daily attacks from the White House and from
18 this administration.

19 This constitutional amendment, along with
20 the two companion bills, are a measured and
21 thoughtful response to the power grab that is
22 happening out of Washington, D.C. A power grab
23 that seeks to further erase the rights of
24 40 million Californians who are counting on us.

25 To be clear, this is not a fight that we

1 sought out, but this is a fight that we are
2 prepared to fight and prepared to win.

3 ACA 8 exists because Trump and the
4 Republican-controlled Texas Legislature and other
5 states, like Indiana and Florida, are attempting
6 to redraw congressional districts in the middle
7 of a decade, pre census, with the explicit aim of
8 diluting Black and Brown representation and
9 power, and tilting next year's congressional
10 elections in favor of the authoritarian in the
11 White House.

12 Their maps are not about fair
13 representation. Their maps are about retaining
14 power at any cost without accountability, without
15 transparency, without the voters of those states
16 getting their say.

17 They want to retain control in Congress at
18 any cost to continue their goals, to protect the
19 wealthy, the President and his corrupt
20 companions, while gutting the liberties of
21 everyday people, working people and struggling
22 families, especially here in California. We
23 deserve better. Californians deserve better.
24 The American people deserve better.

25 ACA 8, also known as the Election Rig

1 Response Act, is our defense against Trump's
2 unprecedented power grab. It would implement the
3 temporary use of the maps outlined in AB 604 if,
4 and only if, the people of California approve it.
5 The people of California will get the final say.

6 If ACA 8 and the companion bills in the
7 Legislature are passed on a special election on
8 November 4th, those district boundaries will be
9 used. That's the main difference, by the way,
10 here in California.

11 So here in California, unlike Texas and
12 some of these Republican-led states, we respect
13 the people. We respect the voters. And we
14 believe that they have the autonomy and authority
15 to make major decisions like this that have
16 national consequences.

17 These maps will be used through the 2030
18 congressional term only and -- only if Texas and
19 other states enact their partisan gerrymandering,
20 their power grab of their own congressional
21 districts at the behest of the President. We
22 will stand down if they stand down. But if they
23 step forward, we are ready to fight fire with
24 fire.

25 The trigger provision in ACA 8 is

1 carefully crafted to ensure that a mid-decade
2 redistricting required by a federal court order
3 doesn't result in California changing its map.
4 This is only in response to an authoritarian
5 power grab.

6 I'm joined by two incredible witnesses,
7 Jodi Hicks, who is the CEO of Planned Parenthood,
8 and Pastor Trena Turner, one of the current
9 Commissioners of the 2020 independent California
10 Citizens Redistricting Commission.

11 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you.

12 And each witness on both sides will have
13 two minutes each, both for opposition and
14 supporter. So four minutes total on each side
15 for our main witnesses.

16 You can begin when you're ready.

17 MS. HICKS: Thank you. Thank you, Madam
18 Chair and Members.

19 I am Jodi Hicks, the CEO and President of
20 Planned Parenthood, Affiliates of California.
21 I'm here to represent all seven affiliates and
22 over a hundred health centers throughout the
23 state of California.

24 And I'm here in strong support of ACA 8
25 and California's response to Texas or any state

1 that is trying to game the 2026 midterm
2 elections.

3 And I know this is the Appropriations
4 Committee. I know that we have someone who will
5 talk about the Commission.

6 I want to talk about the impact to
7 California. And I think we heard yesterday a lot
8 of why California would respond to what Texas is
9 doing. And it's because the impact to California
10 is so great.

11 And if we are not able to have a fair
12 election, if we're not able to fight back in the
13 way that we need to, we're not standing up for
14 our values in California, and we're certainly not
15 defending Californians.

16 You remember here in California 67 percent
17 of voters voted to ensure that California is a
18 reproductive freedom state. That our
19 Constitution ensures that Californians have
20 access to reproductive healthcare.

21 What just passed in Congress defunds
22 Planned Parenthood on day one. So when we talk
23 about the cost of what we're doing today just on
24 that one piece of that bill alone is taking away
25 \$300 million in federal dollars away from the

1 services that Planned Parenthood provides.

2 And we are not talking about abortion
3 services. Those are already not federally
4 funded. We are talking about every other service
5 that one in four women here in California rely
6 on, which is cancer screenings, birth control,
7 oftentimes prenatal care.

8 The rest of that bill has three-and-a-half
9 million folks in California that will be without
10 healthcare in our state, not to mention the other
11 economic sanctions.

12 CHAIR WICKS: You need to wrap up.

13 MS. HICKS: Thank you.

14 So it's imperative that we're able to
15 fight back. We know if Planned Parenthood or
16 anyone else talks about the impact of what just
17 happened, Congress members will be held
18 accountable. But we're not able to do that if
19 Texas is rigging the election ahead of time.

20 So thank you.

21 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you.

22 And you will have two minutes.

23 PASTOR TURNER: Thank you.

24 I'm Trena Turner, Pastor, Executive
25 Pastor. I'm also, though, here today as a

1 Commissioner for the 2020 Redistricting
2 Commission. And I'll read so that I can make
3 best use of my time.

4 I am proud to have served in the 2020
5 California Citizens Redistricting Commission,
6 following the will of the people to draw the fair
7 maps that honor California's diverse communities
8 of interest. Our work, you know, was rooted in
9 independence, transparency, clear voter mandate
10 that the politicians should not choose their
11 voters.

12 But we have to be honest in the moment
13 that we're in. There's a breach of trust in our
14 democracy that has already happened and it's
15 hitting Black and Brown communities hardest.

16 We've watched our current administration
17 dismantle DEI programs, send in National Guard
18 and Marines into LA, D.C., under false claims of
19 keeping order or stamping out rampant crime.

20 The reality, crime has already been down
21 in many of those areas. But the very programs in
22 our communities, the one that has been proven to
23 work, they're being cut, creating the very
24 instability that will be used to justify more
25 force and more control and fewer rights. So it's

1 shortsighted for California to only think about
2 California.

3 I watched the hearings on yesterday and
4 wanted to say that if we stand on principle while
5 our nation disintegrates, we are part of the
6 problem. And are we really thinking about all of
7 California? Because I think the 3.1 million
8 children, veterans and families in California
9 that will lose food off of their tables would
10 tend to disagree, California.

11 I think the 2.4 million Californians that
12 will lose access to healthcare due to Medicaid
13 cuts would disagree.

14 There's been a lot of discussion about
15 protecting lines drawn by the will of the people,
16 lines that I'm very proud of. However, the
17 discussion is emphasizing the importance of
18 independent redistricting. That's fair. But
19 we're doing that at the cost of millions of
20 Californians.

21 There are groups that I respect that says
22 that they -- Newsom is dead wrong in this.
23 Gerrymandering is a threat. However, I want to
24 say that marginalized communities --

25 CHAIR WICKS: If you can wrap up.

1 PASTOR TURNER: -- is the exact reason why
2 we need to move forward with ACA 8. I'm in total
3 support of it and believe it's the right thing
4 for our nation.

