

PARTY FAQ

Who is the California National Party?

The California National Party was founded in 2015 with the express purpose of giving Californians a political voice independent of the two American-centered parties that dominate us. We do not plan to run candidates for federal office, nor will we expand beyond California. This is a much more viable model for creating a new alternative party than one which must create a network of support throughout the entire vast United States. Our ultimate aim is complete independence for the California Republic.

This goal will require hard work, careful planning, and long-term perseverance. In the meantime, we support policies that benefit the lives of all Californians as soon as possible, both within the California government structure and through community service and activism. Even those who may be hesitant to support full-scale independence can recognize the need for California--a land larger than Canada in terms of population and economy--to have our own dedicated political party to serve our interests.

I'm interested in registering with the California National Party, but I'm wondering about...?

We understand that registering to vote with the California National Party can be confusing: How do you do it? Will it affect your right to vote for whomever you wish? Why does the party need registered voters? That's why we put together a [separate FAQ](#) on this specific topic. Please feel free to [get in touch](#) with us if you still have further questions about registration.

What is the California National Party position on...?

Our position on many policy issues can be found in our [platform](#), and you can read about our core values [here](#).

Broadly speaking, we support actions that make the day to day lives of Californians better, such as increased access to healthcare, education, and the justice system through things like single payer healthcare, free community college with vocational training, and increased judicial funding, especially in both overloaded urban areas and historically underserved rural counties.

We also support policies designed to enhance the lives of future Californians, such as environmentally responsible stewardship; support for economic investment that does not simply keep the present wealthy but provides opportunity for future generations; and infrastructure development, both rural and urban, at local, regional, and California-wide levels.

Our goal is to help foster a sense of California national identity for all our people, regardless of ethnicity, language, gender, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, socio-economic background, politics, or other factors. We believe that the promise and potential of California can only be achieved if we are willing to work together in the spirit of mutual tolerance and cooperation.

What makes your policy positions different from the Democratic Party?

Like the majority of California voters, the positions of the California National Party overlap more with the Democratic than Republican Party, especially given the difference in policy outlook between the California and federal Democratic Party. That said, we believe that in some cases, the California Democrats seek to expand the power of government coercion in ways that are not only unnecessary, but potentially harmful. On other issues, we believe the Democrats reject policies that would help ordinary Californians in favor of benefiting their own corporate backers and special interests, using government power to maintain their own unchallenged authority.

The California Democrats have grown corrupt and maintain a political monopoly through the fear that there is no alternative except the California GOP. We believe that one party domination, such that those in power have no need to cooperate or negotiate outside themselves, is an inherently dangerous structure. A vibrant and successful representative democracy requires a new party to challenge the hegemony of the Democrats. The Republican Party has become a toxic brand in California, while the Greens and Libertarians are too ideologically driven. Only a flexible, pragmatic, and California-centric party can return a voice to the voters. The California National Party is that party.

So then what's the ideology of the California National Party? Liberal? Progressive? Conservative? Moderate? Socialist?

We do not see the party bound by any particular ideology, and instead seek solutions that best serve the unique people, needs, and culture of California. While many of our positions are currently considered “progressive”, such as single payer healthcare, environmental stewardship, and greater access to education, we also support decentralization of power where appropriate to foster local political control and responsibility; the streamlining and, when beneficial, reduction of government regulation; and efficient and justified use of taxpayer money. We also support a position of international cooperation and oppose military and political interventionism.

In short, we favor solutions for California based on what works best for us, not slogans or ideology. Because of this, we do not fit neatly into the narrow but familiar categories of two-party American politics.

But isn't “nationalism” inherently right-wing?

Not at all! There are many national independence movements that are not based on a right-wing ideology, such as in Scotland and Catalonia. This is especially true for California because our sense of nation is not based on a single ethnicity or linguistic identity. Although we surely do not deny that California's rich history and culture are clearly distinct from the United States, our nationalism is civic in nature. California is a shared national project of all those who identify as Californian. One of the key components of our national identity is a respect for the

cultural, linguistic, and geographic diversity that has made California the place we all love today.

Why should California seek independence from the United States anyway?

