



**WEEKLY UPDATE
OCTOBER 25 - 31, 2020**

THIS WEEK

**PUBLIC SHOULD CONDEMN ATTACKS ON THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY & HIS ATTACKERS**

**NO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING
OTHER REGIONAL AGENCIES DORMANT**

**NO MATTER WHAT: VOTE!
AND MAKE SURE YOUR FAMILY & NEIGHBORS VOTE TOO**

LAST WEEK

**CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTION REFORM FLOATED
BOARD MAJORITY SUPPORTS \$25,000 LIMIT PER PERSON OR ENTITY**

COVID LOW IN COUNTY

**FINANCIAL COMPLEXITIES AND INTERNAL LOANS
ON THE ARROYO GRANDE CREEK PROJECT
STAFF SAID IT'S OK – "GRANTS ARE SECURE"**

**SOUTH COAST CITIES' WATER RECHARGE PROJECT
MAJOR QUESTIONS FOR COUNTY WATER AGENCY, RATE PAYERS, AND
AGRICULTURAL OVERLIERS GLOSSED OVER AS CITY MANAGERS PUSH
PROJECT AS REGIONAL MOTHERHOOD AND APPLE PIE**

PLANNING COMMISSION LITE BUT CAREFUL

COLAB IN DEPTH

SEE PAGE 10

VANDALIZING HISTORY

BY BRUCE THORNTON

We sowed that wind in the Sixties, and now we are reaping the whirlwind. The longer we appease public violence and disorder, the bolder the rioters become, and the more death and destruction will follow. At some point there will have to be a reckoning to restore the prestige and deterrent power of civil authority. For now, that possibility has to wait on the choices we the people make November 3.

READ THE FULL ARTICLE AT THE LINK:

<https://www.hoover.org/research/vandalizing-history>

**PLEASE STUDY THE ARTICLE BELOW AS A CIVIC DUTY
IT IS A CONCISE SUMMARY OF THE UNDERLYING
FORCES WHICH ARE DESTROYING OUR STATE**

IT ALSO SUGGESTS REMEDIES – SEE PAGE 11

THE BATTLE FOR CALIFORNIA IS THE BATTLE FOR AMERICA

BY EDWARD RING



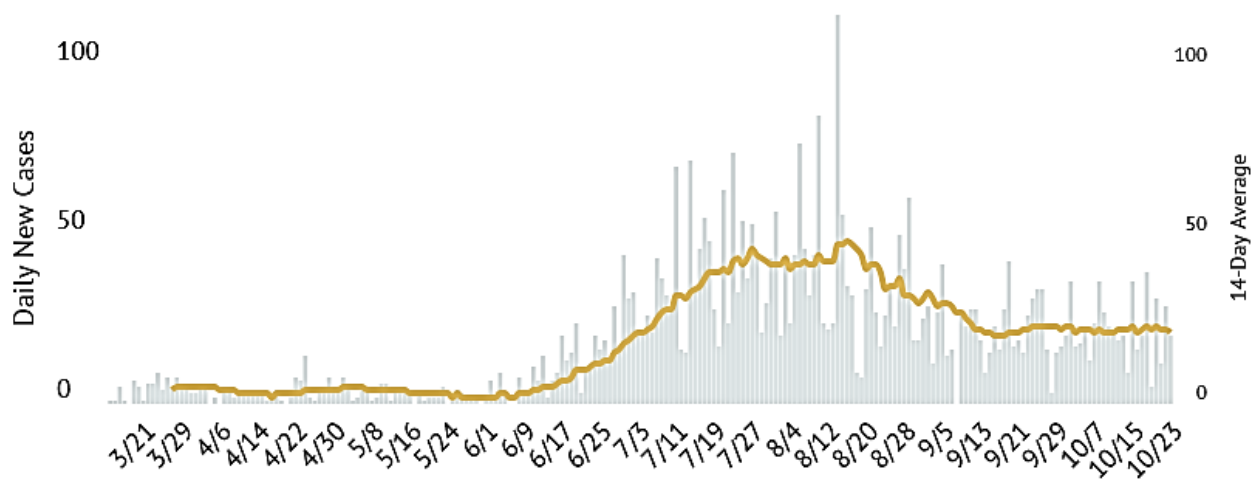
THIS WEEK'S HIGHLIGHTS

No Board of Supervisors Meeting on Tuesday, October 27, 2020 (Not Scheduled)

The Board will meet on Tuesday, November 3, 2020 (Scheduled).

COVID STATUS

Daily New Cases (and 14-Day Average)



Currently Hospitalized

2 (of whom 0 are in ICU)

Concentrated Attack on District Attorney Dan Dow and the Legal Process Should be Condemned

SLO City Mayor Heidi Harmon, the SLO New Times, the SLO Tribune, SLO Democratic Party Chair Rita Casaverde, and other progressives have all lambasted DA Dan Dow and called for him to drop all the charges related to the June 2020 protests. Some have hinted at a recall.

The proffered reason is that the charges involve Tianna Arata and her associates for various infractions during the George Floyd/Black Lives Matter protests. Some individuals stopped traffic, interfered with law enforcement, prevented free passage of other citizens, and otherwise went beyond peaceful assembly. The fact that the infractions took place as part of protest demonstrations is being

used to attempt to justify dropping the charges. The Tribune writes the violations off as “some young people committing civil disobedience amid a nationwide social justice movement...”

Others have attempted to justify violations, stating that the very purpose of demonstrations is to gain attention by disrupting normal life and pushing the envelope. If the SLO City Mayor and Council support these excuses, why don't they revise their ordinances to carve out prohibitions that resulted in the charges during protest demonstrations? They are the legislative body after all. On the other hand, some of the violations are part of the State Criminal Code over which the Mayor and Council have no control. In fact they take an oath to uphold the Constitutions of the United States, the State of California, and the laws as established.

They could ask our state Assemblyman and State Senator to introduce legislation which suspends various state statutes pertaining to “civil disobedience by young people during nationwide social justice movements.”

Moreover, by motion or resolution, they could direct the City manager to direct the Police Chief to “ignore civil disobedience by young people during nationwide social justice movements.” In fact they could direct the City Manager to direct the Police Chief to cease any police activities in the downtown during demonstrations. They might exempt violent crimes in progress, such as bank robbery or homicide from the directive.

This might relieve the District Attorney of his legal obligation to examine the arrests and determine if the violators should be prosecuted.

Whether the elected Sheriff, who has overlapping jurisdiction, would honor such an order is a question. Ditto for the Highway Patrol.

A conflict would occur if the City Manager or Police Chief chose to disobey the Council Policy and made arrests or otherwise interfered and then were disciplined. They would have a good case against the City for forbidding them to carry out their legally mandated duties.

Damned If you Do and Damned If You Don't: One thing for sure is that if municipal officials let the small stuff get out of hand, the problems tend to expand, attract outsiders, beckon looters, and become almost impossible to rein in. The City of Berkeley has learned this lesson the hard way many times over during the past 4 decades. Seattle, Portland, Kenosha, and others are experiencing the problem currently. Santa Monica, which never had a problem until last June, still has boarded up stores and has lost scores of businesses. Even well capitalized regional and national chains have closed and are not coming back. The Santa Monica Police Chief, who did not take a firm hand, has been forced to resign.

In any case, and if things get out of hand, the proverbial turd lands in the laps of the Sheriffs, Highway Patrol, and mutual aid jurisdictions. The taxpayers fund all the overtime and clean up. Property owners have to pay to repair the damage to their buildings.

