



California Budget  
& Policy Center

# Dollars and Democracy: An Introduction to the State Budget Process

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HISPANAS ORGANIZED FOR POLITICAL EQUALITY  
LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

SACRAMENTO, MAY 22, 2018

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**What comes to mind  
when you think of the  
state budget?**











**Budgets are statements of  
our values and priorities.**



# Goals of the Presentation

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- Highlight **key facts** about California's state budget
- Describe the **constitutional framework** for the state budget process
- Review the budget process timeline, including the **Governor's role** and the **Legislature's role**
- Discuss when and how **members of the public** can get involved



# Key Facts About the State Budget

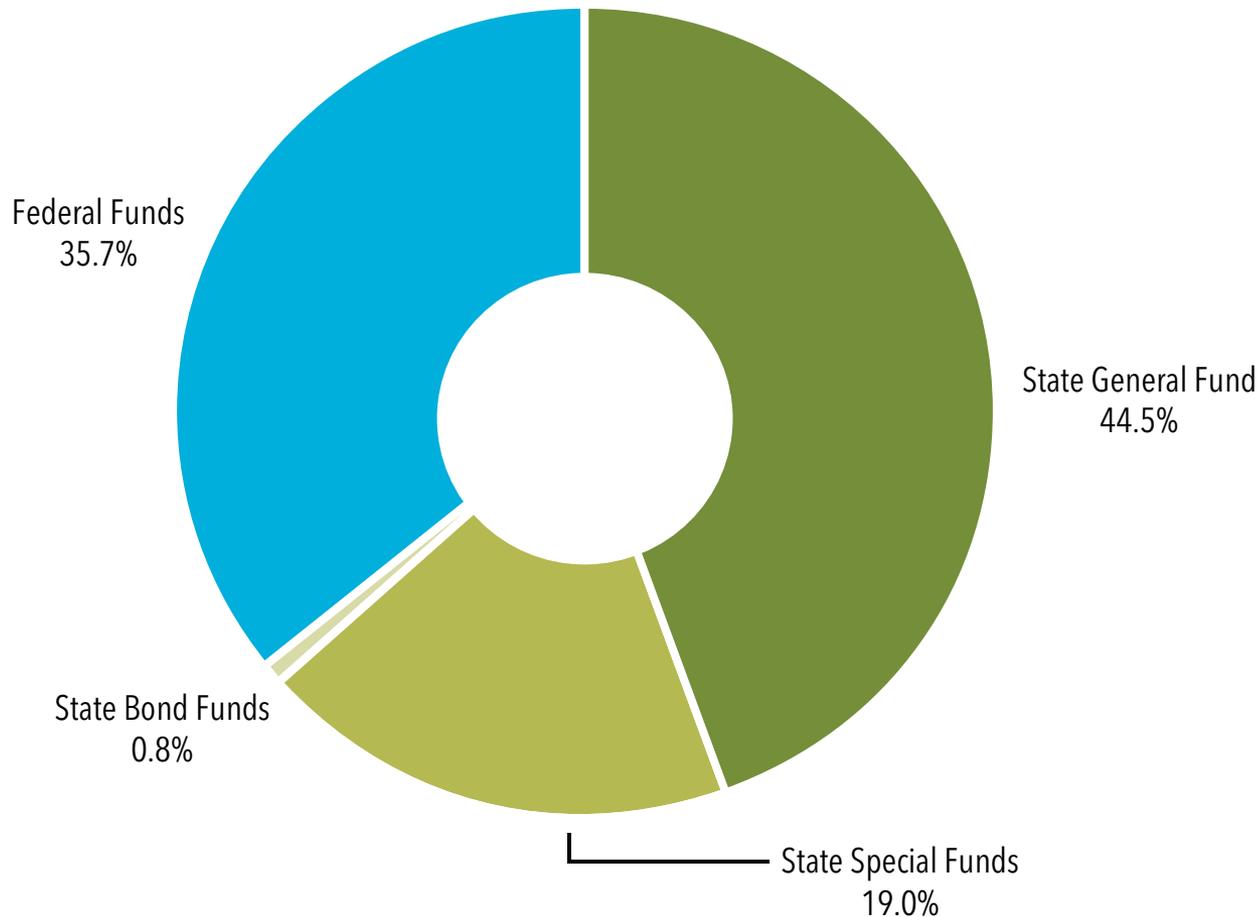


**The state budget =  
state funds + federal funds.**



# State Funds Account for Nearly Two-Thirds of California's State Budget

Total Proposed 2018-19 Expenditures = \$296.2 Billion



