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EAST BAY TIMES

CALIFORNIA

VOTER ID COULD SOON BE REQUIRED

Two lawsuits were filed over ‘misleading’ ballot language last week

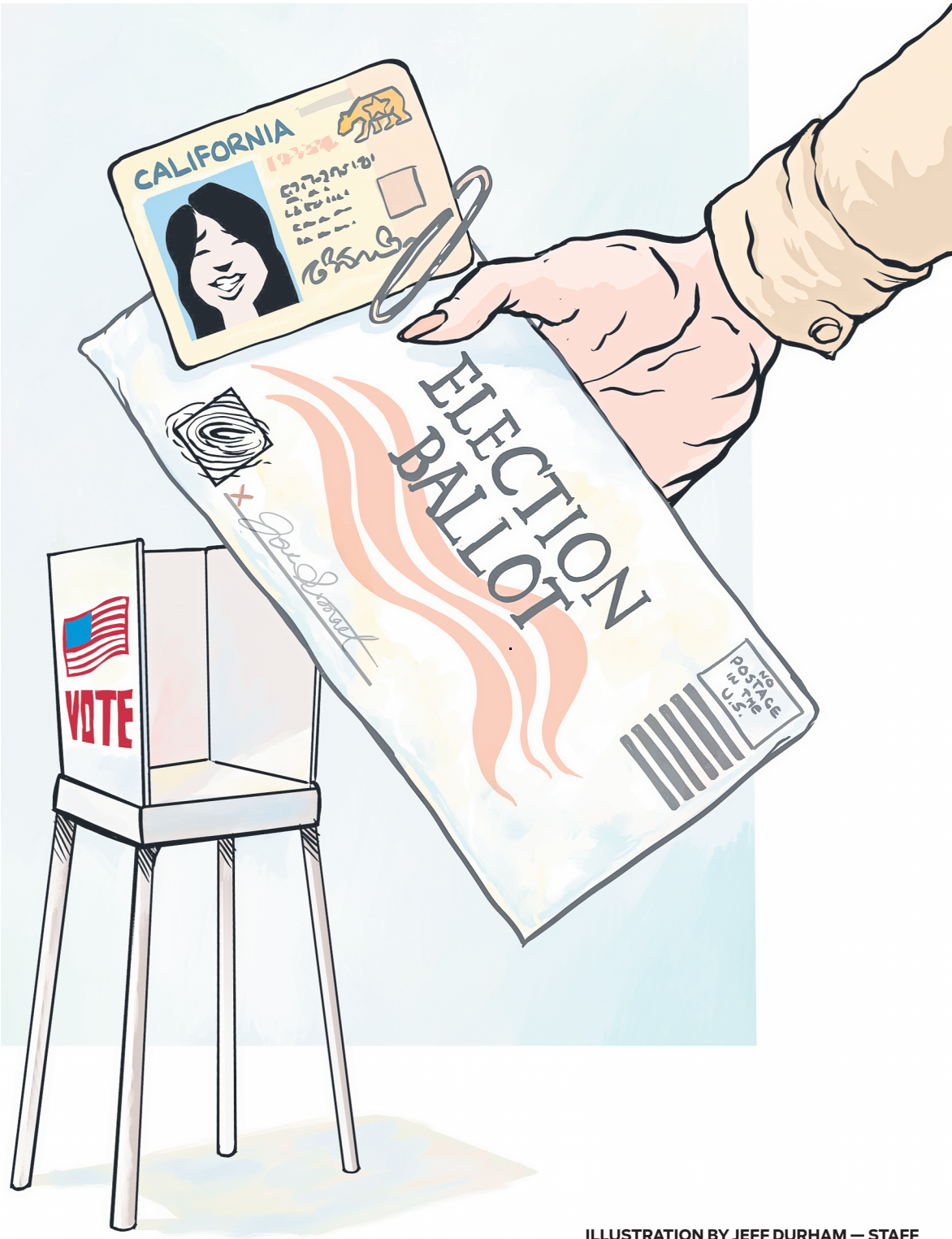
By Grace Hase
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A fight is heating up over a California ballot initiative to implement voter ID as it heads to the courts, pitting advocates who say it will ensure election integrity in the vote-by-mail era against critics who say it would impose needless burdens that could disenfranchise voters.

The state initiative, known as Proposition 39, drew dueling lawsuits this week over the ballot language that both sides are calling misleading. A judge has until Aug. 10 — the deadline to finalize what voters will see in November — to order any changes.