Then the problem is passed to the elected District Attorney and ultimately to the Courts. If a court decides that Arata and/or others are guilty, will the Mayor and Council, Tribune, and the rest of the clique demand that the Judge be replaced or disciplined? Probably not, especially if the Judge was appointed by a Democratic Governor.

Is the onus being placed on the DA at this point simply to foment a recall or set up an opponent for the next election?

The public should not tolerate the progressive mob attempts to bully the District Attorney.

NOTE: *Under California Penal Code 407, when two or more individuals come together for the following purposes, the assembly is considered unlawful:*

- *Assembly is to carry out an illegal act; or*
- *Assembly is to do something legal but in a violent or boisterous way.*

In order to prove that you are guilty of the offense, the prosecution must prove that you were a willing participant and that at the time of assembly you knew what you were doing was unlawful.

The crime of unlawful assembly is a misdemeanor in California and is closely associated with rioting-relating offenses.

By law the police must notify the crowd twice in one-minute intervals when an assembly turns illegal. At that point the people should then leave. Otherwise they become subject to arrest. This is usually done by amplified announcements.

LAST WEEK'S HIGHLIGHTS

Board of Supervisors Meeting of Tuesday, October 20, 2020 (Completed)

Item 16 - Complications on Arroyo Grande Creek Flood Control Project. The Board approved internal loans of \$ 3million. Staff assured the Board that State grants would be reimburse the County once the work is completed.

Background: This is a long evolving project to reduce flooding on the Arroyo Grande Creek. Due to the environmental requirements, it has taken many years to receive the approval from a host of regulatory agencies including the Army Corps of Engineers, the Coastal Commission, the State Fish and Wildlife Department, APCD, County Planning, the Regional Water Quality Control Board, and the Oceano Ladies Village Improvement Society.

The project is now underway. It was discovered that there are grading complications where the creek crosses the union Pacific Railroad, which require about \$182,000 in new engineering expenses.

The larger issue is confusing and involves the necessity for the County to loan itself \$3 million to cover the ongoing construction costs. It may be that this loan will be covered by a future grant. It is not clear from the writing if this grant has been solidly approved and if it has, why it is delayed.

A portion of the Board letter states:

Most of the project costs will be funded through State and Federal Grants. Flood Control Zone 1 has also received loans from FC 450-Flood Control Zone General to temporarily fund the project until after completion of construction and receipt of grant funding.

It is necessary for the Board to approve an additional short-term loan in the amount up to \$3M from Flood Control Zone General, by cancelling Designated Reserves, to provide temporary cash flow until grant reimbursements are received. The \$3M short-term loan is estimated to be paid back by approved grants by June 30, 2021.

Item 19 - An update on State Legislative activities by Paul Yoder and Karen Lange, of Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange (SYASL). The lobbyists presented by Zoom as non-essential staff are banned from the Boardroom due to the COVID lockdown. The presentation was interesting for several reasons.

1. Many of the Propositions in the November 3 ballot are opportunities to rebuke the Legislature for passing measures such as attacking the gig economy via AB 5. Proposition 22 would repeal the law. Voters are going to have their say on bail, Prop 13, and others.
2. When the legislature adopted the Annual FY 2020-21 Budget, it had hopes of being able to add funding later in the year if the economy came back sufficiently. Given the lack of a 3rd COVID bailout by Congress, the State will not have money for backfills. In some cases counties will be impacted as they receive large amounts of State formulaic revenues, which had been capped in the Budget and now may not be increased.

Larger issues such as COVID policy, lockdowns, impacts of single party government, regulatory overreach, keeping Diablo open, and other major policy matters were absent from the discussion.

Item 20 - Request to provide input regarding adoption of an Ordinance establishing local campaign finance contribution limits. The Board directed staff on a 3/1 vote, Gibson dissenting, to return with an ordinance that would set the limit at \$25,000 per person, entity, association, etc. Interestingly the public did not comment. Various reform groups, employee unions, business associations, and others that have an interest and that comprise the larger contributors were absent.

Background: This is a major policy item, which if adopted, will make County elections of Boards of Supervisors, Sheriff, DA, Auditor Controller, Clerk Recorder, and Assessor much more democratic. Per 2019 bill AB 571, the County can adopt an ordinance limiting the amount that any individual, association, political action committee, or other entity can contribute to a particular candidate. Reciprocally, the amount received by a candidate can also be limited.

Some key portions of the Board letter include:

AB 571 becomes effective on January 1, 2021. It accomplished the above goals by continuing to allow cities and counties with no independently imposed local campaign contribution limits the discretion to set their own contribution limits; however, if an agency has no local limits on campaign contributions as of January 1, 2021, the bill limits contributions for elections for that agency by defaulting to the state's limitations (currently \$4,700).

Other characteristics of AB 571

- Extends contribution restrictions for elective county or city office regarding personal loans and for committees created to oppose recall measures.*
- Allows a candidate for county or city office to carry over campaign expenditures in connection with a subsequent election for that same office, except in instances where a city and a county has prohibited that practice in light of its own local contribution restrictions; and*
- Limits personal loans to one's campaign to \$100,000 and prohibits candidates to charge interest on personal loans unless the agency adopts an ordinance with different loan limits.*

Options to consider:

(1) Do nothing. As of January 1, 2021, campaign contribution limits for county elective offices would default to the State's rules, which currently impose a \$4,700 limit from any individual. The FPPC would take responsibility for enforcing the restriction.

(2) Set its own limit. The County could establish its own campaign contribution limits. These limits would apply for any campaign regarding an "elective county office," which includes the Board of Supervisors, County Assessor, District Attorney, Auditor-Controller-Treasurer-Tax Collector-Public Administrator, Clerk Recorder and Sheriff-Coroner.

A specimen ordinance is posted as an attachment to the Board letter. It was not up for adoption yet but was posted to focus the Board on this issue. It can be seen at the link:

<https://agenda.slocounty.ca.gov/iip/sanluisobispo/agendaitem/details/12509>

Item 24 - Appeal of a Minor Use Permit for the City of Pismo Beach to Install 2 Test Wells and pipeline in the Oceano Dunes Park (portion next to Highway 1). The Board approved installation of the test wells unanimously. Our questions, detailed below, were glossed over. It was argued that because they will be recharging as part of the larger project, there is no need to worry out any changes in the status of the legal rights of overlies in the basin. It is not known if there will be a future event where the Board of Supervisor will have any say about the large recharge project of which this action is a first step.

Background: The actual appeal pertains to a test well, which is necessary to ascertain the feasibility of a much larger project that the City of Pismo Beach and perhaps the Cities of Grover Beach, Arroyo Grande, and the Ocean CSD are undertaking. The matter at issue today is whether the test well overly interferes by restricting access to coastal recreation campsites.



Much Larger Future Issues: There are larger issues in the future, as this test well project is prefatory to a much more extensive project entitled the Central Coast Blue Project (CCB). It is a project led by the City of Pismo Beach which would ostensibly have participants including the Oceano Community Service District, the City of Arroyo Grande, and the City of Grover Beach. The purposes of the project are to inject groundwater into the aquifer along the coast to prevent seawater intrusion into the aquifer and to add to groundwater reserves for the participant agencies.

The overall project is expected to cost over \$47 million dollars. It is not clear from the record if the Oceano Community Service District, the City of Arroyo Grande, and the Oceano CSD are contractually committed to have their water users fund their proportionate share of the costs.

