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PRIMARY REFORM COULD BOOST VOTER PARTICIPATION

According to a new report published by *California Forward*, a non-partisan “top two” primary system would likely boost turnout of independent voters as well as voters registered with particular parties.

The report, “Primary Process Reform in California” by T. Anthony Quinn and R. Michael Alvarez, foresees a number of benefits to ending California’s “closed” primary system, including:

- Voters now disenfranchised by the closed primary would have a reason to participate because they could choose from *all* of the candidates on the ballot.
- Independent or “declined to state” voters will have greater reason to participate in primaries.
- More voters of all parties will participate.
- Candidates and elected officials will be motivated to respond to a larger portion of the electorate.
- A top two runoff, which a nonpartisan blanket primary system produces, will provide more choice in the general election.
- Candidates would be protected from excessive influence by political parties or special interests.
- More representative, pragmatic, problem-solving legislators will emerge.

The report was published by *California Forward*, a nonpartisan effort to bolster democracy and improve the performance of government. *California Forward* is funded by The California Endowment, The Evelyn and Walter Haas Jr. Fund, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, The James Irvine Foundation, and The David and Lucile Packard Foundation.

For a complete copy of the report, visit www.caforward.org.

The authors of the report are: **T. Anthony Quinn**, who has more than 40 years of experience with California government, including serving as consultant to the California Assembly for elections and reapportionment; and **R. Michael Alvarez**, a professor of political science at the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena, who has studied voting behavior, campaigns and elections, electoral procedures and rules, and voting technologies in the United States and many other nations.