



## P R E S S   R E L E A S E

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### **CA Lottery Announces First Mega Millions® Winners of 2024**

*One Player Came So Close To Hitting a Massive \$1.58 Billion Jackpot*

**SACRAMENTO** – One number off – that’s how close Ilene Souza came to hitting the largest jackpot in *Mega Millions* history. The winning numbers from the draw on August 8<sup>th</sup> were 13, 19, 20, 32, 33 and Mega number 14. Souza had Mega number 16.

That ticket, which was purchased at a [gas station market](#) on Lander Avenue in Hilmar (Merced County), still earned Souza an exciting consolation prize of \$3,383,371 – not bad for a \$2 investment.

Robert Thomas was also just one number off from taking home a whopping \$360 million jackpot from the *Mega Millions* drawing on October 6<sup>th</sup>. One of the ten tickets he purchased matched winning numbers 12, 24, 46, 57, and 66. He had Mega number 13 but needed 22 to win it all. Even though he didn’t hit the jackpot, he still took home a fantastic \$2,325,131. He bought his Quick Pick® tickets at [Vallee Liquor](#) on Shaw Avenue in Clovis (Fresno County).

California [public schools always win](#) big, no matter who hits the jackpot or where. Both jackpot sequences earned well over \$100 million for public education just from *Mega Millions* sales during those timeframes. Raising additional supplemental funds for public education is the sole mission of the California Lottery. Approximately 80 cents of every *Mega Millions* ticket sold in our state helps public schools pay for programs and services they might not otherwise be able to afford.

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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 \$2.07 billion for fiscal year 2021-22, which amounted to a modest percentage of education’s overall budget. However, this funding is largely discretionary, meaning schools can use this for important, yet unfunded instructional programs they would otherwise not afford. During the same period, the Lottery generated more than \$8.85 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. If you feel you have a gambling problem or know someone who does, you can get free confidential help by calling the California Problem Gambling Helpline at 1-800-GAMBLER.*