While these matters are not entirely before the Board of Supervisors at this juncture, they do raise questions about overall water policy and feasibility. While the County is not a funder or partner and properly leaves local municipal affairs to the cities and districts, it does have an overall statutory responsibility for water planning and security as the Water Agency. The Board should defer the matter and:

- 1. Assess the larger project in terms of its overall responsibility as County Water Agency.**
- 2. Have its expert water management staff prepare an analysis and recommendation with respect to feasibility of the Central Coast Blue project in terms of overall countywide water management policy.**
- 3. Understand the short and long term rate implications of the project on the citizens in the area to be served by the project.**
- 4. Understand the legal impact on the overlying agriculturalist primary beneficial use constitutional water right.**

A key threshold question, which pertains to most government initiatives, is what problem are we trying to solve? The primary purposes stated here are to push back or forestall saltwater intrusion into the aquifer underlying the coastal portion of the putative participant jurisdictions and recharge the aquifer. The actual problem may be: *What are we going to do with our treated sewer plant effluent?*

The various write-ups and websites related to the project do not present any data about the extent of current or potential saltwater intrusion.

The project draft EIR states that its purposes are:

Project Objectives

The objectives for the proposed Central Coast Blue project are as follows:

Produce advanced purified water of a quality that can safely be used to augment groundwater supply while maintaining or improving existing groundwater quality.

Create a sustainable, drought-resistant, local water supply and improve water supply reliability for southern San Luis Obispo County.

Provide a new source of recharge to the SMGB to protect the basin from degradation via seawater intrusion.

Reduce wastewater discharges to the ocean and maximize utilization of local water supplies.

Facilitate continued water resources collaboration in the NCMA.

There is an extensive hydrological analysis included as Appendix G of the EIR. It studies different scenarios of recharge, climate, and other factors involved in predicting the status of the aquifer. County staff needs to advise the Board on how this works, since the presentation is highly technical and it is difficult for lay people to get to the bottom line answer about whether a problem exists.

Major Questions

Project Backing: A review of the City of Pismo Beach’s critical City Council meeting in November 2019 addressing the project shows that the issue was dealt with inconclusively. Is it okay to spend \$47 million on this project? Do the Cities of Grover Beach, Arroyo Grande, and the Oceano Community Service District agree? The answer seemed to be: *We’re working on it.*

Impact on Overliers’ Primary Water Rights: Do the impacted agricultural overlayers agree that injecting the water into the aquifer is legally safe in terms of maintenance of their primary Constitutional water right to the beneficial use of the water? Or does the comingling of municipal recharge water obliterate that right once it mixes and becomes water in the public domain subject to government control? Could in fact the cities and Water District assert that they could charge the farmers for the water or regulate their pumping separate from the Santa Maria Basin Adjudication and/or SGMA, as the cases might apply?

How does the project intersect with the Santa Maria Basin adjudication? Does it need to be approved by the Court?

How does it impact the areas of the basin not under the adjudication and which the County is now studying vis-a-vis SGMA?

Planning Commission Meeting of Thursday, October 22, 2020 (Completed)

In General

Even though the agenda appeared to be light, there was considerable examination of the specific permit applications by the Commission. For the most part, they seemed to be seeking to help the applicants so long as the proposed projects were simply not approvable under the regulations. Everything was approved with the exception of expanding vacation rentals in a previously approved project in Avila Beach. The Commission ruled that the rentals (except for one) had not been approved in the first place, nothing had changed, and the community was opposed.

Background: The agenda items involved permit requests for small projects: a cell tower, a minor subdivision, and amendment of a prior 7-unit project approval in Avila Beach to permit vacation rentals. The 7-unit project is limited to 1 vacation rental by its original approval. The staff recommended against the amendment. As to the rest of the projects, there were no large general policy impacts contained in those items. That being said, the items are very important to the individual applicants, who are spending tens of thousands of dollars on consultants to prepare their applications and more thousands on County processing fees and mitigation exactions.

COLAB IN DEPTH

IN FIGHTING THE TROUBLESOME, LOCAL DAY-TO-DAY ASSAULTS ON OUR FREEDOM AND PROPERTY, IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT TO KEEP IN MIND THE LARGER UNDERLYING IDEOLOGICAL, POLITICAL, AND ECONOMIC CAUSES

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THE BATTLE FOR CALIFORNIA IS THE BATTLE FOR AMERICA

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By now, this is a familiar story. California is a failed state. Thanks to years of progressive mismanagement and neglect, the cities are lawless and the forests are burning. Residents pay the highest prices in America for unreliable electricity. Water is rationed. Homes are unaffordable. The public schools are a joke. Freeways are congested and crumbling. And if they're not still on lockdown or otherwise already destroyed by it, business owners contend with the most hostile regulatory climate in American history.

It is understandable that conservatives in the rest of the United States would be happy to write off California. But California is not writing off the rest of the United States, and therein lies grave danger to American prosperity and freedom.

What if California doesn't implode, a victim of its own political mismanagement? What if California instead completes its transformation into a successful plutocracy, run by a clique of multi-billionaires in a partnership of convenience with environmentalist extremists and backed by the power of a unionized state bureaucracy?

What if the people who would resist this tyranny leave, and the remaining population peacefully accepts universal basic income and subsidized housing? What if all it takes to be a feudal overlord in progressive California is to proffer to the proletarians a pittance of alms, while reliably spouting incessant, blistering social justice and climate change rhetoric?

Why won't that work? After all, it's worked so far. California has the most progressive electorate in America.

Not because of California's regulatory state, but in spite of it, California is by far the wealthiest, most influential state in America. With 40 million people, a diverse economy, and a gross domestic product of \$3.2 trillion, California is almost a nation unto itself. And the progressive zealots who run California have been acting like an independent nation, with the avowed goal of transforming the entire United States to match its image.

What happens in California matters to the rest of the United States because California's internal market is huge, its political and financial influence is powerful, and it rallies political allies throughout the U.S. If what California does to transform its own culture and economy isn't stopped, the rest of the U.S. will fall into line. The result will be a comprehensive reinvention of society in all areas, political, economic, and cultural.

The difficult reality that conservative Americans must accept is that while California may be a failed state by the standards Middle America has come to take for granted, California may not fail by its own standards.

The society California is building may prove viable, even if it is hideous to contemplate and morally wrong. It may prove viable even though the alternatives that it displaces offer more prosperity and freedom to more people. It amounts to an all-powerful tech plutocracy ruling over a micro-managed, dependent population, with rationing and redistribution in the name of social justice and saving the planet.

This model, which is a modern form of feudalism, may work not merely because it is politically and economically sustainable despite its many shortcomings, nor merely because it offers more power and profit to its handful of resident billionaires who already possess obscene levels of power and wealth. These reasons don't fully explain the popularity of progressive feudalism. There is one more piece in the puzzle.

The progressive model also becomes viable because of a moral narrative that is flawed but nonetheless compelling: We live in an inherently oppressive society, so we must reduce the privileged middle class in the interests of social justice. We live in an era of limited resources and a stressed planet, so we must reduce everyone's standard of living. Countering that narrative is the mission that must be sent into California. The misery that Californians have condemned themselves to live is not a moral choice. They are victims of a con job.

What follows are detailed examples of what's happening in California. These examples are selected based on the level of transformative impact they are having, as well as their potential to be rolled into the rest of the United States. But this compendium, while lengthy, only scratches the surface.

