



## PRESS RELEASE

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### *Is Billion the New Million? CA Lottery Puts This Week's Giant Jackpots Into Context*

**SACRAMENTO** – With a \$1.1 billion jackpot advertised for tonight's *Mega Millions* draw and the *Powerball* jackpot also approaching the billion-dollar mark as well, the California Lottery today offers some context to put these prizes into perspective.

This is the first time both jackpots for the two multi-state games have been higher than \$800 million at the same time. It is not, however, the highest combined total on record. In October of 2018, the jackpots were a combined \$2.22 billion when *Mega Millions* was advertised at \$1.6 billion while *Powerball* was at \$620 million. Similarly, the two jackpots again combined for more than \$2 billion in November 2022, when [a single ticket sold in California](#) hit all six numbers, winning a record-breaking \$2.04 billion top prize.

California retailers also sold two other billion-dollar-plus winning *Powerball* tickets in 2023 – one in [downtown Los Angeles](#) and the other in [Frazier Park](#). Conversely, there has never been a billion-dollar *Mega Millions* win in California.

"It's important to remember that like *any* California Lottery game, *Mega Millions* and *Powerball* are both games of chance," said Carolyn Becker, California Lottery spokesperson. "Players have the same odds of winning the jackpots for these games, no matter how high the top prize gets."

The current *Mega Millions* sequence started in December and has rolled 30 times since. This is the first game to cross over the billion-dollar threshold in 2024.

For context, there were 11 draws in 2023 advertising jackpots of \$1 billion or more. Six were *Powerball* and five were for *Mega Millions*.

In 2022, there five advertised jackpots of \$1 billion or more. Four were *Powerball* and one was *Mega Millions*.

The higher each jackpot gets, the bigger the boost for California Lottery sales. It's not uncommon for players to purchase both games when either one of the jackpots is this high, let alone both at the same time.



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“California’s public schools are among the real winners in all of this,” Becker added. “So far, thanks to these high jackpots, which have both been growing for months now, we’ve been able to raise an extra \$140 million for education, which is fantastic. And that’s just from the sales of these games alone – not *SuperLotto Plus*, *Scratchers*, or anything else. Raising this kind of extra cash for schools is why we are here.”

The California Lottery was created by voters in 1984, and tickets first went on sale in October of 1985. Since that time, the California Lottery has generated [more than \\$43.8 billion for public education](#).

Tonight’s [Mega Millions](#) draw happens at 8pm PT. If no one wins the jackpot tonight, it will roll to an estimated \$1.29 billion for the next draw on Friday.

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The mission of the California Lottery is to raise additional funding for public education, helping to supplement school budgets for K-12 as well as colleges and universities. **The California Lottery has raised more than \$43.8 billion for public schools** through the responsible sale of its games since 1985. Lottery funding for schools is largely discretionary, so administrators and educators can use Lottery money for instructional programs and services they may not otherwise afford. The California Lottery features eight [draw games](#) and dozens of new instant [Scratchers](#) games each year. More than 95% of California Lottery sales revenue goes back to the community in the form of prize payments, [retailer commissions and bonuses](#), and contributions to education. More information about who benefits can be found [here](#). California Lottery is also committed to promoting [responsible gaming](#). Anyone who shows signs of a gambling problem, or knows someone who does, can get free, confidential help by calling the CA Problem Gambling Hotline at 1-800-GAMBLER.



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