

CALIFORNIA LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

MINI CONVENTION

BLOCK ONE:

Resolved, that the federal government implement a policy that felons who have completed their sentences have their voting rights reinstated.

The United States was formed on the foundation that the people have the right to elect their leaders. A long-standing contradiction has been that felons are not permitted to vote, at least in certain elections. The idea was understandable at the time, however as society and the law has progressed, it has been argued that there is no longer any need for felons to be ineligible to vote. Some things to consider: Should formerly-incarcerated people get a say in who is in office? Should it matter as they have served their time? Is there any room for potential corruption? If they are going to prison to pay for their crimes, is it right they are still stripped from their rights after they leave?

Pro Speaker:

Con Speaker:

Moderator:

Thought Talk. Should Medicare spend less money on end of life care when the probability of success is low?

The Kaiser Family Foundation estimates that 80% of the people who died in 2014 were on Medicare. It is estimated that 25% of Medicare spending for individuals 65 or older is spent during a patient's last year of life. Proponents of reducing the spending on low-probability life-saving procedures suggest these are expenses we cannot afford as a society and they are irrational. They also argue that patients on average have a lower quality of end of life care when treatments are continued rather than opting for less invasive hospice or in-home end of life care. Opponents of reduced spending feel it is not fair for the government to decide who should and should not get potentially life saving treatments. Even if the odds are low, would you want to be told that the government will not try to save your life?

Moderator:

BLOCK TWO:

Resolved, that the growth of automation will cause more good than harm to our economy.

Artificially intelligent automation is everywhere, fewer job fields are available, and the middle class has become nearly extinct; at least, this is one radical future possibility that many economists fear. Income inequality has, and will continue to increase as artificially intelligent automation increases. Technology that is currently being implemented such as Uber self-driving cars are already expected to take out millions of jobs in the United States.. And robots that may seem to be made to work with humans rather than against them, once uploaded with software like IBM Watson, can and may easily replace the human worker. Progression of technology may have led to a prosperous economy in the past, but this no longer seems so. Americans are stepping towards an uncertain future and changes in skill-set seem inevitable if certain human workers would like to maintain their current middle class status and avoid the negatives of income inequality.

Pro Speaker:

Con Speaker:

Moderator:

Thought Talk. Is single-payer healthcare plan right for America?

For years, there has been argument over the issue of healthcare systems in the United States. The greatest controversy came in 2008 when President Obama pledged to pass the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, which ultimately caused both economic and political distress. As some systems have been removed and some stay, the question has been posed if the United States should formally adopt a single payer system or not. Proponents of a single payer healthcare system believe it is more efficient and more equitable. Opponents feel a single payer system would lead to increased costs (through taxes) and potentially decreased quality of service.

Moderator: