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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **California Lottery Player Beats Incredible Odds to Win \$426 Million Jackpot**

*Schools Across California Split \$40 Million From This Jackpot Run*

**SACRAMENTO** – The California Lottery is thrilled to announce the state’s biggest jackpot winner so far in 2022. **Kristine Wellenstein** hit the \$426 million Mega Millions® jackpot with the ticket she purchased at a Chevron station in Woodland Hills (Los Angeles County) back in January. Her ticket was the only one in the entire country to match all six numbers!



The above image, provided by the California Lottery, shows the actual ticket displaying all six winning numbers in the Mega Millions draw on January 28, 2022.

“When I realized I’d won, I was overcome with so many emotions, but mostly gratitude,” said Wellenstein.

Wellenstein considers herself a private person and is not interested in speaking publicly. She is, however, interested in being a good steward of her newfound wealth.

“I want to give back and support local and global-based initiatives, and my team is in place to help achieve those objectives,” she said. “The real impact of my life’s work begins now.”

Wellenstein’s win concluded a jackpot sequence that began in October of 2021 and rolled 27 times! Sales for the entire sequence in California totaled \$110.3 million, which means **California’s public schools get an estimated \$40 million** just from this jackpot run.

“We love having big jackpots and big wins in California,” said Alva V. Johnson, Director of the California State Lottery. “Higher jackpots typically result in higher sales, of course, and that means more money for public education, which we are proud to support. The Lottery exists solely to benefit schools, so not only do we congratulate Ms. Wellenstein on this terrific win, but we also congratulate students from elementary on up through university, who greatly benefit as well.”

Wellenstein has opted to take the lump sum as a result of her win. The Chevron station where she bought the lucky Mega Millions ticket is at 6061 Topanga Canyon Boulevard; that store gets the maximum \$1 million bonus for selling the winning ticket.

Mega Millions draws happen twice weekly, on Tuesdays and Fridays at 8PM Pacific time. Tickets are \$2 each, and the odds of winning the jackpot are 1 in 302,575,350. The jackpot, however, isn't the only way to win. There are nine ways to earn a prize, and the overall odds of winning something at any prize level are 1 in 24.

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*The California Lottery's mission is to provide supplemental funding to California public schools, including kindergarten and grades 1-12, community colleges, the California State University, the University of California, and other California public educational entities. The funds the Lottery transferred to public education totaled more than \$1.8 billion for fiscal year 2020-21, which amounted to a modest percentage of education's overall budget. However, this funding is largely nondiscretionary, meaning schools can use this for important, yet unfunded instructional programs they would otherwise not afford. During the same period, the Lottery generated almost \$8.4 billion in sales, more than 95% of which went back to the community in the form of prize payments, retailer commissions and bonuses, and contributions to education. The California Lottery urges its customers to play responsibly. Problem gambling resources are available to anyone at 1-800-GAMBLER.*

[www.calottery.com](http://www.calottery.com)