The Labor Movement is the Glue

At the forefront of California's populist progressive movement is organized labor. Assimilating the progressive battle cries on all the predictable topics—race, gender, climate change—California's labor

movement wields both their billions in dues revenue and a perpetually mobilized field army that reaches into every locale and institution. And in a major escalation of a battle soon to rage across America, California's unions have taken on independent contractors.

Sailing through the state legislature and signed by Governor Gavin Newsom in September 2019, [AB 5](#) outlawed most forms of individual independent contracting and threw most of the rest into legal ambiguity. While aimed at rideshare drivers on Uber and Lyft platforms, it affected all businesses that use independent contractors, from nail salons and graphic artists to thousands of badly needed nurses and other health care professionals.

The most powerful injured parties, led by Uber and Lyft, have funded a ballot [initiative that will repeal AB 5](#) for their specific industries. But small businesses, including sole proprietors, are out of luck. The move to ban independent contractors has now gone national, with Biden and Harris endorsing the policy. The Biden campaign is even running ads against the Uber and Lyft-backed ballot proposition: "Now, gig economy giants are trying to gut the law and exempt their workers. It's unacceptable."

The consequences of outlawing most forms of independent contracting are obvious, and disgraceful. Within realistic constraints, people should be allowed to exchange services for money without having to become employees of a company. That such a basic expression of freedom should come under attack illustrates the gravity of the fight we're in. The motivation for this law is equally obvious and disgraceful; if people can be herded into companies as employees, then they can be organized and put under union representation.

It's worth reexamining exactly what unions in California represent, rather than leaving it at that. California's unions exist primarily in the public sector, where their "negotiations" are with politicians whose campaigns they've bankrolled, and their wage and benefit demands are paid for by taxes, not by businesses operating in a competitive environment.

And while unions may still play a vital role in the private sector, it's fair to wonder why their political agenda—open borders in particular—is a goal that is shared by the tech billionaires and corporations these unions supposedly oppose. Why the contradiction?

The answers to this help explain the alliance between corporations and unions which, on the surface, seems contradictory.

First, the center of gravity of union power in the United States—and this is especially the case in California—now rests with the public sector. And why wouldn't public sector unions want open borders, and moreover, why wouldn't they want unrestricted immigration with no regard for the ability of immigrants to speak English, bring useful skills, and assimilate? The more numerous and dependent America's immigrants are, the more numerous and expansive the roster of government employees necessary to assist them in their new country.

The public schools of Los Angeles, to cite an obvious example, receive revenue based on how many students are enrolled. The more immigrants arrive, the more revenue these school districts collect, and the more unionized, dues-paying members of the teachers' union have to be hired. If these students

have had poor education in the nations they are arriving from, and if these students lack English language skills, then the public schools of Los Angeles will qualify to collect even more revenue, and hire even more specialized staff, in order to better assist the special needs of these students.

In most areas of public service, the more dependent and difficult to assimilate immigrants are, the more public services required: social workers, welfare administrators, police, probation officers, translators, and assorted bureaucrats. More generally, the more the population grows through immigration, the more government will grow, benefitting government unions. Population growth, of course, also fulfills corporate objectives, expanding the labor force and driving down wages.

Less acknowledged but perhaps even more significant, a larger population simply creates a larger critical mass of consumers. In the broadest, most macroeconomic sense of the term, a “consumer” is any living resident of a nation, even someone totally dependent on the government. They still require food, medical care, and shelter. They still buy products, and someone—a private-sector government contractor as often as a government agency—will be remunerated to fill those requirements.

This still doesn’t explain why private-sector unions would favor open borders, but here ideology and opportunism align synergistically to provide the answer. On one hand, the leftist narrative of anti-racism, replacing the oppressors, displacing and overthrowing the colonizers, etc., provides an ideological rationale for even private-sector unions to agitate for open borders.

And the internationalist perspective of these union leaders, where increasingly their concern is not for the American worker, but for the “workers of the world,” also gives them cover to call for open borders even though that increases the supply of labor and drives down wages. Many of them simply don’t understand the realities of supply and demand and are fully committed to an economic dream of socialist redistribution, but for those who do recognize economic reality, there is another more practical motive: the worse off the workers are in their bargaining units and in the economy generally, the more likely they’ll be to join a union in an attempt to better their circumstances.

In any case, by far the most powerful unions in California are public-sector unions, for which policy and program failures constitute success, because to address the failures, they can agitate for more policies and more programs. This agenda is playing out in Democratic cities and states across America. Unionizing Police and Firefighters

California’s state legislature doesn’t have to do anything to unionize public employees including police and firefighters, that’s already an established fact. But if Californian Democrats have anything to say about it, unionized public safety is coming to America. California’s 45 Democrats in the U.S. Congress, by far the most numerous and influential coalition of Democrats from any state, have introduced federal legislation to that effect.

Legislation to unionize public safety, misleadingly dubbed the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act, [HR 1154](#), authored by Los Angeles-area Representative Karen Bass and co-sponsored by 201 other Democratic representatives (including all of California’s Democratic House members), would impose exclusive California-style collective bargaining for police and emergency services to the roughly 20 states that don’t already have it.

The consequences of unionized law enforcement and firefighting are many and dire. Every year these unions will collect hundreds of millions in dues, and they will use a significant percentage of that money on political spending to flip battleground states from purple to blue. This bill would also require union bargaining over police officers' wages, hours, and terms and conditions of employment, increasing costs to taxpayers.

These costs are not trivial. Police and firefighter pay and benefits are breaking the budgets of cities and counties across California. The average sheriff in a [California county](#) in 2019 earned pay and benefits of \$158,000. That's average, and that's on the low side compared to other categories of public safety. For example, on average, a police officer in a [California city](#) in 2019 earned pay and benefits of \$176,000. And firefighters earned, on average, much more: In California's counties in 2019, \$214,000; in California cities, also \$214,000.

These averages, if anything, are understating the reality, insofar as they don't take into account the increased costs of prefunding their pension benefits if there isn't another bull market, nor do they take into account the full cost of prefunding their retirement health care. Most reasonable people agree that it is very important to support police and firefighters, and to pay them well. But these averages are so high they are often met with disbelief. They are unaffordable, compromising the ability to maintain adequate forces, and taking funding away from other vital public services. They are a direct result of unionization.

And if unionizing is not to save money, since clearly the opposite has happened, then what is the motivation? In contrast to Democrats' stated aims, unionizing police departments per this legislation would exacerbate systemic police violence, by protecting bad cops from accountability. So why support it? Because government unions want it. Passing the bill allows Democrats to expand the revenue of the unions that quietly fund their campaigns.

Environmentalism Extremism

In 2006, California passed [AB 32](#), the "Global Warming Solutions Act." Signed by Republican Governor [Arnold Schwarzenegger](#), AB 32 empowered the unelected bureaucrats on California's Air Resources Board (CARB) to regulate CO2 emissions in California with the goal of reducing them to 1990 levels by 2020. Since the passage of AB 32 there has been an unceasing flow of follow-on legislation, executive orders, and CARB regulations. To name just a few:

In 2008 California's Public Utilities Commission released their "[Long-Term Energy Efficiency Strategic Plan](#)", which, among other things, requires all new residential construction to be "zero net energy" (ZNE) starting in 2020, all new commercial construction to be ZNE by 2030, and 50 percent of all commercial buildings to be ZNE by 2030.

[SB 350](#) in 2015 requires California to generate 50 percent of its electricity from "renewables" by 2050, with emissions-free nuclear power not eligible for inclusion.