5 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you very much.

6 We will now turn to folks in the room who
7 wish to express support for ACA 8. And for
8 everyone who's wishing to express support or
9 opposition, we are just doing name, organization,
10 if any, and position.

11 MS. FLOCKS: Madam Chair, Members, Sara
12 Flocks, the California Federation of Labor
13 Unions, in strong support.

14 MS. CHOU: Annie Chou with the California
15 Teachers Association in support.

16 MR. HART: Ian Hart on behalf of
17 Lieutenant Governor Eleni Kounalakis in support.

18 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you. We will now go
19 to our primary witnesses in opposition. If they
20 could step up.

21 Is there only one primary witness in
22 opposition, who we recognize here?

23 Since there's only one, we'll give you
24 four minutes.

25 UNIDENTIFIABLE SPEAKER: I object.

1 CHAIR WICKS: And if you could turn your
2 mic on, please?

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER LACKEY: Okay. Hopefully
4 everybody can hear me.

5 I'm Assemblyman Tom Lackey and I'm the
6 Republican Caucus Chair.

7 Assembly Member Gallagher is unable to be
8 here, so I'd like to read his statement into the
9 record, if I'm permitted to do so. I would love
10 that.

11 CHAIR WICKS: Please.

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER LACKEY: In California
13 we've always claimed to be a state that does
14 things better, cleaner government, more
15 transparency, a stronger commitment to fairness.

16 More than a decade ago voters proved that
17 very point by taking one of the most powerful
18 political weapons out of politicians' hands.
19 That is this issue of redistricting. They
20 created the Citizens Redistricting Commission
21 where everyday Californians, not career
22 politicians, draw our political maps. No
23 backroom deals, no party bosses, no lobbyists
24 calling the shots.

25 The result? Maps shaped by public

1 testimony, not raw political muscle. Communities
2 kept together. Comparative districts preserved.
3 Trust in the process restored.

4 It wasn't a Republican idea or a
5 Democratic idea. It was the people's idea, and
6 it worked.

7 Now Sacramento politicians want to take it
8 back. California Democrats, with Governor Gavin
9 Newsom's support, are proposing to rip this power
10 away from the Independent Commission and put it
11 back under political control. Their goal?
12 Protect a few moral -- I'm sorry, a few more
13 seats in Congress. Their excuse? Texas is doing
14 it. That's not leadership. It's abandoning our
15 principles.

16 Redistricting has helped politicians
17 decide who wins before voters get a say. It's
18 the most brazen way to rig the system.

19 When district lines are drawn for
20 political advantage, the first casualty is often
21 fair representation. Rural communities, in
22 particular, risk being carved apart and their
23 voices diluted. Rural Californians lose the
24 unified voice that ensures our unique needs and
25 priorities are heard.

1 That's exactly why Californians stripped
2 the Legislature of this power in the first place.
3 Giving it back to the very people voters took it
4 from isn't reform. It's raw power grab, and
5 voters see through it.

6 A recent Politico poll possibly indicated
7 that Californians opposing returning
8 redistricting to the Legislature by nearly two to
9 one. Only 36 percent support this scheme.
10 That's not a debate. It's a public rejection.

11 This is bigger than party labels. Whether
12 you're Republican, Democrat or Independent, you
13 lose when politicians draw their own districts.
14 Communities are carved up like a pie.
15 Competitive races vanish. Politicians stop
16 worrying about what voters think because their
17 districts are locked up for years. Voters lose.
18 Democracy loses.

19 California should be the model for the
20 nation, not a state that tosses out reforms the
21 minute they inconvenience those in power. We
22 showed America that redistricting can be done
23 openly, fairly and without partisan manipulation.
24 Throwing it away now tells every voter that
25 fairness only matters when it's political

1 convenience.

2 One [sic] partisan control is back in the
3 game, it never leaves. Once partisan control is
4 back in the game, it never leaves. And the
5 people will lose their voice.

6 If Governor Newsom and the legislative
7 Democrats think voters will quietly watch them
8 dismantle one of the state's most important
9 Democratic safeguards, they're in for a surprise.
10 The outcry will be loud, bipartisan and
11 unrelenting.

12 This isn't complicated. Our democracy
13 works best when politicians have to compete for
14 their votes, not when they manipulate the rules
15 to keep themselves in power. That's why the
16 voters passed redistricting reform and that's why
17 they still will support it.

18 The message from the voters is simple.
19 The power belongs to the people. Let's keep it
20 that way, and we won't let them take it.

21 I'm also confused to some degree how
22 redistricting bills are not being sent to
23 suspense when it's been very publicly stated that
24 these bills will result in a \$200 million cost to
25 the state.

1 CHAIR WICKS: You're at four minutes.

2 ASSEMBLY MEMBER LACKEY: Okay. Well, the
3 last thing that I'd like to close with is I find
4 it a little bit disturbing that I have someone
5 sitting on this dais with me, Ms. Jodi, who is
6 married to someone who it's been reported had an
7 active role in this map making, and that would be
8 Paul Mitchell. I find that to be a conflict of
9 interest and I find it disappointing.

10 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you, Mr. Lackey.

11 We will now be going to primary witnesses
12 in opposition. Name, organization, if any, and
13 your position on the bill.

14 Okay. Seeing none, we will bring it back
15 to Committee for questions.

16 Thank you, Madam Chair.

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER DIXON: I will be voting
18 on ACA 8, which is a proposed constitutional
19 amendment that the voters will decide during an
20 unnecessary, unbudgeted, expensive special
21 election this December. And we've heard all the
22 reasons why this is an, unfortunately, bad idea.
23 But I'll speak to the cost as we are in
24 Appropriations.

25 This unnecessary special election is

1 expected to cost California taxpayers more than
2 \$230 million. According to the Orange County
3 Registrar of Voters, in Orange county alone this
4 special election to gerrymander congressional
5 districts and split apart communities in my
6 district and in my own city is anticipated to
7 cost between 11 and \$13 million.

8 By voting to pass SB 280 -- or ACA 8,
9 excuse me, you are voting to appropriate funding
10 for a costly special election at a time when
11 California faces painful budget cuts to
12 healthcare, education, housing and other critical
13 services.

14 And I take special note of Ms. Hicks, I
15 believe is her name, who spoke earlier. And I
16 just want to quote from her statement last May
17 when the Governor announced a cut to Planned
18 Parenthood in the state budget.

19 And her statement at the time was, with
20 this May budget revision, Governor Newsom --
21 Governor Newsom, the author of this effort to
22 spend \$230 million, is effectively defunding
23 Planned Parenthood in the state of California.

24 What I recall, your comments were related
25 to the congressional efforts and the federal

1 budgeting. However, this \$230 million could go a
2 long way to support your Planned Parenthood
3 programs in California.