Source: Department of Finance

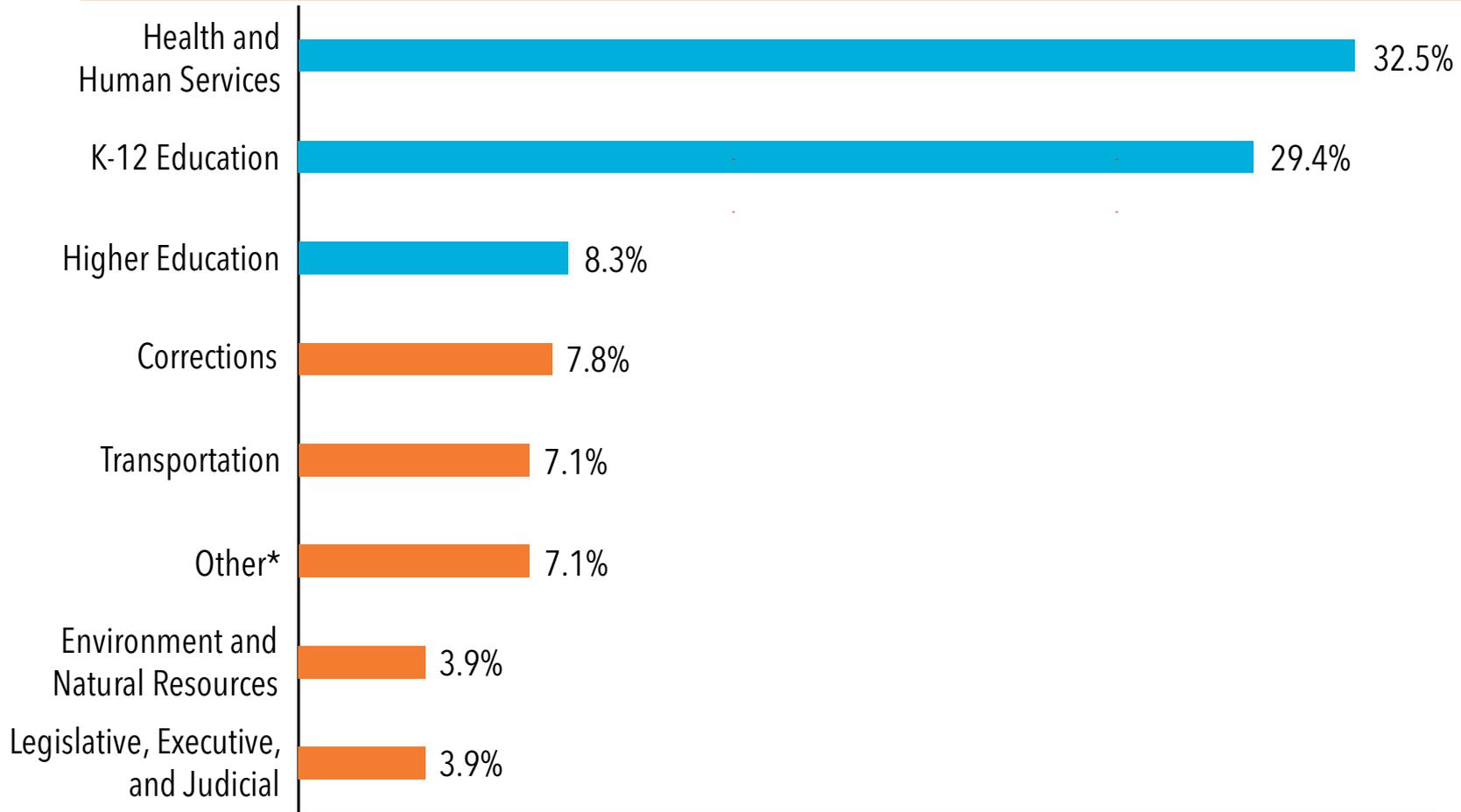


**The state budget supports a broad range of public services and systems.**



# More Than 7 in 10 State Dollars Support Health and Human Services or Education

Proposed 2018-19 General Fund and Special Fund Expenditures = \$187.8 Billion



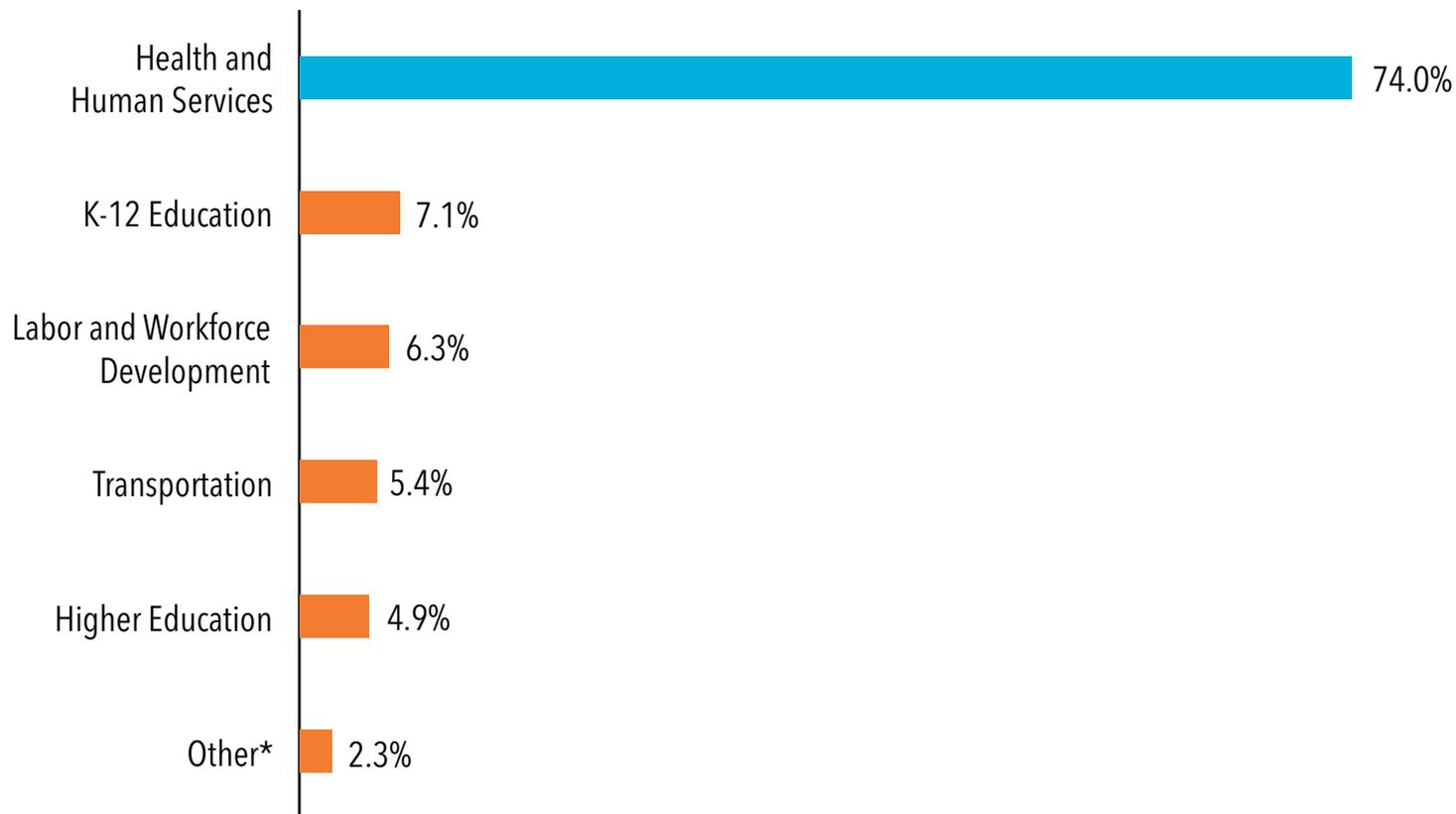
\*Includes Business, Consumer Services, and Housing; Labor and Workforce Development; Government Operations; and General Government.