More recently, Newsom has ordered CARB to implement the [phaseout of new gas powered cars](#) and light trucks by 2045, barely 14 years from now. He also called on the state legislature to ban fracking.

These recent executive orders from Newsom are motivated by the series of cataclysmic wildfires that have again claimed millions of acres of forest in California, wildfires that Newsom alleges were caused by climate change. But the biggest factor by far in causing these wildfires was [forest mismanagement](#), thanks to environmentalist policies pioneered in California.

For decades, California's foresters and timber harvesters knew the forests were dangerously overgrown. Tree density had progressed in the vast Sierra Nevada from a historical and healthy norm of between 10-50 per acre to upwards of 300 per acre.

While natural fires were suppressed with increasing efficiency, for many years healthy forests were nonetheless maintained by logging and controlled burns. But between 1950 and 2020, California's timber industry's [annual harvest declined](#) from 6 billion board feet, which maintained an equilibrium between natural growth and annual removals, to less than 1.5 billion board feet.

California's powerful environmentalist nonprofits, such as the Sierra Club and the Center for Biological Diversity, used litigation and lobbying—not only within California, but in federal court and the U.S. Congress—to coerce sympathetic judges and legislators to nearly [destroy California's timber industry](#), at the same time as CARB regulations and other onerous permitting obstacles prevented forest thinning or controlled burns.

When it comes to progressive ideology in general, and California's environmentalists in particular, irony abounds. Let this sink in: California's environmentalists destroyed California's forests. Any attempt to deflect this catastrophe onto climate change is sophistry. Densely packed, tinder dry forests will burn like hell, and that's exactly what happened. It doesn't matter one bit if summers are slightly dryer and slightly hotter. They'll still burn.

Cripple the Housing Industry, Destroy the Suburbs

In all aspects of what Democrats now market as the Green New Deal, California's state government has led the way. This is vividly expressed in the critical area of zoning for high-density housing, based on the largely unchallenged assumption that suburban sprawl results in higher per capita greenhouse gasses. By cramming nearly all new home construction into the footprint of existing cities, the price of entitled real estate in California has become artificially inflated. But that's just the beginning of the ordeal facing developers.

Along with higher-priced land, home builders have to contend with costly building codes (such as requiring "zero net energy" homes), excessive fees, and uncertain, prolonged delays in gaining approval to begin construction. The result of California's restrictive policies is that it has become impossible for unsubsidized developers to build and sell affordable homes.

A key piece of restrictive legislation is [SB 375](#), enacted in 2008, which ties transportation funding to cities and counties adopting higher density residential zoning. A more recent example of the relentless drive towards higher density is [SB 743](#), passed in 2013 but just [now being implemented by CARB](#). This new law requires every new housing development to assess the likely "vehicle miles traveled" by the residents per year, and if that amount is considered excessive, the builders must pay extra fees or in some way "mitigate" for this. Needless to say, this renders the [price of homes](#) even more unaffordable.

All these laws being passed in California are designed to increase the density of housing, as well as to mandate home builders move to multi-family dwellings with a percentage of them designated for low-income renters. Democratic lawmakers have repeatedly introduced bills that will [supersede local control](#) over zoning to force, for example, fourplex projects to be approved in neighborhoods that currently are for single-family homes.

The entire regulatory ecosystem that has been created not only denies middle-income Californians the ability to purchase homes, or long-standing homeowners the right to preserve the ambiance of their neighborhoods. It also enriches a corrupt class of developers whose business model relies on tax credits and public subsidies to build housing for low-income families and the homeless at a statewide average cost that has now [eclipsed \\$500,000 per apartment unit](#). At this extraordinary per unit cost, nothing is solved.

But the tax-subsidized developers and investors do very well.

And the more money these developers make, the more political influence they have. This is the model for housing that California is exporting to the rest of the United States. Their goal is to eliminate the single-family dwelling altogether, which they justify by characterizing free-standing homes as ecologically unsustainable and disproportionately allocated to people with unwarranted privilege based on the color of their skin.

Through all of these examples of progressive feudalism that California is perfecting even as they export them to the rest of America, the same themes apply. Reduce consumption. Ration energy and water. Ration the supply of available land for construction. Reduce the privileged middle class, in this case by transforming their suburbs into high-density neighborhoods with abundant subsidized housing. Justify all of it in the name of saving the planet and social justice.

Make Basic Necessities Unaffordable

The consequence of California's excessive, environmentalist-inspired policies is to make the state unaffordable. It comes from a fundamental worldview that California uses all of its cultural influence to reinforce in America and across the globe: Austerity is necessary to save the planet. This goes all the way back to Jerry Brown's "[era of limits](#)" philosophy which he promoted during his first terms as governor back in the 1970s.

The basic necessities of life—housing, transportation, energy, and water—cost more in California than anywhere else in America. This is because of artificially imposed scarcity, a choice that is entirely avoidable. Along with making it impossible to profitably build affordable market housing, California no longer makes significant public investments in energy, water, or transportation infrastructure—preferring instead to redirect available funds to public employee pay and benefits. They justify this by claiming they are protecting the environment, but the real winners are the special interests.

The fully co-opted, unionized public sector is a primary beneficiary of a hyper-regulated state where everything costs more than it should. Stratospheric home values translate directly into higher property tax receipts. Elevated utility and telecommunications prices to the consumer enable higher returns from

the hidden taxes and fees embedded in the monthly billings. Public employee pension funds benefit when their real estate portfolios soar in value.

Also benefiting from artificial scarcity are landowners, established corporations, public utilities, and investment funds, all of which realize higher profits and returns when competitors are shut out and captive consumers bid up prices on limited supplies. Public utilities offer a particularly pernicious example of how artificial scarcity elevates profit. The profits these regulated utilities can earn are limited to a percentage of their revenues. But when expensive renewable energy is delivered on this cost-plus basis to the consumer, they can sell the same or even fewer kilowatt-hours for far more revenue. Since they are allocated a fixed percentage of their revenue for profit, higher revenue always means higher profits.

This philosophy of limits and austerity, pioneered in California and pushed relentlessly into the culture, is as dangerous to the prospects of ordinary Americans in the rest of the country as the actual policies enacted by California's politicians.

The blessings of capitalism, where competitive development and innovation yield ongoing and broadly distributed prosperity, are assigned no credibility in California. They are discredited as harming the planet and inherently racist, in a stunning inversion of logic promulgated as much by high-tech billionaires as by the zealous millennials emerging from California's K-12 system of public school indoctrination. Which brings us to public education.

Destroy Public Education

There is one area where California's influence is felt every election cycle in the rest of the United States, and it comes courtesy of California's unionized public education system. California's public employee unions collect and spend [over \\$900 million per year](#), mostly from member dues. More than half of that, nearly a half-billion per year, comes from public education unions, chief among them the California Teachers Association.

The leadership of these unions are willing to spend hundreds of millions every election cycle to support Democratic candidates and causes. Everywhere. With California's cities and counties and school boards almost universally dominated by California Teachers Association-approved Democrats, along with both houses of the state legislature and all higher state elected offices, the teachers' unions have money to burn in the rest of the United States. And that's exactly what they do, sending out millions to swing close elections to the U.S. Senate, House of Representatives, and state offices around the country.

Where there's money for politics, there's the political clout to completely dominate California's school system. Thanks to the influence of the teachers' union, state laws are slowly squeezing charter schools out of existence, with a rising assault on homeschoolers only deferred by the COVID-19 school shutdowns.

