



Written by [David Kelly](#) on December 18, 2022

California County Approves Measure to Study Seceding From State

In California, Governor Gavin Newsom's progressive leadership and Democrat-dominated Legislature have made little progress regarding the growing homeless crisis, soaring housing costs, and rising crime rates, which has led some residents to consider abandoning the state.

On Friday, the [Associated Press](#) (AP) reported that in last month's elections, voters in [San Bernardino County](#), the fifth-most populous county in the Golden State, approved a ballot proposal directing county officials to study the idea of secession and forming the 51st state.



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The AP article shared, "this attempt to create a new state — which would be the first since Hawaii in 1959 — is a longshot proposition for the county just east of Los Angeles that has suffered from sharp increases in [the] cost of living. It would hinge on approval by the California Legislature and Congress, both of which are highly unlikely."

One of the driving forces of the proposal is questioning how the state had spent billions of dollars in federal and state funds without fairly sharing it with local governments in the Inland Empire (including the cities of San Bernardino and Riverside), especially during the last few tumultuous years.

Curt Hagman, chairman of the Board of Supervisors that placed the proposal on the ballot, said recent years have been rough on residents, with record inflation and disputes over the state's long-running Covid policies causing tension.

Here's the [ballot question](#) voters approved: "Do the citizens of San Bernardino County want the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors to study all options to obtain its fair share of state and federal resources, up to and including secession?"

There have been more than 220 [reported](#) attempts to break up California over its 172-year history, all of which have failed. One of these secession attempts was a 2017 [federal lawsuit](#) filed by activists seeking to create a new "State of Jefferson" out of 21 counties. The suit argued that rural counties aren't equitably represented in the Legislature, with a total of only "40 state senators and 80 Assembly members being insufficient representation for a state of 40 million people." That lawsuit was eventually [denied](#) by the U.S. Supreme Court in 2018.

San Bernardino County encompasses an area of 20,000 square miles, which is comparable in size to the state of West Virginia. The city of San Bernardino has a "population of about 220,000, [and] anchors the third largest metropolitan area in the state, behind L.A. and San Francisco." Outside of the growing metro area are miles of isolated desert and small mountain-resort towns.

The county's communities have suffered from high unemployment, which was sitting at 9.5 percent in



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2019, and [reportedly](#) have 12.2 percent of households living below the poverty line. Adding to these dismal stats is the growing number of businesses leaving the state due to progressive policies and high taxes.

“From 2018 to 2021, 352 companies moved their headquarters from California to other states, according to a Hoover Institution study. After decades of growth, the state population of 39 million has been shrinking, partly because residents are leaving for states that offer more affordable housing and lower taxes,” said the AP article.

A large number of these companies leaving California are relocating to the business-friendly state of Texas, [according](#) to Center Square. “In 2019, 11 of 22 companies exiting California relocated to Texas; 19 out of 37 in 2020 and 26 out of 49 in 2021, according to [the California Policy Center’s ‘California Book of Exoduses’]. The first 10 months of 2022 was no different when nine out of 32 companies left California to relocate to Texas and another downsized, offering to relocate its employees to Houston.”

Newsom and the Democrat-led statehouse have been put on notice that their liberal policies and unequal distribution of state funds are not acceptable. But will San Bernardino County’s secession remedy the situation? No. The underlying problem is that the state is bleeding out businesses and tax revenue, and the only solution to *that* problem is to return to constitutionally and fiscally sound policies.



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