4 So I suggest maybe you also talk to the
5 Governor. He's spending \$230 million that could
6 better go for healthcare, mental health, housing,
7 homelessness, all the long list of horrors in
8 the state of California. Yet, he can find
9 \$230 million out of a deficit-based budget to
10 fund this election.

11 If we want to have an election, I don't
12 support it. It should be tied into another
13 election.

14 There's been no financial analysis -- I
15 haven't seen any anyway -- to the cost of to the
16 state general fund or to county budgets. No one
17 has time to figure this out where the money is
18 going to come from to provide for another
19 state-mandated, unfunded, urgent item, which is
20 an election in November.

21 I will be voting no and when it comes
22 before me, and ask you to do the same. Thank
23 you.

24 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you. Would you like
25 to respond?

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: May I respond to
2 that?

3 CHAIR WICKS: Yes.

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: I just want to be
5 very clear, because I think facts matter. The
6 Governor's proposal was to cut that fund, and the
7 Legislature rejected those cuts, and the final
8 adopted budget restored all of that funding for
9 healthcare, including funding to Planned
10 Parenthood.

11 It should also be noted that California
12 pays over \$80 billion in federal taxes that we
13 don't get back. Seventy billion of that went to
14 Texas. That's money that is also being cut from
15 Head Start programs, education programs, veterans
16 benefits.

17 And I find it horribly offensive that
18 \$40 billion of our own money couldn't return home
19 for disaster aid in Los Angeles, and not a single
20 Republican in this Legislature is demanding that
21 it come home.

22 So if we're talking about the cost of a
23 special election versus the cost of our democracy
24 or the cost that Californians are already paying
25 to subsidize this corrupt administration, those

1 costs seem well worth paying in this moment.

2 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you, Mr. Bryan.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER DIXON: May I just respond
4 to that?

5 CHAIR WICKS: Yes.

6 ASSEMBLY MEMBER DIXON: Just briefly.

7 It's still -- \$230 million is nothing to
8 blink your eyes about. It is money that could
9 cost -- could be allocated for costs other than a
10 special election. If it sits there in the
11 budget, why not put it to healthcare? Why not
12 put it to all these issues that are very
13 important in California? But suddenly \$230
14 million materializes as essential.

15 Democracy is not hanging by an edge. I
16 think this is really overstated and it's
17 hyperbolic, and it does not do respectable
18 service to the people of California to engage in
19 that kind of hyperbole. Thank you very much.

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: The last thing I
21 will say to that is just I wish we had this same
22 conversation when we ran several pointless
23 recalls in the last few years.

24 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you.

25 And we'll go to Mr. Tangipa now. And each

1 Member has five minutes to opine on this bill.

2 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Thank you and
3 good morning.

4 I've got some really fiscal-related
5 questions. Is there anybody pointed to that I
6 can --

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: Yeah, I'm ready.

8 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Okay. Yesterday
9 there was a lawsuit filed in response to the
10 pending legislation. There will be undoubtedly
11 additional lawsuits filed against California.
12 The Attorney General has already needed to
13 request emergency funding to pay for the
14 litigation.

15 Do you anticipate needing to come back and
16 ask for additional funding for the litigation?
17 And if so, do you expect that in this normal
18 budget year -- or budget cycle, or is it going to
19 be an emergency ask?

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: I think similar to
21 the funds we gave to the Attorney General during
22 the special session at the beginning of this
23 year, that if it turned billions of dollars back
24 to California at the expense of only \$50 million
25 dollars investment, investments that we spend

1 protecting ourselves from this hostile
2 administration, pay back several times over.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: So you believe
4 that that funding will be used in the lawsuits to
5 fight this?

6 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: I believe --

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: And no more
8 additional funds are going to be allocated
9 towards that?

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: I believe that the
11 Attorney General's Office, both now and under the
12 previous Trump administration, has been wildly
13 successful fighting the unconstitutionality of
14 this --

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I'm asking for
16 the funds.

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: May I --

18 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I'm asking for
19 the funds.

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: May I finish
21 talking, Madam Chair?

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Well, I've only
23 got five minutes. So I'm asking for the funds.
24 I'm not asking how good they are.

25 CHAIR WICKS: Mr. Tangipa, I think if you

1 can let him respond, that'd be great.

2 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: Reclaiming my
3 time.

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I've got five
5 minutes.

6 CHAIR WICKS: Mr. Bryan.

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I think we're on
8 the opposite end. I have to reclaim.

9 I just need the funds portion. Do you
10 believe that there's going to be a budget ask now
11 or later?

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: I believe that any
13 investment we make in the Attorney General's
14 Office yields back several times over more
15 resources back to California.

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I'm not talking
17 about how good they are. I'm talking about, do
18 they need more money?

19 CHAIR WICKS: Mr. Tangipa, I think he's
20 answered your question.

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Okay.

22 CHAIR WICKS: Next question, please.

23 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Will litigation
24 costs be tracked and reported separately so
25 taxpayers can see the true costs of this measure?

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: I think any time
2 that public dollars spent, it is always in a
3 transparent way. And the Attorney General's
4 Office has been incredibly transparent in how
5 they use those litigation dollars to fight to
6 return dollars --

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Thank you.

8 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: -- back to
9 California.

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: It's estimated
11 that this special election will cost \$235 million
12 to complete. Is the appropriation for the
13 special election ultimately going to come from
14 the general fund, all while the LAO has already
15 highlighted to us structural deficits and a
16 projected budget shortfall next year ranging in
17 between 10 and \$30 billion?

18 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: I can tell you
19 it's not going to come from the \$80 billion that
20 Californians pay to subsidize this corrupt
21 administration that has been held hostage from
22 the people of our state.

23 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: The rural
24 counties I represent are feeling heavy budget
25 pressure. Our counties can't afford to foot the

1 bill up front for the special election. Is the
2 plan to provide them full up-front costs of the
3 election, or are we going to reimburse them post
4 election?

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: I imagine there's
6 a lot of economic insecurity in rural counties,
7 especially when a hundred billion dollars has
8 gone into ICE enforcement that has destabilized
9 our agriculture economy in many sectors of our
10 state. I think those resources could definitely
11 be spent in a better way.

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Isaac, I've got
13 a rural county that has three people that work
14 (inaudible).

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: Assembly Member
16 Bryan, sir.

17 CHAIR WICKS: Please refer to him by
18 Assembly Member Bryan, please.

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Sorry.

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: Or the Member from
21 Los Angeles.

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Sorry about
23 that. I'm still learning.

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: I know.

25 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: The state has a

1 long history really of creating mandates that are
2 supposed to be funded. My big worry on this is
3 that there's so many unfunded mandates and money
4 actually doesn't get back to them.

5 What guarantees do we provide that -- to
6 make sure that this won't happen so those
7 counties that are trying to operate in the state
8 of California to make sure that they're made
9 whole?

