

Free Enterprise Beats Politics in a Landslide

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The general election, in which our various elected leaders hop through a political game of musical chairs, is but a couple of weeks away. For many months, we've been doused almost every waking hour with rhetoric of immense proportions as candidates of all political stripes skate across philosophical and party platforms, inundating us with robocalls, tweets, campaign fliers and media ads. They all promise that a particular candidate or ballot proposition will solve the problems at hand.

The candidates we elect and what propositions we support or reject are important matters that require at least some modicum of attention on the part of an often distracted electorate. We do need thoughtful voters who carefully study the candidates and issues so that the true will of the majority can be expressed. But we have to temper our political zeal somewhat by keeping in mind politicians and pet programs by themselves won't influence our future to the extent promised by those who court our votes.

For example, if the person elected president faces a do-nothing Congress, then his campaign promises could fizzle out.

Even installing a new mayor in San Diego presents challenges in addition to potential opportunities. Whoever occupies the 11th floor mayor's office at City Hall Dec. 3 will have to face an independent City Council whose support will be necessary if the new mayor is to deliver on his campaign promises.

The point is we cannot rely solely on what candidate or issue wins in next month's election. The key factor in our ability to not only survive but once again prosper as a society is not up for election — at least not directly.

Our free enterprise system is the real incumbent; it has built and continues to protect our freedoms and qualities of life that are unparalleled anywhere in the world.

That being the case, how will the national and local elections affect the businesses and industries that comprise our free enterprise system?

The answer depends on how the people who run industries and companies handle the impact of government on their affairs. Businesses have thrived in good and bad times — politically and economically — and they will continue to do so.

Worst-case scenario: Businesses will continue to pause in varying degrees to deal with onerous government policies and regulations, either through redesigning, reconfiguring or replacing products and services, procedures, policies or by moving to a more business-friendly locale. But they will survive whomever and whatever.

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Best-case scenario: The government entities coming into power at whatever level know who makes the wheels go around in our economy. These regimes will set in place policies to reduce government controls and costs on individual and corporate taxpayers and then get out of the way.

There are already some encouraging signs where public agencies and voters at the ballot box have enhanced our collective prosperity. One example is the trend on the part of several cities and other public agencies to roll back the healthy pensions for public employees.

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With more tax monies now available from such reforms, there can be more attention paid to improving streets, water and sewer systems, parks and the like — amenities that enhance our ability to attract, retain and even expand businesses.

There also are ways for government to partner with the private sector and nongovernmental organizations to create ways to enhance the collective welfare of all who depend on a healthy economy. But you won't find those among the candidates and propositions in this year's General Election Voter Guide.

You'll find the real solutions working in the best public office of them all — our free enterprise economy.

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