Thanks to the teachers' unions in California, the work rules that prevent teacher accountability and school accountability are already well-established law. Attempting to fire a teacher, or retain the best

teachers in layoffs, or even to extend the period of time before a teacher gains tenure and has a job for life, are all [rendered nearly impossible](#) in California.

The ways teachers' unions have used their power to affect the curriculum of California's public schools are well documented. Most notably, the recent mandate to implement "[gender studies](#)" instruction across all age groups that borders on pornographic. Still pending, the mandate to require "[ethnic studies](#)" courses as a prerequisite for high-school graduation—something that would have already become law, except the various "stakeholders" haven't yet agreed on which victimized groups would occupy which positions on the victim hierarchy.

In general, California's teachers' unions have committed public schools to a pedagogy that indoctrinates students with their own political ideology. America is a flawed nation founded on racism. White men are oppressors. Capitalism is inherently exploitative. Socialism is the only path to social justice and environmental health.

The impact of the teachers' unions to reinforce and catalyze California's socialist vision for America and the world cannot be overstated. Year after year, their money pours over the Sierra Nevada to decisively influence countless political races in the rest of the nation. The national teachers' unions that lobby for similar curricula around America are dominated by the California leadership and California's dues revenue.

For over a generation, students thoroughly steeped in socialist ideology have graduated from California's K-12 schools. As graduates of this indoctrination, they have spread into every state, from the streets of Portland and Seattle to the precincts of [Allegheny County](#). They staff HR departments and activist nonprofits. They are code warriors and social media influencers. The teachers' unions of California have done their job well. Their protégés are everywhere.

Foment Identity Group Tension

Fundamental to California's progressive culture is the deconstruction of meritocracy. It's all an illusion, of course. No start-up that aspires to be Google or Facebook's next unicorn acquisition expects to achieve such glory by hiring incompetent programmers. But the institutional drive towards erasing colorblind, genderblind criteria has progressed further in California than anywhere else in the United States. For any corporation still doing business in California, these policies have enterprise-wide impact.

Just last month, for example, Newsom signed [AB 979](#), which requires publicly traded corporations to "appoint directors from [underrepresented communities](#) to their boards." A close reading of this law reveals the brazen, punitive arrogance of California's Democrats, exemplified by the announced fine of \$100,000 merely for "failure to timely file board member information with the Secretary of State."

A tactic of the Left, perfected in California, is to measure aggregate group achievement, by ethnicity or by gender, and then to ascribe all variation between groups either to racism or sexism. And to the argument that perhaps there are factors related to competence, qualifications, and merit, rather than

racism or sexism alone explaining these disparities, the response has been to eliminate those factors as official evaluation criteria, or even as subjects we are allowed to discuss.

Why else is it that the regents of the University of California, yielding to pressure from the state legislature, have [eliminated](#) the use of the SAT and ACT tests as a method to evaluate college applicants? Why is it that California is [lowering the score](#) required to pass the bar exam and become a licensed attorney?

All of these steps and more are being pioneered in California. In November, California voters will even have the opportunity to [bring back affirmative action](#), which would restore the explicitly racist (and sexist) requirement for public and private institutions to achieve proportional representation by race and gender in admissions, hiring, pay, and promotions. Where does this end?

It doesn't end there. Governor Newsom has just signed another bill, AB 3070, which will “establish a first-in-the-nation task force to study and make recommendations on [reparations for slavery](#).” Critics have suggested this is just Newsom's way to position himself to run for president in 2024 or 2028. Maybe. And he could win. But meanwhile, given their record to-date, there is no evidence whatsoever that California's state legislature would not enact a reparations bill.

As part of their relentless, intrepid quest for social justice, California's woke Democrats are not just trailblazing quotas, affirmative action, and reparations and exporting them across the United States—another pioneering innovation is to declare racism to be a public health emergency. This notion gained national traction in the wake of the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, but it was already being pushed by [health providers in California](#).

Which brings us to California's excessive attention to public health, to the point of absurdity and beyond.

Health and Safety Mandates

The COVID-19 lockdowns may have grabbed the headlines, but California has been going off the deep end in pursuit of health and safety for decades. A good example is [Proposition 65](#), the “Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act,” sold to voters in 1986. This is the California law responsible for cancer-warning signs so ubiquitous that most Californians know it's better just to ignore them.

In bars and restaurants, on playground equipment, shoes, umbrellas, and golf club covers, even around Disneyland, consumers are warned that a product served on the premises—even the place itself—“is known to the state of California to cause cancer or reproductive harm.”

While most Californians have gotten used to these warning labels, they are no laughing matter. They expose small businesses to ruinous lawsuits. Prop. 65 is often out of step with scientific consensus because it draws from a reference list of nearly 1,000 chemicals, chosen if, according to state regulators, they could cause “one excess case of cancer in 100,000 individuals exposed to the chemical over a 70-year lifetime.” But with criteria like that, everything causes cancer.

Like so many regulations, the biggest victims of Prop. 65 are small businesses. Prop. 65 deputizes private trial lawyers to search for evidence of noncompliance. Small businesses, which generally don't have the resources to fight costly legal battles, are often compelled to settle. Because the penalties for "failure to warn" are so steep, businesses paid \$35 million in Prop. 65 settlements in 2018, with more than three-quarters of this total going to attorney fees. Some lawyers who specialize in this area take home more than \$1 million in fees per year.

The federal government is the only backstop against a law so broad that it applies to products produced anywhere in the world and that are sold in California. In August 2019, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency took the unprecedented step of issuing guidance stating it won't approve of Prop. 65's "false labeling" on the weedkiller Roundup because the science doesn't support it. EPA didn't mince words: "It is irresponsible to require labels on products that are inaccurate when EPA knows the product does not pose a cancer risk," said EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler. "We will not allow California's flawed program to dictate federal policy."

This federal action against Prop. 65 came on the heels of a long-sought exemption for coffee in June. This about-face was the result of outrage from coffeemakers, drinkers, and even scientists who demonstrated that coffee was not a cancer risk. Another federal agency—the Food and Drug Administration—threatened to "step in" if the state went ahead with Prop. 65 labels for coffee. Former FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb explained that these "could mislead consumers to believe that drinking coffee could be dangerous to their health when it actually could provide health benefits." Imagine a White House in the hands of someone more favorably disposed to California's global ambitions.

The Battle For California Is the Battle for America

But again, it's not just coffee or weed killer. California's long reach is far more ambitious. What we drive, where we live, and how much we pay for basic necessities—all of these questions are destined to be answered with far more restrictions making everything far more costly, if California's policies are successfully exported to the rest of the United States.

Despite covering a lot of ground in this discussion of how California is transforming itself and the rest of the nation in the process, there are more examples of equal significance left unexamined.

California's proposed [wealth tax](#) borrows from proposals from Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren, and returns the favor by creating a model for states and possibly even the federal government to emulate. There's also California's minimum wage laws, set to drive the statewide minimum wage to the highest in the nation; California's extraordinary hostility to small businesses; and California's punitive rates of taxation.

To counter California enacting laws and regulations that corporations will simply adopt for their entire global product line, or HR manual, the political and cultural values that dominate California must be challenged. Sadly, many corporations have decided it is more cost-effective for them simply to adopt these practices than to bother fighting them. In California, most corporations have realized their commercial aspirations are actually better served by adhering to the excessive restrictions imposed by California, because it creates artificial scarcity which drives up prices, it creates captive markets

purchasing mandated products, and it throws up barriers to innovative competitors lacking the financial resilience to comply.

