

MediaJustice

Big Tech's California Dreaming

A TECH MONEY IN POLITICS
CASE STUDY



AI & CRYPTO CA STATE PAC
SPENDING IN THE 2026 PRIMARIES

WHICH AI & CRYPTO COMPANIES ARE SPENDING BIG IN THE CA MIDTERMS?

AI HYPERSCALERS

∞ Meta Google

CRYPTO MONEY

ripple

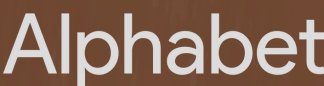


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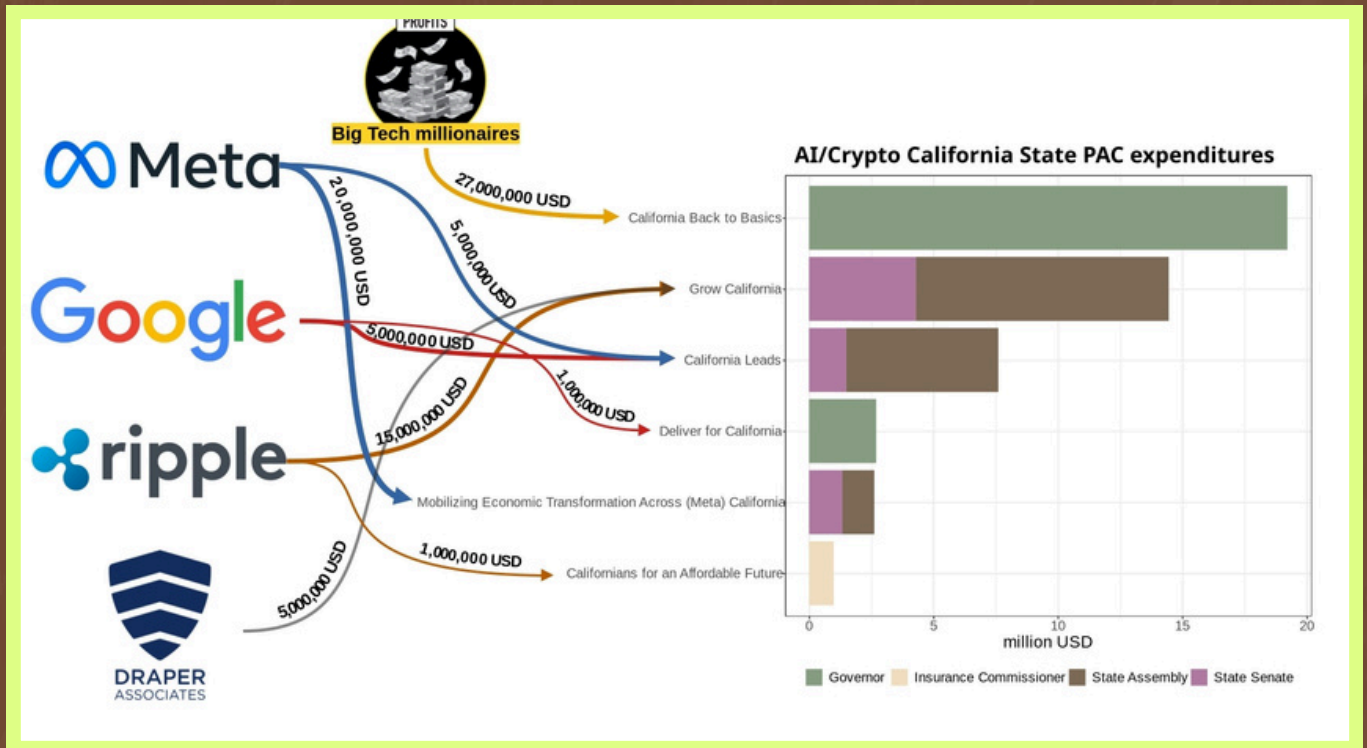
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BIG TECH'S PAC SPENDING

Companies	PAC	Agenda
	Mobilizing Economic Transformation Across (Meta) California	Backs "candidates with a light-touch approach to tech regulation, especially AI."
 		Vaguely prioritizes "innovation" and "economic growth."
 		Focused on electing corporate-friendly candidates as a "counterforce" to the state's labor movement.