The new legal action comes as the opposition has started to mobilize with two separate groups forming to fight the measure. One of the No on 39 campaigns is being sponsored by the California Donor Table and the ACLU of Northern California, while the other has named former Health Secretary and gubernatorial candidate Xavier Becerra and state Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas as honorary co-chairs who will help with fundraising efforts. They jump into action as the measure’s backers — Reform California, a statewide organization led by state Assemblymember Carl DeMaio — have already amassed a more than \$13 million war chest, according to the campaign filings.

Prop. 39 would amend the state Constitution, requiring voters to present a government ID when voting in person or provide the last four digits of a “unique iden-



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ILLUSTRATION BY JEFF DURHAM — STAFF

GAZA

Israel kills at least 17 ahead of accord

Intelligence assessment claims Hamas plans to rebuild and not disarm

By The Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel — Israel has shared “serious security concerns” with the White House regarding the proposed disarmament deal with Hamas, an Israeli official said as Israeli strikes overnight and into Sunday evening killed at least 17 people, including children, in Gaza.

The remarks by Doron Spielman, spokesperson for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s office, were some of the first public comments since U.S. President Donald Trump announced the agreement.

Spielman told The Associated Press that Israel’s intelligence assessment is that Hamas remains committed to rebuilding its military rather than genuinely demilitarizing. He said the Israeli military would not withdraw from Gaza — where it controls more than 60% of the territory — before Hamas disarms.

“Our assessment is that if we redeploy before Hamas is truly disarmed, it will quickly expand its presence throughout Gaza, rebuild its terrorist infrastructure, once again threaten Israeli communities, and seek to carry out another Oct. 7-style attack,” he said, referring to the Hamas militant attack on Israel in 2023 that triggered the war in the Gaza Strip.

“Disarming means physically giving up the weapons. Nothing less,” Spielman said.

His comments come days after Hamas said that it would begin disarming as part of the U.S.-brokered ceasefire signed nine months ago to end the nearly three-year-long conflict. It marks a potential breakthrough in ending the conflict, but many hurdles, condi-

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HEALTHCARE

Losing ACA coverage, uninsured crowd ERs

Medical executives are warning of more unpaid bills, skipped surgeries

By Reed Abelson
THE NEW YORK TIMES

More and more uninsured patients are showing up in hospital emergency rooms and clinics, having lost their coverage under the Affordable Care Act.

Executives running some of the biggest hospital systems, including large for-profit chains spanning many states, expressed concern over the unexpectedly sharp rise in uninsured patients and the costs associated with treating them.

And many executives said the hospitals were also reporting more unpaid medical bills and providing more in the way of charity care. Some hospital systems also found

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ENVIRONMENT

Robotic craft monitors waters for sharks

University researchers can track movements of tagged great whites

By Paul Rogers
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From a distance, it looks like a kayak or a surfboard. But it’s not a person enjoying an afternoon at the beach — it’s a new high-tech device to look for great white sharks.

Researchers at Cal State Long Beach have begun testing what they are calling a “semi-autonomous shark surveillance bot.” The unmanned craft, a prototype that is about 10 feet long and 3 feet wide, hit the water last month in Southern California.

The craft can patrol near beaches for up to a week at a time, using acoustic receivers to listen for white sharks in the wild that have been fitted by scientists with tracking tags. It also has cameras, and will soon include a drone for aerial surveillance that can send live 360-degree images back to



Cal State Long Beach Shark Lab researchers developed this robot watercraft that has acoustic receivers and cameras to listen and look for great white sharks. **PHOTO BY CHRIS LOWE — CSULB SHARK LAB**

lifeguards and biologists on the shore.

“The idea is that you program it to mow the lawn — just go back and forth — in the ocean,” said Chris Lowe, a professor of marine biology and director of the Shark Lab at Cal State Long Beach. “Life-

guards can drive it, or we can drive it from the lab.”

Plans also are afoot by scientists at the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute in Moss Landing to fit the craft with equipment that can detect shark DNA in the water, picking up traces of

skin, mucus and other waste that leaves clues when the famous apex predators are coming and going through a popular beach area.

Shark attacks remain extremely rare. California has recorded 236 since 1950, including 17 fatalities, according to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

San Diego County has the most incidents with 27, followed by San Mateo County with 22, Santa Barbara with 21, then Marin, Monterey and Humboldt with 19 each, Santa Cruz County with 17, and San Luis Obispo and Sonoma counties with 16 each.

Every year, millions of people swim, surf, kayak and dive in the ocean off California. In recent years, drone footage and signals from acoustic tags have shown that sharks regularly swim near people and almost never attack.

“Sharks are swimming by surfers and swimmers all the time, and the people don’t know they are there,” Lowe said. “It is happening daily.”

Several high-profile deaths

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