For these reasons, out-of-state interests must recognize California for what it is—a plutocracy that has put its own interests before the interests of its residents.

This power of this plutocracy is almost indescribable and extends well beyond their alliance with environmentalist nonprofits and public sector unions. California's plutocrats not only have personal wealth measured in tens of billions, but they control the [most powerful corporations on earth](#). These corporations have monopoly power over America's online communications and search platforms, and equally if not more significant, their companies are at the epicenter of a high-tech ecosystem capable of developing and rapidly deploying advanced autonomous weapons systems. In a low-intensity civil war, California, allied with other blue states, might easily hold its own.

The Battle for America is the Battle for the Future of the World

California's plutocrats don't just have their eye on America, they want to conquer the world. For them, progressive feudalism is the political economy of the future, enabling them to preside over a reduction in the quality of Western lifestyles and individual freedom and a leveling of wealth around the world, while exponentially increasing their own wealth and power.

Once they've taken over the United States, they may face a reckoning with the progressive electorate and militant cadres that were their enablers on the ground, but it wouldn't last long. By then the technology-driven police state will be perfected, with limitless access to robots, slap drones, nanobots, cyberware, and precision pathogens offering effortless control of even the most restive populations.

For these reasons, overcoming the progressive feudalists now, by changing the sentiment of California's electorate, is not only preferable to violence, it has a higher probability of success. Most Californians have figured out that something is wrong, but they have been brainwashed into fearing the alternatives. They fear meritocracy. They fear capitalism. They fear racism. They fear climate change. They have slowly become accustomed to what is becoming tyranny, and they believe material poverty is necessary to save the planet and atone for racism. And in all these areas, the people who could offer common-sense solutions have been censored and disparaged.

But the progressive feudalists have one fatal weakness: They are wrong. The fundamental premises they use to justify their actions are flawed.

Meritocracy is the only way a free people can create an efficient, prosperous, opportunity society. Without it, nobody has any incentive to innovate or work hard. The capable and hard-working become cynical and resentful, while the incompetent and the indolent know they don't have to step up, because they can live for free.

Capitalism is not dangerous, it is the engine of progress. It has been conflated with corporate monopolies and financial speculators. What a free nation does is use thoughtful regulations to amputate the gangrenous appendages of capitalist corruption, the predators and the gamblers, leaving the pure and competitive heart of capitalist competition to thrive.

Racism is an odious fact of history, in all nations and cultures, but the facts today in California tell a very different story. Racism, such as it is, is institutionalized to favor nonwhites in every aspect of society, hiring, admissions, and promotions. To the extent racial disparities exist in academic group achievement, it is the result of schools that have been destroyed by the teachers' union monopoly, which has been [proven to disproportionately](#) damage schools in low-income areas. And as courageous conservatives in the [black](#) and [Latino](#) communities are asserting with increasing confidence, building wealth and income in these communities requires internal cultural change: stay married, work hard, stay in school, study marketable skills, reject drugs and alcohol and gangs. There are ample examples of communities in the United States that have overcome discrimination, or possible discrimination, and have thrived. It can be done. Take responsibility.

Finally, there is climate change, the trump card of the collectivists, played by progressive feudalists whenever they decide it's time to end the debate and get on with their agenda. But everything the environmental extremists have done in recent years has caused harm. Suburban expansion doesn't stop climate change, it just makes housing unaffordable. Forest "preservation" doesn't preserve forests, it turns them into tinderboxes that are periodically obliterated by fire. Natural gas is affordable and clean, and has already allowed Americans to lower their ratio of CO2 emissions to energy consumption to the lowest of all industrialized nations. Are the Chinese and Indians going to lower their emissions? Because if they don't, so what if Americans do? And what about nuclear power? Why is the renewables lobby shutting down [Diablo Canyon](#)?

These are the messages that must be taken to California's voters, without apology or equivocation. Expand suburbs along the freeway corridors into the vast rangeland of California. Build new reservoirs and restore the aqueducts. Build desalination plants up and down the California coast and keep [Diablo Canyon](#) open. Thin the forests, restore the timber industry, and build biomass power plants to turn the trimmings into clean electricity. Instead of squandering billions on the bullet train, widen the roads with smart lanes for high speed, high tech cars. Drill for natural gas in the Monterey Shale. Mine lithium in the Mojave Desert. Deregulate, so builders and business owners can spend their time, talents, and money on productive work instead of permits and fees. And launch a frontal assault on the teachers' union by enacting school choice with vouchers parents can redeem wherever they want.

This is a contract with California that would entice everyone. This is the enlightened, empowering capitalism that delivers the broad prosperity and freedom that progressive feudalism promises but cannot possibly deliver. This is the agenda that will enable voters in California to understand that competitive abundance is a morally preferable choice. California can be affordable again without compromising environmentalist values.

California can deliver opportunity to everyone again, no matter who they are or where they came from. Americans who want to prevent the Californication of America must step up, dollar for dollar, to counter the spending of California's public sector unions and resident billionaires. California's seething population, searching for answers, must realize the premises used to justify their misery rely on convenient illusions, conjured by special interests for their own gain. But the battle must be fought. Somebody has to tell them.

What is at stake in California is not just California. It is the future of America. It is the future of the world.

*This article originally appeared on the website [American Greatness](#). Edward Ring is a contributing editor and senior fellow with the **California Policy Center**, which he co-founded in 2013 and served as its first president.*



ANNOUNCEMENTS

November 3, 2020 Ballot Measures:

Prop. 14: In 2004, voters approved \$3 billion for a publicly funded stem-cell agency, the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine, to support research into new treatments and possible cures. The money has been spent, and the backers of Proposition 14 want voters to approve \$5.5 billion more. But CORM has been widely criticized for inefficiency and insider dealing. **Vote no.**

Prop 15: This is the treacherous “split roll” property tax, a direct attack on Proposition 13. Proposition 15 would repeal part of Prop. 13 and require reassessment to market value of business properties. It would raise taxes on supermarkets, shopping malls, office buildings, factories, movie theaters, hotels, restaurants, sports stadiums, warehouses, self-storage facilities, major retailers and other businesses where Californians work or shop. Even the smallest businesses that lease space will face higher rents, or will have to pay the higher property taxes as part of their “triple net” lease agreement. Those higher costs are passed on to consumers. **Vote No.**

Prop 18: Proposition 18 would change the voting age in California to allow 17-year-olds to vote in primaries and special elections if they will turn 18 by the date of the next general election. While some states allow this, California is different than other states because under Prop. 13 and Prop. 218, tax increases must go on the ballot for voter approval. These proposed tax increases are frequently on primary and special election ballots. Proposition 18 would allow high school students to vote on tax increases. Proposition 18 would change the voting age in California to allow 17-year-olds to vote in

primaries and special elections if they will turn 18 by the date of the next general election. While some states allow this, California is different than other states because under Prop. 13 and Prop. 218, tax increases must go on the ballot for voter approval. These proposed tax increases are frequently on primary and special election ballots. Proposition 18 would allow high school students to vote on tax increases. **Vote No.**

Prop: 19: Proposition 19 takes away important taxpayer protections that have been enshrined in the State Constitution since 1986. That's when 76% of voters approved Proposition 58 to allow parents to transfer a home and limited other property to their children without an increase in property taxes. Proposition 19 eliminates Proposition 58 and a similar measure, Proposition 193, which gives the same protection to transfers between grandparents and grandchildren if the children's parents are deceased. Proposition 19 would require property transferred within families to be reassessed to market value as of the date of transfer, resulting in a huge property tax increase for long-held family homes. **Vote No.**

