

Prop. 74 - "Punish New Teachers" Initiative Talking Points

Unnecessary:

- This initiative is unnecessary. There is already a system in place to fire teachers who are not performing in the classroom. Existing law allows teachers to be fired for unsatisfactory performance, unprofessional conduct, criminal acts, dishonesty and conduct unfit for associating with children no matter how long they've been on the job.
- No teacher has a guaranteed job. This initiative is misleading about how teachers' jobs work. Right now, after two years, all teachers get is the right to a hearing before they are fired.
- This initiative is poorly drafted and will actually make it more difficult to get rid of teachers who are not doing their job.

Ineffective:

- This initiative does nothing to improve student learning or deal with the real problems facing our schools. It won't reduce class sizes, buy up-to-date textbooks for students or provide quality teacher training.
- Stanford University experts say there is no evidence to show that lengthening the probation period has any impact on teacher quality. Instead of punishing teachers, we should focus on proven reforms such as providing mentoring programs and quality training for new teachers.
- Governor Schwarzenegger promised real reform, but instead he broke his promises by cutting billions in funding for our schools. This initiative does not address the real challenges facing our schools.

Unfair:

- This initiative unfairly singles out teachers as the problem in our public schools, when many classrooms are badly underfunded and students are denied the basic resources they need to learn.
- This initiative is unfair to teachers because it takes away their right to a hearing before they are fired. It doesn't solve the problems facing our schools, but creates new ones by driving good teachers away.
- This initiative extends a teacher's probation period to five years, longer than all but one other state in the country, which will make it more difficult to recruit and retain high-quality teachers in California.