There are many reasons why the California National Party believes we need to ultimately separate ourselves from the United States, all of which remain true regardless of whether Republicans or Democrats hold power in Washington DC:

- 1) **Economic:** In the vast majority of years over the last few decades, California has received far less money from the federal government than it sends in tax revenue. Much of this money goes to areas of the United States whose representatives then vote against our interests, while the needs of our own people are ignored. Furthermore, despite being the fifth largest economy on the planet, California is constitutionally prohibited from making our own international trade agreements and is forced to accept pronouncements from a distant, disinterested, and often hostile foreign capital.
- 2) **Political:** Despite our population of nearly 40 million people (global ranking: 36th), the largest in the United States, our voice is effectively silenced in the federal Senate. It is this body, not the House of Representatives, that approves cabinet officials and Supreme Court justices, ratifies treaties, and removes impeached officials. Wyoming, which is smaller in population than 15 California counties, possesses equal senatorial power. The 40 million people of the 22 smallest states control 44 Senators, almost a majority. According to Article V of the United States Constitution, equal representation in the Senate is the only part of that document which cannot be changed by amendment. California's voice in the Electoral College is likewise reduced relative to our population and, in practice, the President of the United States is chosen exclusively by a handful of "swing" states.
- 3) **Military:** California's share of the United States' annual military budget is approximately \$75 billion dollars, over one third of California's own \$209 billion general budget. This makes us the third highest military spender in the world, more than Saudi Arabia, Russia, and India, behind only China and the United States itself. The various geopolitical adventures of the United States in the post-World War II era have in fact made California less secure, and we could easily protect ourselves with a fraction of the money we are forced to give up for American military spending.
- 4) **Environmental:** 45% of California's land is under control of the federal government, as well as the waters between three and 231 miles from our shores. Especially given that many Americans and their representatives fail to recognize the global environmental crisis facing humanity, to the point of undermining even modest attempts to curb climate change, such external control of our own territory and resources is neither acceptable nor justified. California needs to preserve our natural heritage for future Californians, protect our people from the consequences of environmental irresponsibility, and prevent the exploitation of our resources for the profit of others.

- 5) Cultural: Most every Californian recognizes how distinct we are from the United States. It's one of the reasons we stay, despite the many economic hardships. The history of California is vastly different from the rest of the United States, especially east of the Rocky Mountains. We possess a greater amount of cultural diversity with increasing toleration for our differences, despite our unity as Californians. Many of the main cultural exports of the United States, especially in media and technology, are in fact from California, and much of the world already recognizes our distinctiveness.

What will the path to an Independent California look like?

This is by far the most asked question and the most difficult to answer. It is important to remember that while a free California Republic is our ultimate goal, we hope to accomplish a great deal of good for California along the road leading to independence. We are not simply a one-issue party, but strive to become the only political party that truly represents Californians.

Ultimately, many decisions about the shape of a future independent California should be made by the people, either directly or through their representatives, not by a political party. However, we do believe that much of the following should be done to lay the groundwork for independence:

1. California government reform to prepare for the transition to independence, specifically more robust, accountable local administration; a larger Assembly with smaller districts and more responsive representation; and an expanded Senate with proportional representation. See our [Legislative Reform](#) plank to learn more.
2. A constitutional convention to create a streamlined national document to replace the confusing morass of the present California constitution.
3. Referendum on independence supported by a majority of California voters.
4. Negotiation with the United States on the transfer of authority and land, military presence, debt assumption, and other necessary issues to smooth the transition for both nations.

Learn more in the [Independence](#) plank of our current platform.

Is California independence illegal under U.S. law?

The only Supreme Court decision to address whether a state can leave the United States is *Texas v. White* (1869) which found that under the Constitution, a state cannot *unilaterally* secede, although it may do so "through consent of the States". While the Court did not define the nature of this "consent", it is clear that a state can leave the United States without a constitutional amendment, under mechanisms that already exist. Since the California National

Party seeks independence through legal, democratic means under the constitution and not unilaterally, our project is not in any way illegal.