Source: Department of Finance



# More Than 7 in 10 Federal Dollars Spent Through the State Budget Support Health and Human Services

Federal Funds Estimated to Be Spent Through the State Budget in 2018-19 = \$105.9 Billion



\* Includes Environmental Protection; Legislative, Judicial, and Executive; Corrections and Rehabilitation; and other state budget categories that account for relatively small shares of federal funds.

Source: Department of Finance



**California's state budget is  
actually a budget "package."**



The budget package consists of one or more **budget bills** plus budget-related **trailer bills**.



There is no limit on the number of trailer bills that may be included.



# The 34 Bills in the 2017-18 Budget Package (So Far)

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- **AB 97:** The initial **2017-18 budget bill**
- **AB 109, AB 120, AB 134, SB 108, and SB 113:** Additional budget bills that **amended the initial 2017-18 budget bill**
- **SB 107:** Another budget bill that **amended the 2016-17 budget bill**
- **Other bills in the budget package:** AB 99, AB 102, AB 103, AB 107, AB 111, AB 114, AB 115, AB 119, AB 126, AB 129, AB 130, AB 131, AB 133, AB 135, SB 84, SB 85, SB 88, SB 89, SB 90, SB 92, SB 94, SB 96, SB 97, SB 103, SB 110, SB 112, and SB 117