THE RACES BIG TECH'S PACS ARE TRYING TO BUY

Figure 1 - AI/Crypto California State PAC Expenditures



WHICH CANDIDATES DID BIG TECH SUPPORT IN THE CALIFORNIA PRIMARIES AND WHY?

SPOTLIGHT: DEMOCRAT MATT MAHAN

WHO: Democrat Matt Mahan lost the primary for CA Governor.

WHAT: Mahan was backed by several billionaires and tech CEO donors.¹ Two PACs were created exclusively to support Mahan, California Back to Basics and Deliver for California. Sergey Brin, co-founder of Google and former president of Google's parent company, Alphabet, contributed 1 million dollars to Deliver for California.

WHY: Mahan garnered so much tech-billionaire support due to his opposition to California's billionaire tax² aka Proposition 40, which will be voted on November 3rd. In addition, Mahan has advocated for increasing criminal penalties for low-level offenses³ and homelessness⁴ — something he has in common⁵ with one of his major donors, Joe Lonsdale, co-founder of Palantir.



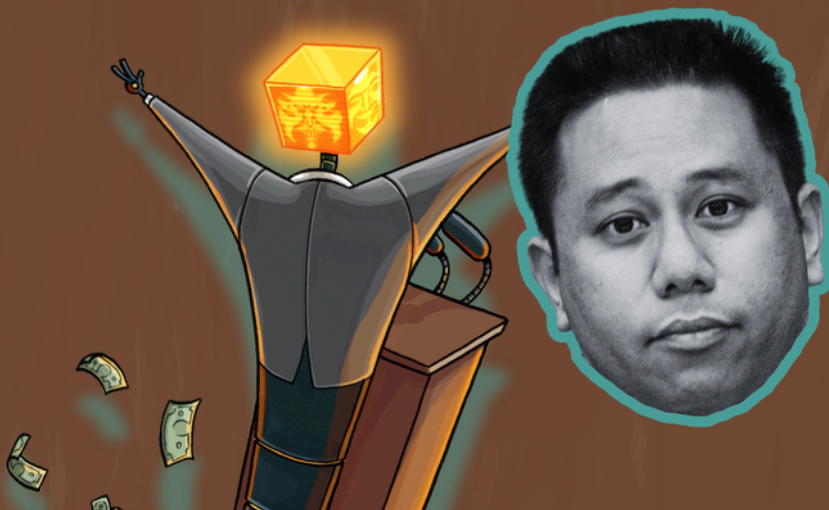
WHICH CANDIDATES DID BIG TECH SUPPORT IN THE CALIFORNIA PRIMARIES AND WHY?

SPOTLIGHT: DEMOCRAT MARK PULIDO

WHO: Democrat Mark Pulido advanced from the primary on June 2, 2026 and is on the ballot in the general election on November 3, 2026. He is running for election to the California State Assembly to represent District 67 (Los Angeles and Orange County).

WHAT: California Leads supported Mark Pulido with 1.2 million dollars. Grow California spent over 2.5 million dollars supporting Mark Pulido and nearly 1.5 million dollars opposing UNITE HERE co-president Ada Briceño who was the other leading democratic candidate.⁶ This was the highest spending State Assembly Race. A total of 9.9 million dollars was spent against labor leader Ada Briceño, 6.6 times more than the 1.5 million dollars spent to support her.⁷

WHY: Big Tech is not just protecting their industry.⁸ They're funding opposition to workers organizing,⁹ period.



WHAT IS BIG TECH AFRAID OF?

HERE IS A SNAPSHOT OF LEGISLATION THEY ARE OPPOSING THROUGH PAC SPENDING:

CALIFORNIA'S BILLIONAIRE TAX¹⁰

Proposition 40 could result in a one-time 5% tax on the wealth of California's roughly 200 billionaires. Multiple PACs were created with the sole purpose of opposing California's proposed billionaire tax, such as the Golden State Promise PAC, fully funded by billionaire Chris Larsen, co-founder of crypto company, Ripple Labs.