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: The only money
11 that's not getting back to us, not to the
12 fire-torn areas of Los Angeles, not to our Head
13 Start programs, not to our healthcare
14 infrastructure, not to our agriculture economy is
15 the \$80 billion in federal taxes that we paid
16 that we have asked for back in emergency times
17 that the federal government has used as leverage
18 and held hostage and subsidized their plans,
19 including the plans that are happening in Texas
20 right now.

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I think it's sad
22 right now that I'm asking very fiscally
23 appropriate questions in the Appropriations
24 Committee and I haven't gotten a single answer on
25 how the money is going to get there, how much

1 money is actually needed, and where are the cost
2 estimates.

3 All I'm asking for is, can we do this, and
4 do we have funds with a projected deficit next
5 year?

6 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: So --

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: And we're
8 saying --

9 CHAIR WICKS: I'm sorry. We also have
10 Department of Finance here who can weigh in as
11 well.

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Uh-huh.

13 MR. BELTRAN: Thank you, Madam Chair, and
14 good morning, Members.

15 My name is Christian Beltran. I am with
16 the Department of Finance.

17 And thank you, Assembly Member Tangipa,
18 for the questions.

19 Just to clarify, the language does specify
20 that the Department of Finance will continue to
21 work with the Secretary of State's Office, as
22 well as our county partners, to ensure that
23 funding for this election will be made in advance
24 to the election.

25 So we will continue to ensure that

1 counties, particularly your counties as well,
2 will be made whole and not to have to cut any
3 additional funding to public safety programs or
4 any kind of healthcare programs.

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Does the
6 Department of Finance next year also expect an
7 estimated and agree with the LAO's Office that
8 there is a structural deficit next year?

9 MR. BELTRAN: I think we can all agree
10 that we are not in the best budget situation
11 given federal pressures and given other kind of
12 hostile acts that we are seeing from the federal
13 government. And therefore, we are continuing to
14 plan for the worst, and we do have projections
15 that are consistent with the LAO.

16 However, we would just encourage the
17 Legislature to understand that the Department of
18 Finance will continue to work with the partners
19 that have, both on the state and federal levels,
20 to ensure we are continuing to get as much
21 funding as possible.

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: So you --

23 CHAIR WICKS: And sorry, your five minutes
24 is up. This is your last question.

25 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Okay.

1 We have in front of us many questions that
2 need to be answered because it's fiscally
3 responsible here in the state of California. We
4 are elected in the state of California to get our
5 budget right. That is not happening right now.
6 We know that.

7 But we need to make sure that the right
8 people are here, because that was my first
9 question. Who should I point the financial
10 questions to? And you said you were ready.
11 Doesn't seem like it.

12 But what we need to know right now is who
13 drew the maps, who got paid, who didn't go on
14 vacation, who is involved in this, and who has a
15 vested interest in all of this money being
16 allocated? That is very important. That is the
17 number one question everybody is asking.

18 Can somebody, somebody, anybody tell us
19 definitively? Whether it's leadership, whether
20 it's the DCC, whether it's Paul Mitchell, whether
21 it's special interests, who got paid to draw the
22 maps and who is doing this, and did they register
23 under the State of California to make sure that
24 they can do this? Answer the question.

25 CHAIR WICKS: Mr. Bryan, would you like to

1 address that? Then we'll move on to other
2 members.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: Sure, I'm happy
4 to.

5 And I appreciate you still learning which
6 committee does what. Because you started out
7 understanding this is a fiscal committee and then
8 went straight into your partisan B.S., and that's
9 perfectly fine.

10 These maps were drawn in collaboration
11 between many stakeholders, including experts who
12 have been drawing lines for multiple
13 municipalities for over a hundred different
14 jurisdictions across California and beyond. It
15 was in collaboration with the Legislature. It
16 was in --

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Who are those
18 many individuals and how much did they get paid?

19 CHAIR WICKS: We're allowing Mr. Isaac
20 Ryan to (inaudible).

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: It was also in
22 collaboration with the 10,000 comments that were
23 submitted to the Independent Redistricting
24 Commission, which is why nearly 80 percent of
25 this map mirrors the map before.

1 Let's also be very clear, the person who
2 drew this map is the authoritarian in the White
3 House who called for destruction of the
4 foundations of our democracy by clawing back five
5 seats that don't belong to him in Texas, and
6 forcing the people of California to respond.

7 The people of California will draw this
8 map on November when they have their voice heard.
9 The Legislature does not draw or implement these
10 maps. The people get the final voice. And the
11 maps will change not even a little bit unless
12 they say so in November. And I believe strongly
13 that they will.

14 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Well, we should
15 know who paid --

16 CHAIR WICKS: Mr. Tangipa. Mr. Tangipa.

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- to prepare
18 you, because that's all we got.

19 CHAIR WICKS: Mr. Tangipa.

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Thank you.

21 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you. Thank you.

22 Okay.

23 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: Still learning
24 those rules.

25 CHAIR WICKS: Any other -- any other

1 questions from Members on the Committee?

2 Mr. Gonzalez.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER GONZALEZ: I know there's
4 a lot of conversation about cost, and I think the
5 budget figures were a hundred and something --
6 what was it? \$230 million to taxpayers to have a
7 special election. But I just want to ask the
8 question to the Department of Finance if they can
9 confirm.

10 There are many studies that are out there
11 that say from mass arrests to detention to
12 deportation, that California could cost the
13 state's economy \$275 billion and eliminate
14 \$23 billion in annual tax revenue. The loss of
15 immigrant workers, including undocumented
16 individuals and those losing lawful status would
17 hinder projects like rebuilding Los Angeles after
18 wildfires, reducing food supply, and increasing
19 costs.

20 And in 2022 undocumented immigrants
21 contributed \$8.5 billion in state and local
22 taxes, a figure that would rise to 10.3 billion
23 if they could work lawfully.

24 So if we're sitting here arguing about
25 \$230 million, I wish there was this sort of

1 outrage when it came to the billions of dollars
2 that are being lost as a result of people who
3 look like me who are being detained, who are
4 being held hostage. And we're sitting here
5 arguing about, well, who drew the maps? Who held
6 the pen?

7 Well, guess what? The California -- we
8 were the ones who went out there and we were the
9 ones who said that, you know, you're obsessing
10 over who participated in the structure and how
11 they did it. The public did it.

12 And in the comments that were mentioned,
13 it said, abandoning principles, fair
14 representation, mass power grab, losing when
15 politicians -- I'm from Texas. I know what
16 happens there. And they are not listening to the
17 people. They're holding them hostage. In fact,
18 their own legislature is stuck there and they can
19 only get a police escort.

20 So there's all this talk and rhetoric
21 about, oh, you know, who's drawing the maps and
22 how are they doing this? And Republicans in
23 Texas and Florida and across the country are
24 actively rigging districts to silence voters and
25 protect Donald Trump.

