

# California

NEWS 3

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## Court dismisses GOP redistricting initiative

**POLITICS:** Proposition 24 includes a legislative pay-cut provision, and the justices said that was improper.

By STEVE LAWRENCE  
The Associated Press

SACRAMENTO — In a victory for Democrats, the state Supreme Court on Monday removed a GOP redistricting initiative from the March ballot, saying it should not have included an attempt to cut law-

makers' pay.

The measure violates the state constitution's prohibition against ballot measures that cover more than one subject, the court wrote in a 5-2 ruling, agreeing with Senate Democrats who challenged the proposal.

Proposition 24 would have given the court rather than the Legislature the authority to redraw legislative and congressional district boundaries after the 2000 census. It would also have reduced legislators' pay and required voter approval for pay raises.

Allowing an initiative with

two distinct subjects would "inevitably create voter confusion and obscure the electorate's intent," Chief Justice Ronald George wrote for the court.

Prop. 24 proponents said they will try to place a measure with similar redistricting requirements before voters in November.

The initiative was sponsored by anti-tax activist Ted Costa and backed by Republican congressmen who do not want Democrats to oversee redistricting.

States must redraw congressional and legislative district

boundaries after the U.S. census every 10 years. The maps are created to even out district sizes.

Democrats control both houses of the Legislature and the governor's office. If they maintain their majorities in next year's elections they could redraw district lines to try to gain seats.

Prop. 24 would have given the Republican-dominated Supreme Court the power to oversee redistricting and require that the justices' plan win voter approval.

The measure also would have cut legislators' pay from

\$99,000 to \$75,000, reduced their daily allowance during legislative sessions from \$121 to \$75, required voter approval for future legislative pay raises and raises for other state elected officials, and docked legislators' pay if the state budget is late.

Shawn Steel, vice chairman of the state Republican Party, said the GOP plans to sponsor another measure that would address only redistricting.

"It's unfortunate the Supreme Court has denied the voters a voice," he said. "But it gives the party and those who want fair reapportion-

ment and not ramrod reapportionment another opportunity in November."

Senate President Pro Tem John Burton, D-San Francisco, who joined state school Superintendent Delaine Eastis in asking the court to remove Prop. 24, called linking redistricting to legislative pay "the ultimate in political cynicism."

"I think the court really did the right thing," Burton said.

Assembly Minority Leader Scott Baugh, R-Huntington Beach, said the GOP could lose 10 or more California seats in the U.S. House.