



# YOSEMITE CAPITAL MANAGEMENT

## Third Quarter 2010 – COMMENTARY

*The punishment of wise men who refuse to take part in the affairs of government is to live under the government of unwise men. -- Plato*

*The people in a democracy get the government they deserve and deserve the government they get. -- Anonymous*

One of the most important rights that adult citizens of the United States possess is to elect members of the government at the federal, state, and local levels. Through this process Americans live the principle enshrined in the Declaration of Independence that the people choose the government rather than being subjects of the government.

But in recent decades, only about 50% to 60% of eligible Americans vote in presidential and mid-term elections, and far fewer in other elections. People give various excuses for not voting, including believing such things as their vote doesn't affect the outcome, special interests control the politicians, the general outcome is the same under either major political party, politicians in general are corrupt, the parties are controlled by their extreme factions, etc.

While we understand the frustrations behind these arguments, we believe that choosing to not participate is not the answer, in part because this actually incentivizes the bad behavior just described. To not vote is akin to leaving one's front door wide open when away believing that thieves will always find a way in so why bother trying to stop them. To not vote is similar to giving a mugger a bigger stick with which to beat you while they steal your money.

Instead we submit that voting is the biggest weapon against corruption, extremism, special interests, etc., and that voting is a major way to redirect the course of government. Voters are not limited to candidates of the two major parties -- one's actual choices number among the millions of citizens, including candidates of smaller parties, your neighbor, and even yourself. Consider that if every eligible non-voter decided to cast a ballot, every single member of Congress, judges, and the President could be different! By extension, that also means every cabinet member, regulator, and appointee could also be different. Consider that even if the results of an election are the same, if enough people voted for a smaller party or write-in candidate, the winning official would face a powerful message that their victory by plurality by definition means the majority actually voted against them! That would be a definite mandate to reach

out to find common ground, possibly lessen the importance of political contributions, and potentially change the very tone of American politics.

We encourage all registered voters to take matters into your own hands and vote your conscience in every election. We encourage all eligible non-registered citizens to register to vote with your state's Secretary of State in accordance with that state's deadline for the next election and then cast a ballot in every election thereafter. (For California residents, voter registration information is at [http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/elections\\_vr.htm](http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/elections_vr.htm) and the deadline is 15 days prior to an election.)

As citizens, we have a choice through the ballot to fight back against Wall Street's greed and selfishness, reject lies and spin by the government, prevent frivolous public spending, minimize the extreme factions of political parties, reduce the importance of money in the political process, ensure accountability of government officials, encourage honesty from government contractors, and return the economy to the functions of legitimate business – in short, get the American government back to its citizens.



**John Kleponis, CFA**  
Senior Portfolio Manager



**Paul Heckler**  
Managing Director

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