1 But we're figuring out where all this
2 money is coming from while immigrants, who make
3 us the fourth largest economy in the world, are
4 suffering.

5 So the question is, if you can confirm
6 that, as a result of these raids and all of the
7 hostages that are being taken by this Trump
8 administration, who are taking Brown people, the
9 billions of dollars that it's costing California
10 and why we have to have this election in the
11 first place.

12 MR. BELTRAN: Thank you, Assembly Member
13 Gonzalez, and appreciate the question.

14 You know, I would just like to say that we
15 as the Department of Finance continue to track
16 economic implications that are stemming from the
17 federal government, whether it's through tariff
18 policy or immigration enforcement, we continue to
19 track our monthly cash receipts and will continue
20 to do so, and will be able to report that to the
21 Legislature as we have more information.

22 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you.

23 Do you have any other questions from
24 Members?

25 We do have a motion and a second.

1 Oh, yes, Mr. Arambula.

2 ASSEMBLY MEMBER ARAMBULA: Thank you.

3 Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Madam Chair.

4 CHAIR WICKS: Your mic's not working?

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER ARAMBULA: Well, that's
6 one way to silence some voices.

7 Thank you, Madam Chair, for the
8 opportunity to ask questions.

9 I have great respect for my two colleagues
10 who are here on the dais, but I'm going to start
11 with a bit of being a fan boy, having watched so
12 many of the Independent Redistricting Commission.

13 Trena, you were our Central Valley
14 representative. You stood up for us. I watched
15 you time and time again during those hearings
16 making sure that you were standing up for
17 community and protecting us.

18 And so I want to ask, with all real
19 honesty, why we need to repeat this process that
20 was so well-done back there just a few years ago.
21 Can you help answer that to me?

22 Because I started my week meeting with my
23 preacher, meeting with my faith leaders, wanting
24 to be led in this moment, knowing that it's
25 important for us to stand up for people of our

1 great state.

2 PASTOR TURNER: Yes. And thank you for
3 the question and the opportunity to respond.

4 I think most of what we hear talks about
5 numbers, figures, policy. There is an old saying
6 in the church that talks about -- warns people
7 against being so heavenly minded that you're no
8 earthly good.

9 And in this case, I think in all of our
10 appropriation meetings, we need to think about
11 being so politically minded that we're no
12 community good.

13 People are suffering as a result of what's
14 already going on. And it's one thing to stand on
15 policy and principle when you have beautiful,
16 nonthreatened communities to go home to.

17 But for our Central Valley communities and
18 other places in California that's seeing right
19 now terror on the streets, separations of
20 families, overreach by our administration, we
21 cannot wait for another five years, six years,
22 ten years. We need to take action now.

23 And when history is told, we need to be
24 able to say that we stood on the right side of
25 trying to stop this authoritarian government that

1 we have currently going on.

2 Numbers -- 230 million is not a lot of
3 money. We can find it. And certainly it can be
4 offset by some of the other things that's
5 currently going on. I'm not an expert in that.

6 I'm an expert in facing people all day
7 everyday that's living in real fear. And we
8 still will have a fight because their voices are
9 intentionally being muted now so they don't show
10 up later.

11 The people will speak if they're allowed
12 to speak, if we don't continue to face issues
13 like trying to get rid of voting by mail, getting
14 rid of the bail. All of that is a one-story,
15 one-picture design to silence voices.

16 If the Congress didn't stand up against
17 our administration and face that and speak out
18 against it, and we expect people to do it without
19 any cover and protection, I'm hoping that all of
20 our elected officials will do what our people is
21 counting on you to do. And you know that they're
22 being impacted now by what's going on.

23 ASSEMBLY MEMBER ARAMBULA: Thank you for
24 that answer. And thank you for being able to ask
25 that question.

1 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you. Any other
2 members have questions?

3 Mr. Bryan, would you like to close?

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: Absolutely.

5 I'd like to just address finally a few
6 things that had been said.

7 Opposition witness, my colleague, said
8 that stealing congressional seats is the most
9 brazen way to rig the system. I could not agree
10 more. That is exactly why in this moment we have
11 to stand up and push back against the power grab
12 that is happening from the authoritarian in the
13 White House through the State of Texas.

14 My colleague also said that two-thirds of
15 Californians don't believe that the Legislature
16 should draw and implement new maps. I agree. I
17 authored legislation two years ago calling for
18 independent redistricting commissions at every
19 level of California government, and it was
20 opposed by every single Republican, including the
21 gentleman, who I love, who's sitting right next
22 to me.

23 That's why I also passed an update to the
24 Fair Maps Act that was signed into law by the
25 government that prevented us from drawing maps

1 around incumbency. Again, it was voted down by
2 every single Republican in the Legislature. In
3 fact, the leader of the Republican caucus spoke
4 in opposition. Another Republican,
5 Mr. Gallagher, spoke in opposition.

6 The public in this moment doesn't want us
7 to bow down and roll over and allow for the
8 foundations of our democracy to be eroded and
9 taken away from us so that our country becomes no
10 longer recognizable.

11 I also think the fiscal hypocrisy that
12 I've heard today is mind blowing. The State of
13 California was impacted by over \$10 billion from
14 the haphazard tariffs that were coming out of
15 Washington, D.C. The Governor spoke very clearly
16 about it in the May revise.

17 I've said it many times in this hearing
18 already. The State of California pays over
19 \$80 billion in federal taxes that we do not get
20 back. Money that Los Angeles, who was on fire in
21 January, has desperately asked for in federal
22 aid.

23 We have a \$1 billion extortion attempt on
24 the number one public university in the country,
25 UCLA. And I don't hear any Republican standing

1 up for those California tax dollars.

2 I didn't hear any Republican standing up
3 to the big, beautiful scam that put trillions of
4 dollars of national debt on the backs of the
5 future generations of California children and cut
6 billions of dollars in critical services,
7 benefits, nutritional assistance, and the things
8 that our children and families need to survive.

9 So to sit here and talk about the cost of
10 a special election to save democracy being too
11 high is unconscionable, hypocritical and
12 unbecoming of anybody in this body.

13 The people of California have asked for us
14 to stand up. That is why we are moving this ACA
15 forward. And I respectfully ask for your aye
16 vote.

17 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you, Mr. Bryan.

18 The motion before us is do pass. It was
19 moved by Mr. Solache, seconded by Mr. Fong.

20 I also just want to add some closing
21 comments as well. I appreciate the spirit of
22 debate that we have had here in the
23 Appropriations Committee.

24 I have deep respect for you, Mr. Lackey,
25 so thank you for representing the opposition.

1 I do want to make a comment to one of your
2 comments, though. You know, Ms. Hicks is here in
3 her position as a leader of Planned Parenthood
4 and not as the wife of someone who has
5 participated in this. And she is a professional
6 in her own right who is leading an organization
7 that provides very critical services for millions
8 of people across the state of California, and
9 that is who she is here representing.

