

Venture capitalist Tim Draper “close” to collecting signatures needed for Six Californias measure

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Venture capitalist [Tim Draper](#) says he is getting “close” to collecting the necessary 800,000 signatures needed to get his “[Six Californias](#)” measure before state voters in 2014 — but he acknowledges his own internal polling shows Silicon Valley is most opposed to the idea of splitting the state into six parts.

“You’d think that Silicon Valley would benefit” greatest from the plan, said Draper, whose plan calls for the foundation of a state of Silicon Valley, which economists suggest would likely be the richest state in the nation. But “Silicon Valley is the least likely to vote for this,” Draper acknowledged Tuesday. “It’s bizarre.”

Draper made the statements at a salon before a crowd of tech insiders, journalists and San Francisco business insiders Tuesday night. The evening of discussion to explore the idea of California secession was hosted in the San Francisco home of public relations guru [Susan MacTavish](#), founder of the [Living Mactavish](#) fashion, food and design website.

And the questions came fast and furious for Draper at the event moderated by Matthew Bishop, the U.S. Business editor of The Economist. Draper — the founder and managing director of Draper Fisher Jurvetson — appeared alongside author Michelle Richmond, whose new novel, “Golden State,” hinges on a plot related to the topic of California secession.

Draper recently launched his “Six Californias” initiative — [and we’ve reported on his effort](#) to collect signatures to get the measure before voters. [The venture capitalist and founder of the Peninsula-based Draper University for Heroes tech school has committed \\$750,000 toward collecting the signatures needed by May 5 to get it on the 2014 ballot.](#)

But the idea has raised eyebrows in California; here’s The Economist’s very entertaining look at it:

Draper on Tuesday would not reveal his internal polling — other than to say generally that numbers in Silicon Valley are strongly opposed to the plan and other more conservative parts of the state, like the Central Valley, are in favor. “This is not going to happen overnight,” he said.

But he said he is convinced that he can convince Californians to come around and to seek solutions for a state which he said has become “the worst in the nation..the worst managed government in the country” in key areas like education, infrastructure and business development.

“We have had really good people running California,” he said. “Why is this not working?”

“Think of it as Sacramento being sort of...rusted,” he told the crowd of about 35. “We need to do something structural, something fresh...If we don’t try, we’re failing in our complacency.”

Under Draper’s Six Californias proposal:

– San Francisco, Oakland and San Jose would be part of the state of Silicon Valley, which would extend to Santa Cruz and Monterey counties.

– San Diego and Orange County would be in South California.

– Los Angeles, Santa Monica and Santa Barbara would be part of West California.

– The Central Valley – Fresno and the San Joaquin Valley – would be Central California.

– North California would include Marin and Sonoma counties and the greater Sacramento area.

– The rural counties in far Northern California would make up the state of Jefferson.

Asked to respond to Democrats’ criticism that he’s really just creating a way for Republicans to seize four new states — and eight new senators — who might be created in the new territories, Draper said that wasn’t his idea.

He said he used to be a Democrat, then a Republican, and now is an independent voter. “I don’t actually like either of these two parties,” he said. “They don’t really represent me.”

But “I’m going to do everything I can to get this on the ballot,” if not in 2014 then in 2016, he said. “And at that point, it’s up to California.”