

**Reflections on Governance Reform and  
Ways of Policy Reasoning**

**Roundtable of the Collaborative  
Democracy Network**

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“The three-part strategic framework for environmental policy-making hasn’t changed in 40 years: first, define a problem (e.g. global warming) as ‘environmental.’ Second, craft a technical remedy (e.g. cap-and-trade). Third, sell the technical proposal to legislators through a variety of tactics, such as lobbying, third-party allies, research reports, advertising, and public relations.”

*The Death of Environmentalism*

## **Points of Departure for Reflections**

**Crisis of Confidence for US  
Environmental Movement as Reflected by  
publication of “Death of  
Environmentalism”**

**Crisis of California State Fiscal  
Governance**

**“Democratic Autonomy” by Henry S.  
Richardson**

**Is the critique of the environmental movement really a more fundamental question about how we think about policy reforms generally?**

**Do we think in terms of technical fixes for policy problems when we might more effectively think in terms of how we make our governance institutions more capable to respond to the challenges of change, uncertainty, and fragmentation?**

**Policy governance as a “machine” vs as an organic system**

## **California's Fiscal System as an Example**

**Since 1978 and Proposition 13 each year  
brings yet more reform proposals to fix  
the fiscal system**

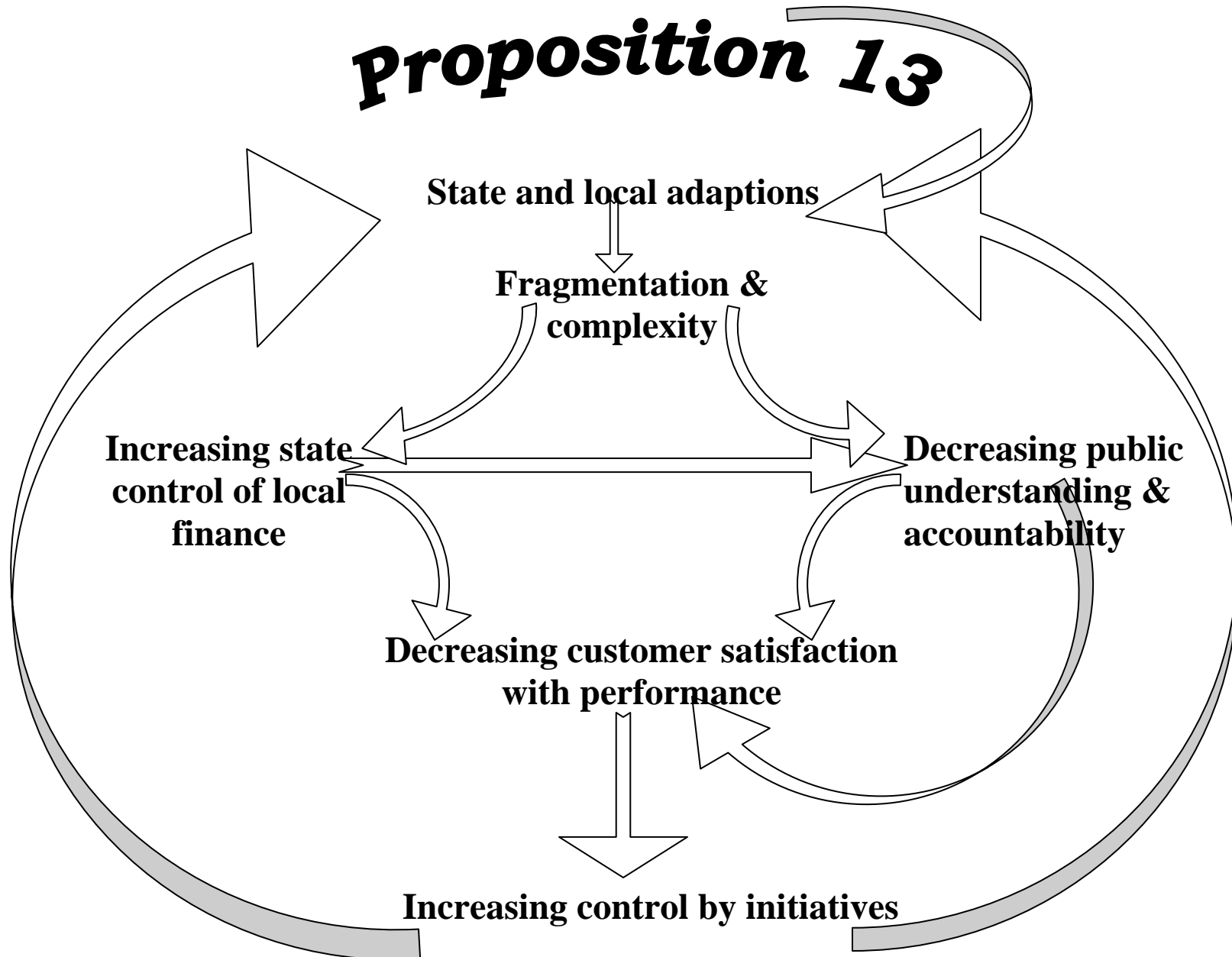
**Each new reform results in still more  
reforms and adaptations**

**Leading to more fragmentation, less  
accountability, and declining  
understanding and support from the  
public**

**The result is a fiscal system that few  
understand and that is constantly in a  
state of crisis**

# California's Fiscal System

## ***Proposition 13***



**“An all-pervasive climate of mistrust exists throughout the state that distorts all issues, creates gridlock, and causes citizens to restrict government freedom of action. In other words, mistrust and the disconnect are far more than background noise. Instead, they combine to affect every issue considered in these dialogues. Until and unless these deeper issues can be addressed-bridging the disconnect and rebuilding trust- it will be difficult, if not impossible, to make far-reaching, sustainable reforms that go beyond a patchwork of temporary fixes.”**

*Listening to Californians:  
Bridging the Disconnect*

# **Ways of Public Policy Practical Reasoning:**

**Instrumental Reasoning: From ends to means**

**Preference Reasoning such as cost-benefit analysis: From preferences of public**

**Public Reasoning about Ends: Recognizes that ends are often uncertain and preferences are limited because they don't recognize changes in preferences based upon learning**

*From: H.S. Richardson, Democratic Autonomy.*

**Dilemma of Experts with their many proposals for reform based upon instrumental and preference reasoning:**

**“How do we get the message across?”**

**is soon followed by:**

**“Why don’t they do what we want them to do?”**

*Niels Roling and P.G.H. Engel*

**Frequent answers:**

**“We need moral leadership”**

**“We need visionary leadership”**

**“We need to educate the public”**

**COLLABORATIVE GOVERNANCE  
PRACTICES ARE FORMS OF  
PUBLIC PRACTICAL REASONING  
ABOUT ENDS**

**EXAMPLES:**

**CONSENSUS BUILDING FORUMS**

**NEGOTIATED RULE MAKING**

**NETWORK STRUCTURES**

**COMMUNITY VISIONING**