10 Planned Parenthood is an organization that
11 I have benefited from myself when I did not have
12 healthcare when I was younger.

13 And she has every ability to be here to
14 speak on behalf of those who need those
15 resources. So I just want to respectfully remind
16 us why she is here and in which capacity she is
17 here.

18 The other thing I would like to say is,
19 since this is a fiscal committee, you know, the
20 cost of an action is way too high right now on
21 what is before us here in this body. The cost to
22 our democracy is what we are talking about right
23 now.

24 The cost to families, millions of whom who
25 will lose healthcare because of what this Trump

1 administration is doing.

2 The cost to these wildfire victims who are
3 not receiving the deserved resources that they
4 need to rebuild.

5 The cost to our working class families who
6 are losing their SNAP benefits. That is what we
7 are talking about here.

8 None of us want to be in this situation,
9 but our hand is being forced. And we will not
10 unilaterally disarm. That is why we are here.

11 And we are doing this in the most
12 transparent way possible by allowing the
13 electorate to determine if they want -- if they
14 want this or not. This is going to go to the
15 ballot.

16 There's triggers on this. It reverts back
17 to the Commission. This is the best case
18 scenario for where we are at.

19 But we will not stop fighting in
20 California. And I believe our electorate will
21 respond to that as well. That is what we are
22 moving forward today. That is what is going to
23 be on the floor of the Assembly for debate
24 tomorrow.

25 I deeply appreciate the conversation. But

1 with that, I am proud to move this bill forward.
2 It is going to move out of this Committee today
3 on a B roll call.

4 Thank you, Mr. Bryan, and everyone who
5 participated.

6 CHAIR WICKS: And Ms. Cervantes, you are
7 up next and you will be presenting SB 280.

8 And I just want to remind everyone,
9 Members will each have five minutes for comments
10 on the bill, and primary witnesses will each have
11 two minutes for a total of four. Opposition
12 witnesses will each have two minutes for a total
13 of four.

14 And Members of the public will say name,
15 organization, if any, and position on the bill.

16 We have a motion by Mr. Fong and a second
17 by Mr. Pacheco.

18 And you can begin when you're ready.

19 SENATOR CERVANTES: Thank you, Madam Chair
20 and Committee Members.

21 Today I'm proud to present Senate Bill
22 280, which calls for a statewide special election
23 on November 4th of this year.

24 The special election would allow
25 California voters to consider Assembly

1 Constitutional Amendment 8, which would allow
2 this Legislature to engage in a one time mid-
3 decade redistricting of our state's districts in
4 the U.S. House of Representatives.

5 This bill also makes the necessary
6 statutory changes to allow the June 2026
7 statewide primary election to be held on time.

8 California did not start this
9 redistricting fight. This fight was brought to
10 us. The truth of the matter is, if we let Donald
11 Trump get away with rigging elections in Texas
12 and other red states through partisan
13 gerrymandering, we will not have free or fair
14 elections in the United States in the future. If
15 Donald Trump pursues this power grab, California
16 stands ready to respond.

17 SB 280 appropriates the funding necessary
18 for the Secretary of State and our county
19 registrars to administer the special election.
20 The amount needed to administer the election will
21 be determined by the Director of the Department
22 of Finance and appropriated from the General
23 Fund.

24 The State Controller will then distribute
25 monies to the SOS and the county registrar so

1 that they have the funding they need. This is
2 done on the front end so the funding is available
3 as we march toward the election in November.

4 Madam Chair, we have two witnesses who are
5 here to testify.

6 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you. You will each
7 have two minutes.

8 MS. HICKS: Thank you. Thank you, Madam
9 Chair. Thank you, Members.

10 I am going to reintroduce myself. I am
11 Jodi Hicks. I am the CEO and President of
12 Planned Parenthood Affiliates of California.

13 I realize some of you I do not know. But
14 before that, some of you I do know because I also
15 have a 20-year history of being a healthcare
16 advocate, particularly for our most vulnerable
17 communities in California and advocating for
18 patients on Medicaid. So that is why I am here
19 today.

20 Planned Parenthood was the first action
21 that happened with HR 1. So the defund happened
22 day one. It was \$300 million.

23 Thank you for quoting me and acknowledging
24 that I am holding folks accountable if they are
25 making cuts to Planned Parenthood, to Medicaid,

1 to any section of our healthcare that affects
2 patients in a deep way, which some of our own
3 California budget proposals did.

4 We have advocated to ensure that people in
5 our most vulnerable communities are able to get
6 access to the healthcare that they need,
7 including reproductive healthcare. What HR 1
8 did, though, is decimate that, and it is
9 \$300 million every year.

10 So the cost and the fiscal analysis for
11 being able to fight back against a Congress that
12 is attempting to hold onto power, to continue to
13 have economic sanctions and hold California
14 accountable for the values that we all share,
15 which includes reproductive freedom, which
16 includes diversity, inclusivity and equity in
17 healthcare, has to be stopped.

18 Our Congress Members need to be held
19 accountable. We want to be able to do that in
20 the traditional way, but we're not able to if
21 other states are rigging the system. And that's
22 why I'm here today encouraging your aye vote.
23 Thank you. Thank you.

24 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you.

25 MS. TURNER: Thank you. Trena Turner,

1 2020 Redistricting Commissioner.

2 I wanted to say that if we could balance a
3 perfect budget, but we do it on the backs of
4 people where it brings them harm, it is
5 absolutely a problem for Californians.

6 California can't be seen centered in this
7 moment irregardless to what else is going on in
8 the nation.

9 The proposed districts aren't perfect as
10 the current ones aren't, but it certainly should
11 not elicit the critique and fear that some are
12 going for.

13 This cost of 230, 235 million is well
14 worth the money spent in order to be able to
15 protect our communities.

16 The new maps, by the way, use most all of
17 the same criteria, VRA included. And the almost
18 40,000 community of interest testimony received,
19 it was all used. Most districts that we focused
20 on were actually kept intact. The proposed
21 margin -- the proposed even -- the proposed maps
22 even managed to split fewer areas than we were
23 able to split.

24 There were some issues in that in that
25 there were some communities that were split, but

1 we're talking about balancing what's going on.
2 I'm not confused as a Commissioner that this is
3 in this moment not about California. This has
4 nothing to do with recanting or figuring out that
5 independent redistricting was incorrect. It was
6 great. It's wonderful. We need to do it across
7 the nation.

8 Since that's not happening right now,
9 California, we need to be able to stand up in
10 this moment and we do need to -- I'm in total
11 support of SB 280 for the election that needs to
12 take place now. Because I think the work before
13 us is to get our people to understand,
14 Californians to understand why we're taking this
15 approach in this moment that is different from
16 what we did just five years ago.

17 The day is different, our time is
18 different, our nation is different. Our
19 congressional -- the representatives have not
20 stood up for California. They have not voted in
21 a way that protects all of our nation. And so we
22 now have an opportunity to play a role in that.