# The Constitutional Framework for the State Budget Process

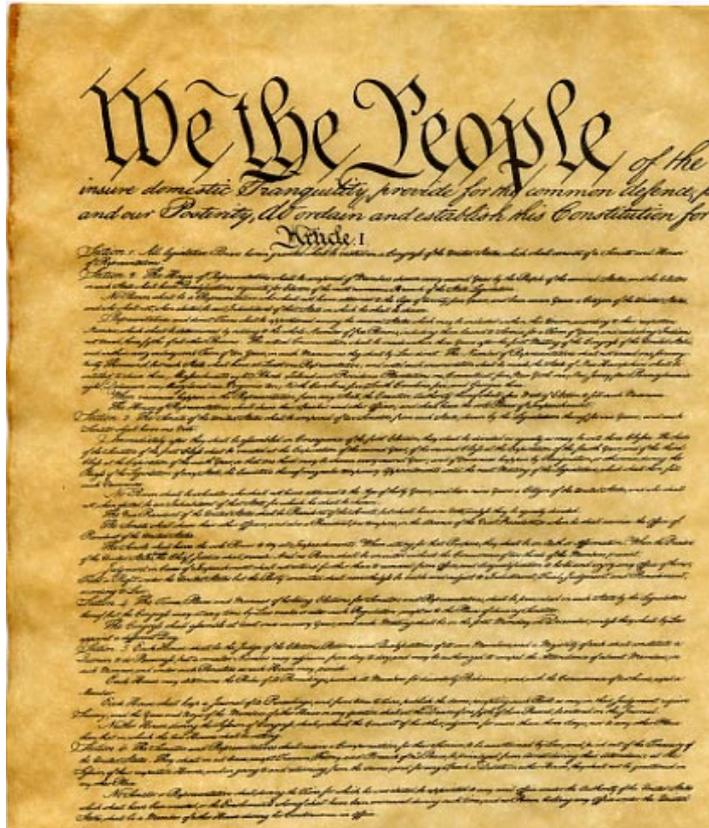


**California's Constitution  
establishes the basic rules  
of the state budget process.**



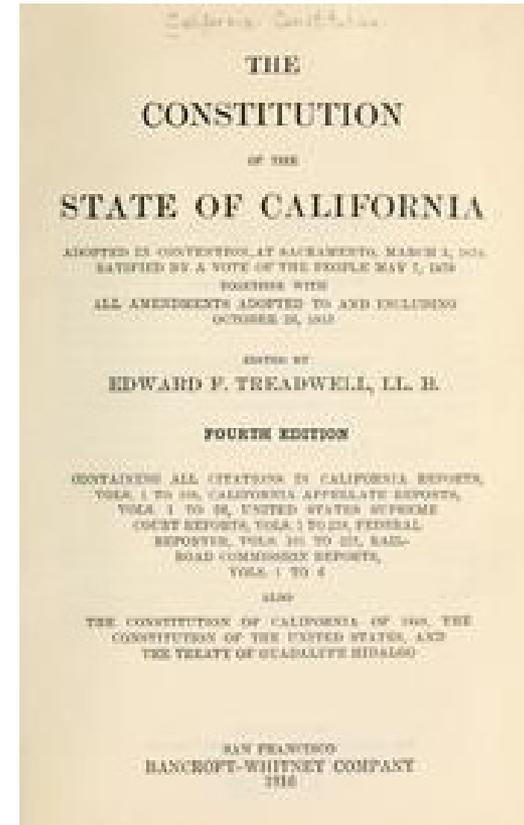
# US Constitution

- Roughly 7,800 words
- Amended 27 times



# California Constitution

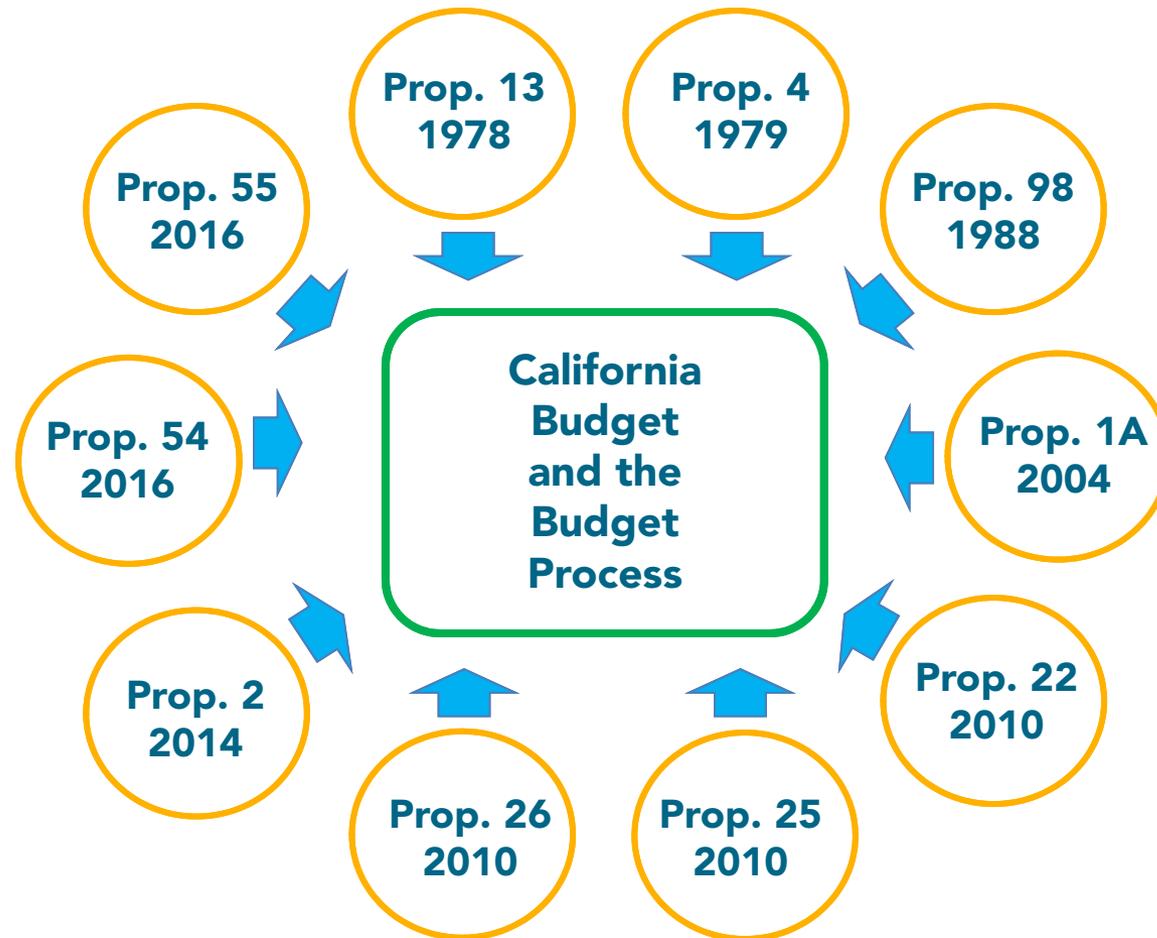
- Roughly 75,000 words
- Amended 500+ times