Additionally, in the 150 years since this Supreme Court decision, a vast body of international law and United Nations resolutions, including laying out rights to national self-determination, has come into existence, lending further legitimacy to our goal. The United States itself has also granted independence to former territories since then, such as Cuba and the Philippines.

Isn't this treason against the United States government?

The California National Party does not challenge the authority or legitimacy of the United States government, but simply seeks a legal agreement that its powers no longer extend to California. We pursue our ends using only peaceful and democratic means, such as our rights to free speech and to associate with like-minded individuals. These rights are guaranteed by the United States Constitution itself and are sufficient for us to reach our goal of true political representation, and ultimately independence, for California. Our party is not anti-American, it is pro-Californian.

Wasn't this already tried (and failed) in the Civil War?

This is a common misconception. The Confederacy in the American Civil War left the United States without agreement from the federal government and used officially sanctioned military action to seek their goals. We in the California National Party support only democratic, non-violent means to work towards independence through discussion and negotiation with the United States.

Our approach is closer to the evolving situation in Scotland, which has been politically united with England for centuries at the time of the United Kingdom's greatest geopolitical strength but is now seeking independence through peaceful elections. What was unthinkable for a major world power a few decades ago has now become possible, perhaps even inevitable. This model is a much more accurate representation of the California National Party's strategy.

Does your party support other independence movements in the United States, such as in Cascadia, Texas, and New England?

We unreservedly support the *right* of people in those regions to work for independence, if they so choose, by whatever peaceful and legal methods they think best. However, the California National Party's goal is California's own independence because of the specific and unique political, economic, and cultural factors that make it no longer reasonable that we should be a subnational entity of the United States or any other government.

If California has the right to leave the United States, shouldn't counties have the right to leave an Independent California?

The federal system of the United States recognizes that states retain a recognized legal sovereignty, although the form and limits of it have varied over time. For states that were not territories organized by the United States, but had an independent historical existence--Vermont, Texas, Hawai'i, and of course California--this sovereignty pre-dates statehood.

Counties, on the other hand, have no legal recognition outside the laws of that state and some, such as Rhode Island, Connecticut, and Massachusetts, have largely done away with them. This is not to say that the California National Party intends to do away with counties. We, in fact, believe that unless there is a compelling and practical reason otherwise, decision making on exclusively local issues should be made at the county, city, or neighborhood level, where appropriate. However, we do believe that counties do not have the same legal sovereignty as states.

On a practical level, much of California's success rests on uniting our diversity of resources, skills, and production. Our commerce, agriculture, shipping, manufacturing, and so forth are all strengthened by California's integrated infrastructure in transportation, water, and energy and we all gain from retaining this unity. The California National Party believes that it is in the best interests of all Californians--rural and urban, coastal and inland, south and north--to remain together as one land and one people.

I've heard of other organizations seeking independence for California, are you affiliated with them in any way?

There are other organizations that also claim, with varying degrees of legitimacy, to be working for greater autonomy for California, although the California National Party is the only organized political party seeking this goal. Some of these other groups are genuinely devoted California-focused organizations. Others have engaged in questionable, even damaging, messaging and tactics, with methods and policy positions that we disavow completely. Regardless of our various personal opinions, we as an organization are not affiliated with any other California independence groups.

Are you supported, financially or otherwise, by interest groups outside California?

Absolutely not! Our funding comes from individual Californians and California businesses, while our volunteer [leadership](#) is based entirely in California. We do not accept money or material support from any organization, corporation, or special interest based in the United States or other foreign countries.

This all sounds good, so what do I do now?

The most important--and fortunately, easiest--thing you can do to help right now is to [register](#) to vote with the California National Party. It takes five minutes and can be done online if you have a California ID or driver's license. Click [here](#) to learn more about registering with us. Be

sure to [sign up](#) for our email list and follow us on [social media](#) to keep up with the latest California National Party news.

We also encourage all members to [volunteer](#) their skills and to [contribute](#) and participate at [events](#) as much as they feel they can. Our vision is that the California National Party belongs to its members, not corporations or special interests, and that means it is up to all of us to contribute in building the path to a successful and independent California.

Still have questions? Please [contact us](#)!