23 The last thing I want to say is many of
24 our people, a lot of times we have often said
25 California was not a swing state, so we don't get

1 a lot of voice up front. But in this moment,
2 California is centered in this conversation and
3 we need to stand up now. In support of SB 280.

4 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you.

5 We will go now to folks in the room who
6 wish to express support. Name, organization, if
7 any, and position on the bill.

8 MS. FLOCKS: Madam Chair, Members, Sarah
9 Flocks, California Federation of Labor Unions, on
10 behalf of our 2.3 million members. We are in
11 strong support.

12 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you.

13 MS. HINES-SHAIKH: Honorable Chair and
14 Members, Amy Hines-Shaikh with UDW AFSCME Local
15 3930 and their 200,000 IHSS providers who are
16 funded by Medi-Cal largely, and would like to
17 stand up and support that and this bill, in
18 addition to UNITE HERE! Local 11 and their 32,000
19 Members. Thank you.

20 MS. TURNER: Thank you.

21 MS. CHOU: Annie Chou with the California
22 Teachers Association in support.

23 MR. HART: Good morning again. Kaden Hart
24 on behalf of Lieutenant Governor Elani Kounalakis
25 in support.

1 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you.

2 MR. GUSMAN: Good morning. Conor Gusman,
3 on behalf of Teamsters California, in support.

4 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you.

5 We will now go to primary witnesses in
6 opposition.

7 Do we have any primary witnesses in
8 opposition?

9 Okay. We will have any additional folks
10 in the room wish to express opposition, name,
11 organization and position, if any. Anyone in the
12 room wish to express opposition?

13 Okay. We will now bring it back to
14 Committee.

15 We have DOF here to answer questions, if
16 need be.

17 Ms. Dixon, you can go first.

18 And I want to remind Members they will
19 each have five minutes.

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER DIXON: Thank you very
21 much, Madam Chair. I don't think I need five
22 minutes.

23 I will be voting no. I will be saying
24 much of the same that I said in the previous
25 measure, on SB 280, which calls for a fiscally

1 irresponsible special election to be held on
2 November 4th so voters can determine the fate of
3 ACA 8.

4 This unnecessary, again, stated again,
5 special election is expected to cost California
6 taxpayers more than \$230 million. And according
7 to the Orange County Registrar of Voters, this
8 special election for Orange County alone to
9 gerrymander congressional districts and split
10 apart communities in my district is anticipated
11 to cost between 11 and 13 million.

12 By voting to pass SB 280, you are voting
13 to appropriate funding for a costly special
14 election in a state that routinely spends money
15 that it does not have.

16 In fact, we all know just this year
17 California faced a budget deficit of over \$12
18 billion. And you had to make -- we in the
19 Assembly and the budget committees had to make
20 painful cuts, as been referenced in healthcare,
21 fire prevention, education, housing and other
22 critical services.

23 I just have to ask how that -- the cost
24 for the special election of \$230 million could
25 have helped plug some of those gaps and those

1 costs that were mandated or made necessary
2 because of overspending by the Legislature and
3 the Governor. So there's a lot of budget fixes
4 that need to happen, and here we're piling on
5 another \$230 million.

6 When we talk about the vulnerable people,
7 \$230 million on their healthcare benefits would
8 have gone a long way. Wildfire mitigation.

9 My party side of the aisle recommended I
10 think a billion dollars for wildfire mitigation.
11 I think it came in at 200 million.

12 Another hundred million would have helped
13 the people in California to mitigate on future
14 wildfires.

15 We know there are significant priorities
16 in this state to help people, to help us be
17 providing the needs and the services of our
18 communities.

19 And \$230 million to be spent before
20 November 4th, where it comes from, where they
21 found \$230 million. What is not going to be
22 spent, whether it's on education.

23 I deal with educators all the time, K
24 through 12, higher education. Their budget cuts,
25 their research cuts, cuts all across the board

1 because of a budget deficit. Has nothing to do
2 with the federal government. The federal
3 government doesn't fund elections. The State of
4 California funds elections. And where is this
5 money coming from?

6 The cost of this special election
7 unbudgeted by the counties and not provided for
8 the state budget, passed only two months ago,
9 make a mockery of the budget process and an
10 independent redistricting process.

11 I think to hyper politicize this effort is
12 shameful. And I will speak, all the references
13 to the President United States, I'm not here to
14 defend him, but the Governor of this state
15 obviously has future interests in this one. He
16 wants to mobilize national attention. I will
17 make this as a statement.

18 And that is what's driving everyone to
19 march in order to ensure that he is positioned to
20 run for President of the United States. We all
21 know what he's doing to get national attention.

22 But to hold hostage the taxpayers of
23 California to fulfill his political goals is
24 inappropriate. So I'm obviously strongly
25 opposed.

1 For these reasons, I'll be voting no. And
2 I encourage others to realize the folly of this
3 entire exercise. Thank you.

4 CHAIR WICKS: Would you like to respond or
5 answer in your close?

6 SENATOR CERVANTES: Madam Chair, happy to
7 answer in my close.

8 CHAIR WICKS: Okay.

9 And we have Mr. Solache.

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER SOLACHE: Thank you, Madam
11 Chair.

12 I just want to respectfully to my
13 colleague say that I do not plan a march in order
14 to support anyone 2028 yet, but I will march in
15 order to support democracy and support the
16 constituents in my district who are being
17 snatched by these agents without documentation.

18 I am every day fear for my community that
19 I represent. So this is an investment to our
20 Californians that we owe.

21 I truly understand that we have to ensure
22 that we safeguard our budget and I appreciate
23 that. But this is a time where dollars at the
24 federal level are at stake.

25 And Medi-Cal, Medicaid, I plan supporting

1 health care for our Californians. So in this
2 case, we will make that investment to protect
3 democracy in California. Thank you. And
4 throughout America.

5 Because this is not a Republican issue, a
6 Democrat issue. This is an American issue.
7 Thank you.

8 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you.

9 Any other question?

10 Mr. Gonzalez.

11 ASSEMBLY MEMBER GONZALEZ: Just to the
12 Department of Finance. How much was the, I think
13 it was in 2021, the special recall election that
14 we had?

15 And then out of curiosity, there also was
16 an election for Assembly District 63 where a
17 former colleague was promoted to this
18 administration and left that vacancy, costing
19 taxpayers dollars in a special election as well
20 because they did not fulfill their term. How
21 much is that costing us?

22 MS. YAN: Good morning, Madam Chair and
23 Members and staff of the Appropriations
24 Committee. Millie Yan with Department of
25 Finance.

1 Thank you, Assemblymember Gonzalez, for
2 your question.

3 My understanding is that in 2022, for the
4 Gubernatorial recall, 100 -- or \$270 million was
5 appropriated for the effort, and approximately
6 200 million was spent for the state and the
7 counties.