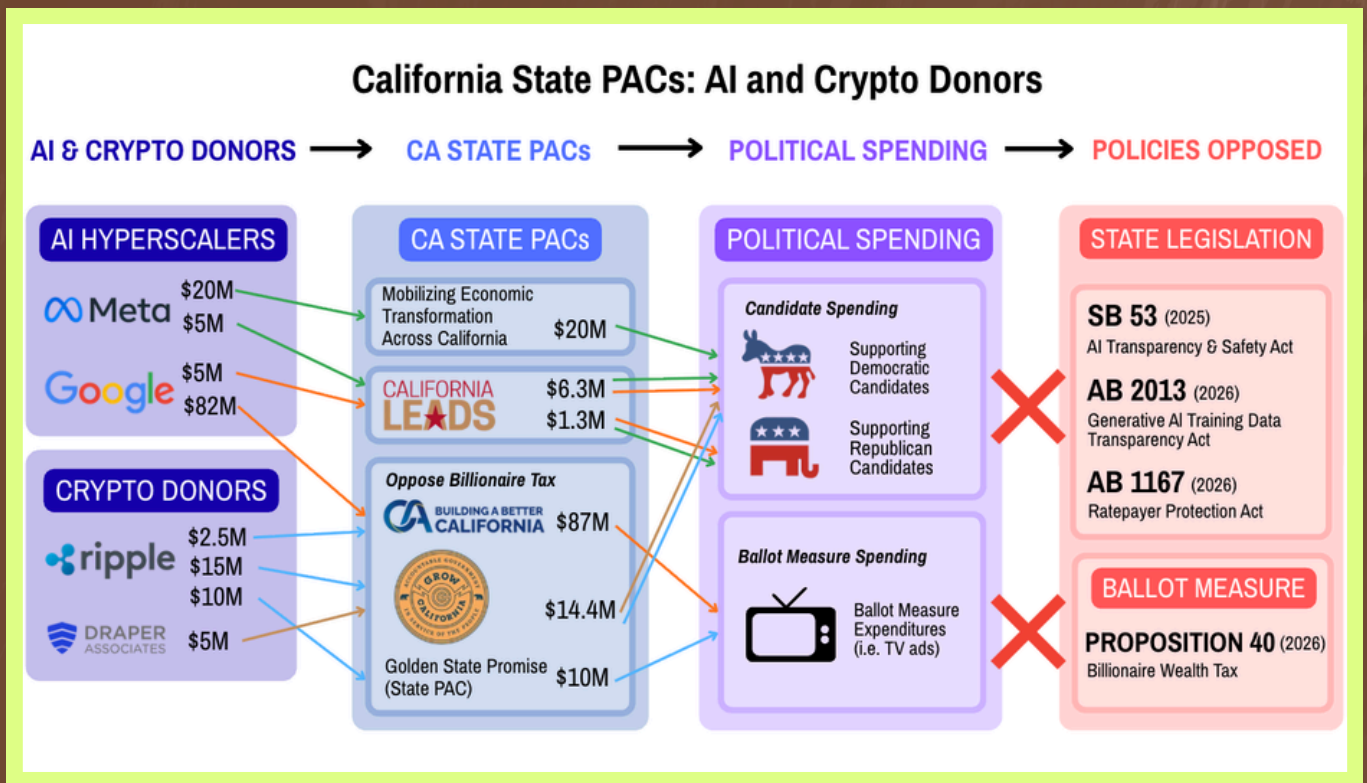
THE RATEPAYER PROTECTION ACT¹¹

This would stop utilities from passing data center energy costs onto your electric bill. The industry wants you subsidizing their buildout without noticing.

AI SAFETY AND TRANSPARENCY LAWS LIKE SB 53¹²

Big Tech is fighting rules requiring companies to disclose how their systems work and what data they train on. The industry line is that transparency kills innovation. What it actually kills is the right for the public to know how these tools work.

HOW BIG TECH BUYS FAVORABLE POLICIES



A wealth tax, your power bill, and the right to know what these systems do. That's what hundreds of millions of dollars are being spent on to stop.



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⁷ *ibid.*

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