**Several ballot measures,  
dating back to the 1970s,  
have had an impact on  
the budget and the budget  
process.**



# Ballot Measures With an Impact on the State Budget and the Budget Process



**The state Constitution  
sets two budget-related  
deadlines:  
January 10 and June 15.**



**Bills must be published, in their final form, at least 72 hours before being passed by the Legislature.  
(Proposition 54 of 2016)**



**The budget bill and most budget-related bills can be passed by a simple majority vote.  
(Prop. 25 of 2010)**



**A supermajority (two-thirds)  
vote is needed to approve any  
tax increase.  
(Prop. 26 of 2010)**



## Prop. 26 added this key phrase to the state Constitution:

“Any change in state statute which results in **any** taxpayer paying a higher tax” requires a two-thirds vote of each house of the Legislature.



**The state Constitution  
contains complex formulas  
that establish state budget  
priorities.**



# Three Key Budget Formulas in the State Constitution

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- **Prop. 98 (1988):**
  - Guarantees a minimum level of funding for K-12 schools and community colleges.
- **Prop. 2 (2014):**
  - Requires some state revenues to be set aside to pay down debts and save for a rainy day.
- **Prop. 55 (2016):**
  - Creates a formula to boost funding for Medi-Cal, which provides health care services for low-income residents.



# The State Budget Process: Key Players and Timeline



# **The budget process is cyclical.**

**Decisions are made throughout the year, both  
in public settings and behind the scenes.**



# Navigating the State Budget Process

Each year the Governor and Legislature work to craft the state's spending plan. While the January-to-June period gets the most attention, the process of developing the budget is an ongoing enterprise, giving Californians ample opportunity to stay engaged and involved year-round.

## The Governor

The Governor has the lead role in developing the state budget. Each year the Governor proposes a spending plan, which is introduced as the budget bill in the Legislature. The Governor can sign or veto the budget bill passed by legislators as well as other bills in the budget package that make policy changes related to the budget. The Governor can also reduce or eliminate individual appropriations using the line-item veto.

## The Legislature

The Legislature – made up of the Assembly and Senate – reviews the Governor's proposed budget and crafts its own version of the spending plan. The Legislature can maintain, modify, or reject the Governor's proposals, with review occurring through each house's budget committee and related subcommittees. The Legislature must pass the budget bill, but not other bills in the budget package, by June 15. The Legislature can override a Governor's veto by a two-thirds vote of each house.