8 And in terms of the AD 63 election, I
9 don't have that information offhand, but I am
10 happy to go back and get that information for
11 you.

12 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you.

13 Any other questions from Committee
14 Members?

15 Mr. Tangipa.

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Good morning.

17 I just again have some very important
18 fiscal questions. I represent the second-largest
19 district in the state of California in the
20 Assembly. I have six very rural, very small
21 counties. Some of them have only three elections
22 workers. I'm just trying to make sure this moves
23 to where we want it to be.

24 They need to be made whole. They are
25 trying to keep up with the mandates on the state.

1 There is a very big divide in this state and it's
2 mainly urban versus rural than it really is right
3 versus left when it comes to the financial side
4 of things, which is what I am trying to focus on.

5 I just need to know, with this bill, the
6 amount that is appropriated to it, is this a
7 blank check, or do we have the dialed-in approach
8 to how much funding is going to all of our county
9 elections clerks to perform their duties?

10 We just need to know, are the current cost
11 estimates that were granted right now because the
12 state has a track record of being over
13 400 percent over estimates. We need to rein that
14 in.

15 If the Department of Finance has already
16 admitted that there is a structural deficit next
17 year, that is our responsibility as legislators
18 in the State of California to be very mindful of
19 the dollars and taxpayers that they are giving
20 us.

21 Do we have all of those dialed in, or is
22 it a blank check, or when a county says I just
23 need more for this, that they're just
24 automatically going to get it? Are we just going
25 to allocate money? What is the appropriation

1 limit?

2 MS. YAN: DOF?

3 Thank you, Assemblymember Tangipa. I
4 appreciate your concern over the costs.

5 SB 280 includes an appropriation for the
6 Secretary of State and allows the state
7 controller to allocate resources to counties
8 based on a schedule that we are currently in
9 development with the Secretary of State. So it
10 is a moving -- it's a developing issue right now,
11 and we are working with the Secretary of State to
12 develop a schedule.

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Do we have a
14 cap? Do we have a cap on how much can be spent?
15 Because I just -- I had to run a bill to put a
16 cap on other projects in this state.

17 Is there a cap there? So that way we
18 don't go from 250 million to half a billion
19 dollars. And that is more than reasonable to
20 expect with the track record of projects in this
21 state.

22 MS. YAN: Thank you. I appreciate your
23 concern about the costs.

24 We do have benchmarks from past efforts
25 that we would hew close to.

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Okay. Thank
2 you.

3 And now I have -- I reached out to almost
4 all of my county elections clerks asking them,
5 what financial questions do you have? How can
6 you implement?

7 There are a lot of rules in this that also
8 require them. Covid era regulations, additional
9 Voters Choice Act.

10 Some of my counties are not Voters Choice
11 Act simply because they don't have the personnel
12 to do it when you're asking three people to show
13 up. The labor laws in the state of California
14 are very conflicting with the Voter Choice Act
15 and the amount of work that they can do and they
16 can't onboard and hire for a temporary special
17 election.

18 All of those costs are specifically for
19 Inyo county, Mono county, Mariposa county,
20 Calaveras county and Tuolumne county. I am here
21 to make sure that they can make up for it.

22 Because some of my counties just this past
23 year have had to reduce their budgets because
24 they can't afford the state mandates by
25 15 percent. They are struggling very heavily.

1 So the question that they are asking is,
2 this proposition would require significant
3 redistricting implementation, if this is passed,
4 by counties.

5 Is there an appropriation for this
6 unscheduled portion of it after the election is
7 happening, the mandate that is mandated -- with
8 this mandated work that must be completed after
9 the certification of the election on December 2nd
10 and prior to the opening of signatures in lieu on
11 December 19th?

12 Because they've got about two weeks, two
13 weeks to redo all the districts, to open the
14 signatures in lieu for the primary election.

15 Is there additional funding after the
16 election is done appropriated to them to make
17 this happen?

18 MS. YAN: Thank you for your concerns.

19 The intention is to provide funding to
20 county elections officials in advance of the
21 election, and we are working with the Secretary
22 of State right now

23 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: After the
24 election?

25 MS. YAN: And in terms of that, that

1 is --this is a very developing issue that we will
2 continue to look at as developments occur.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I think we
4 should all worry to be fiscally responsible in
5 this state, to do our job as state electeds.

6 And what we heard right now and what my
7 counties are watching right now is you are asking
8 them to do something, to have a Hail Mary from
9 the 99-yard line.

10 I've got three people in an elections
11 office. I have very urban area. I have the
12 fifth largest city in the entire state of
13 California and I have the smallest community as
14 well.

15 Shouldn't they have some consideration?
16 And if we are going to take all of these dollars
17 and punt them away for it, they are struggling
18 now. Do we not expect them to struggle in the
19 future? And how can we say that we are fiscally
20 responsible --

21 CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you, Mr. --

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: --and taking
23 care of those dollars?

24 CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you, Mr. --

25 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Thank you. It

1 should worry everybody.

2 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you Mr. Tangipa.

3 Any other questions or comments from
4 Committee Members?

5 Ms. Cervantes, would you -- did you--
6 Ms. Caloza, did you want to speak? No.

7 Ms. Cervantes, would you like to close?

8 SENATOR CERVANTES: Yes, Madam Chair.

9 You know, I find it interesting some of
10 the fiscally responsible questions that were just
11 asked. You know, just yesterday in Assembly
12 Elections Committee you're worried about us
13 spending too much money. Now, today, you're
14 worried about not having enough money. I
15 certainly -- or it was the opposite.

16 You know, I certainly want to just
17 highlight that it was -- the cost that we're
18 talking about in this fiscal committee today, the
19 costs are going to be just as much as a failed
20 recall that your party placed on Governor Newsom.
21 That was irresponsible. That wasn't fiscally
22 responsible.

23 The cost that this election is going to
24 cost is as much as a new ballroom that President
25 Trump is going to build at the White House. Is

1 that fiscally responsible?

2 It's also half the cost of the
3 retrofitting of the Boeing 747 that President
4 Trump is questionably accepting from Qatar to
5 build to have as his new Air Force One.

6 And today I do want to highlight, as was
7 mentioned by the Department of Finance, that the
8 counties will be made whole. The counties will
9 be made whole.

10 Voters have a vested interest. They have
11 a vested interest to say no more to Trump's power
12 grab. And today, we will continue to move
13 forward collectively and stand up against this
14 authoritarian presidency. I respectfully asked
15 for an aye vote.

16 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you, Ms. Cervantes,
17 and appreciate the conversation today.

18 That is out on a B roll call. Thank you.

19 (End of SB 280 hearing.)
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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

I, MARY ANN SCANLAN, hereby certify that
I transcribed the California Assembly
Appropriations Committee meeting held on
August 18, 2025, as completely and correctly to
the best of my ability.

I further state that pages 1 through 66,
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proceedings specified.

Dated: November 1, 2025



Mary Ann Scanlan, CSR

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