## The Public

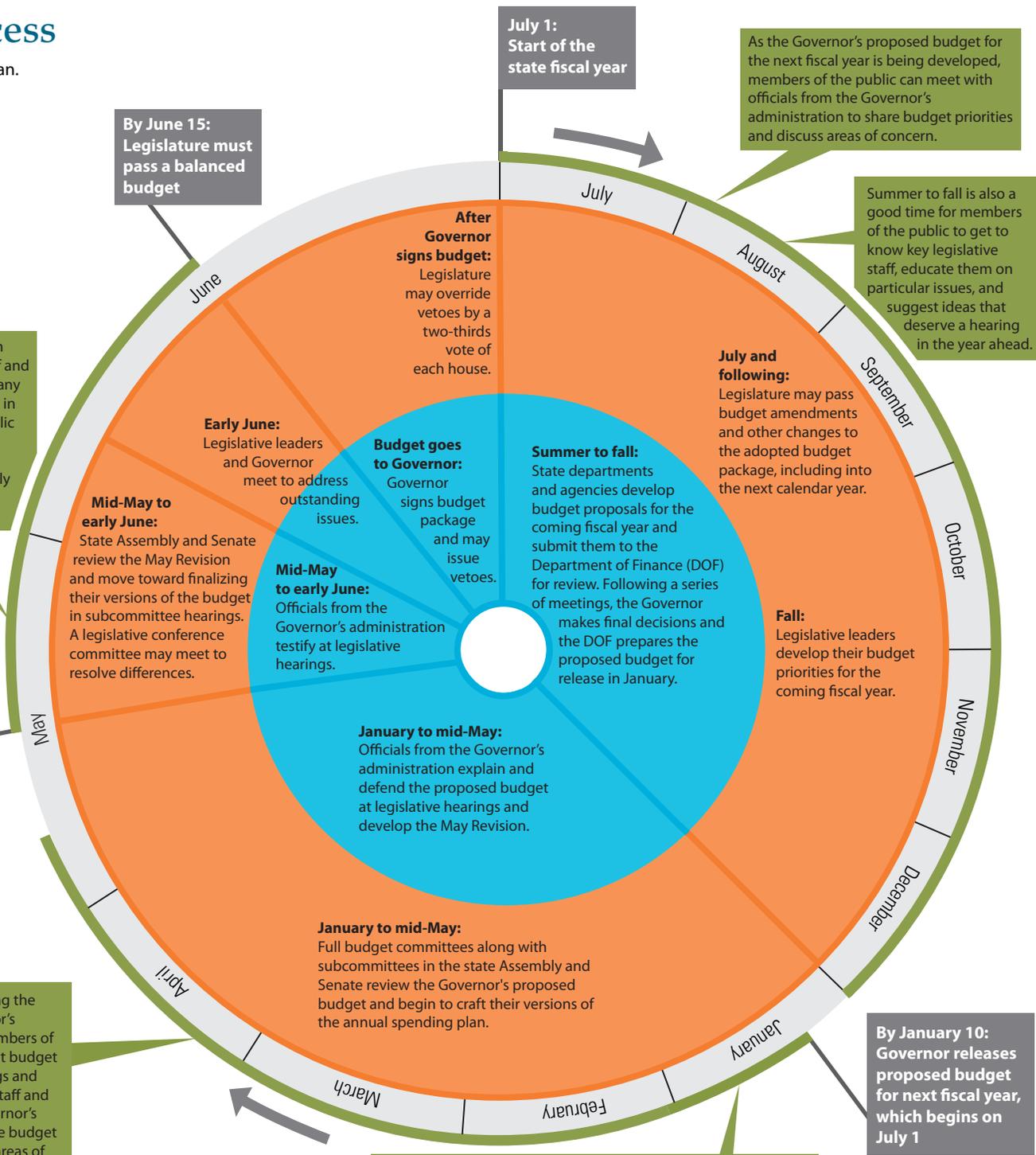
The public has various opportunities for input during the budget process. Members of the public can meet with officials from the Governor's administration and with legislators and their staffs, testify before budget committees and subcommittees, and write letters of support and opposition. Through individual engagement or as part of coalitions, members of the public can express their budget priorities and areas of concern.

Members of the public can meet with Governor's staff and legislative staff to discuss any changes or new proposals in the May Revision. The public can continue to offer comments at legislative hearings, although typically not during the two-house conference committee.

**By May 14: Governor releases revised budget proposal ("May Revision")**

In the months following the release of the Governor's proposed budget, members of the public can testify at budget subcommittee hearings and meet with legislative staff and officials from the Governor's administration to share budget priorities and discuss areas of concern.

After the release of the Governor's proposed budget, members of the public can submit letters of support/opposition to budget subcommittees, meet with budget subcommittee staff and legislative leadership staff, and get involved with coalitions.



# The key players in the state budget process are...



# The Governor



# The Legislature



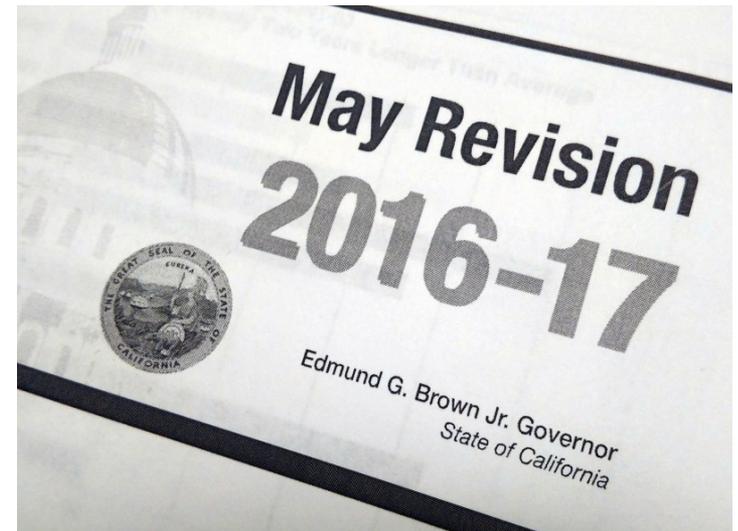
# The Public



**The Governor has the lead  
role in crafting the budget.**



State of California  
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE



**The Legislature reviews and revises the Governor's proposals, with help from the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO).**



Holly Mitchell,  
Chair, Senate  
Budget and  
Fiscal Review  
Committee



Mac Taylor,  
Legislative  
Analyst



Phil Ting,  
Chair,  
Assembly  
Budget  
Committee



**Members of the public have various opportunities to make their voices heard during the budget process.**





# The state budget process can be divided into three distinct periods.

**July to December**

**January to Mid-May**

**Mid-May to June**



# July to December



## Governor's Administration

- **Department of Finance (DOF) leads development of Governor's proposed budget.**
  - Look for opportunities to engage with Administration officials.

## Legislature

- **Legislative leaders develop budget priorities.**
  - Seek to have your priorities considered.
- **Budget committee staff look ahead to upcoming budget deliberations.**
  - Build relationships and suggest ideas for hearings.



# January to Mid-May



## Governor's Administration

- **Proposed budget released by January 10.**
  - Weigh in on the Governor's proposals.
- **DOF makes budget adjustments and prepares May Revision.**
  - Engage with budget officials, offering candid feedback on Governor's initial proposals.

## Legislature

- **Budget subcommittees hold dozens of hearings to review proposed budget.**
  - Testify at hearings and continue to meet with key legislators and staff.



# Mid-May to June



## Governor's Administration

- **May Revision released by May 14.**
  - Look for opportunities to engage with Administration officials.

## Legislature

- **Budget subcommittees convene hearings on May Revision proposals.**
  - Testify at hearings and continue to meet with key legislators and staff.
- **Budget conference committee meets to iron out differences.**

**The “Big 3” negotiate the final outlines of budget package.**



# The Bottom Line

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- The state budget expresses our **values and priorities**.
- The **state Constitution** establishes the “rules of the game.”
- The budget process is **cyclical** – budget decisions are made throughout the year.
- The **Governor** has the lead role in crafting the budget; the **Legislature** reviews and revises the Governor’s proposals.
- **Public input** is a key part of the budget process and comes in many forms.





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