Prop 21: Proposition 21 would change state law to allow radical rent control laws to be passed in cities that are already suffering from an inadequate supply of housing. In 2016, California's nonpartisan Legislative Analyst's Office issued a report that found that expanding rent control "likely would discourage new construction" by limiting the profitability of new rental housing. Under current law—the 1995 Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act—housing providers have the right to raise the rent on a vacant unit to market value after a tenant moves out. The same law also bans rent control on units constructed after February 1995 and on single-family homes and condos. Proposition 21 would repeal this law and allow unelected rent boards (or elected rent boards) to impose radical rent control and regulations, even on single-family homes. **Vote No.**

Prop 22: In 2019, the Legislature passed, and the governor signed Assembly Bill 5, a law aimed at destroying the "gig economy" and forcing companies to stop using independent contractors as part of their business. Supporters said companies must put all workers on the regular payroll as employees, with control over their hours and wages. The Legislature carved out exceptions for many industries, but the ride-share and restaurant delivery industry wasn't granted an exception. Proposition 22 was put on the ballot by Uber, Lyft and DoorDash. It would create an exemption from AB 5 for the companies' drivers, while providing them with basic benefits and protections. Without this exemption, the companies would likely stop offering their services in California, depriving state residents of convenient and affordable transportation and delivery services. **VOTE YES ON PROPOSITION 22.**

Prop 25: Proposition 25 is a referendum on a state law, Senate Bill 10, that eliminated cash bail and replaced it with a system based on judging risk, specifically the risk that an arrested person poses to public safety and the risk that the person will fail to show up for a court appearance. Because opponents of the law qualified a referendum, SB 10 did not take effect. A "yes" vote is in favor of the law going into effect; a "no" vote means you do not want the law to take effect. Proposition 25 would result in immense new costs to counties. The new system of risk-based release instead of cash bail would cost taxpayers somewhere in the mid-hundreds of millions of dollars, according to the Legislative Analyst. **Vote No.**

CENTRAL COAST 
TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATION

CCTA OPPOSES NOVEMBER BALLOT SALES TAX INCREASES OF SIX CITIES IN SLO COUNTY

When cities need money, the default reaction is always to raise taxes: sales taxes, transient occupancy taxes, surcharges on utility bills, increases in every fee and additional fees, ad nauseam. Senior staff has a vested interest in staving off bad news, wrapping their tax proposals as reasonable, logical, and painless. “It will be paid by tourists,” “it’s only one percent,” and of course, “Everyone is doing it so we won’t be uncompetitive.” It’s so easy.

But we know from recent past experience that this approach doesn’t work. Taxes with sunset clauses, pushed to provide “extras,” are now funding routine maintenance and permanent positions. And now the demand is for even more taxes, permanently.

No tax increase should even be considered without a thorough review of the structure of the city and its long and short term goals. Consolidation of services and outsourcing are only a start. No amount of sales taxes, TOT and other fees can make up for the structural compounding growth in salaries, staffing and pension debts of small cities. These pension debts have been growing exponentially for at least two decades. Administrators and department heads, often paid more than the Governor, will block any and every attempt to make reforms, preferring a permanent sales tax hike to create another source for leveraging debt, via bonds. Thus they can postpone the inevitable pain a little longer or at least until retirement looms.

The current pandemic provides an excellent opportunity to break this cycle of tax and overspend and finally institute overdue, sound, long term financial planning in city government. Anyone breathing knows the lockdowns have created unprecedented drops in revenue for everyone. We literally are all in this together. It is time that local governments, like families and businesses, take a good long hard look at their expenses and priorities, or risk losing everything.

Six Cities have sales tax increases on the November ballot. Only the City of Arroyo Grande does not! See below!

City of Arroyo Grande - No Sales Tax Increase on November Ballot

Arroyo Grande's proposed sales tax increase fails - Cal Coast ...

City of Atascadero - 1%

Council Votes to Add Sales Tax Measure to Ballot

City of Grover Beach - 1%

Grover Beach City Council supports raising sales tax

City of Morro Bay - 1%

UPDATE: Morro Bay City sales tax increase placed on ...

City of Paso Robles - 1%

Paso Robles City Council votes to put 1-cent sales tax ...

City of San Luis Obispo - 1%

UPDATE: SLO City Council approves added 1% sales tax for ...

City of Pismo Beach - 1%

The City Council has adopted Resolution R-2020-053, adding the following measure to the November 3, 2020 ballot.

CITY OF PISMO BEACH

MEASURE B-20

PISMO BEACH PUBLIC SAFETY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES PROTECTION MEASURE. To maintain police and firefighter service levels; reduce 911 emergency response times; protect local groundwater and beaches; and enhance senior programming and other essential services, shall the hotel/visitor tax be increased by 1%, paid by visitors, generating approximately \$1 million annually, until ended by voters, requiring annual audits and local control of funds?

ALERT

ANDY CALDWELL SHOW NOW LOCAL IN SLO COUNTY

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in *Santa Barbara, Santa Maria & San Luis Obispo*

Counties!

We are pleased to announce that The Andy Caldwell Show is now broadcasting out of San Luis Obispo County on FM 98.5 in addition to AM 1290 Santa Barbara and AM 1440 Santa Maria



The show now covers the broadcast area from Ventura to Templeton - THE only show of its kind on the Central Coast covering local, state, national and international issues!

3:00 – 5:00 PM WEEKDAYS

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COUNTY UPDATES OCCUR MONDAYS AT 4:30 PM



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VICTOR DAVIS HANSON ADDRESSES A COLAB FORUM



DAN WALTERS EXPLAINS SACTO MACHINATIONS AT A COLAB FORUM
See the presentation at the link: <https://youtu.be/eEdP4cvf-zA>



AUTHOR & NATIONALLY SYNDICATED COMMENTATOR BEN SHAPIRO APPEARED AT A COLAB ANNUAL DINNER



NATIONAL RADIO AND TV COMMENTATOR HIGH HEWITT AT COLAB DINNER



MIKE BROWN RALLIES THE FORCES OUTDOORS DURING COVID LOCKDOWN.

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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS:

General Member: \$100 - \$249 \$ _____ Voting Member: \$250 - \$5,000 \$ _____

Sustaining Member: \$5,000 + \$ _____

(Sustaining Membership includes a table of 10 at the Annual Fundraiser Dinner)

General members will receive all COLAB updates and newsletters. Voting privileges are limited to Voting Members and Sustainable Members with one vote per membership.

MEMBER INFORMATION:

Name: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____

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COLAB Member(s) / Sponsor(s): _____

NON MEMBER DONATION/CONTRIBUTION OPTION:

For those who choose not to join as a member but would like to support COLAB via a contribution/donation. I would like to contribute \$ _____ to COLAB and my check or credit card information is enclosed/provided.

Donations/Contributions do not require membership though it is encouraged in order to provide updates and information.

Memberships and donation will be kept confidential if that is your preference.

Confidential Donation/Contribution/Membership

PAYMENT METHOD:

Check Visa MasterCard Discover Amex NOT accepted.

Cardholder Name: _____ Signature: _____

Card Number: _____ Exp Date: ___/___ Billing Zip Code: _____ CVV: _____

TODAY'S DATE: _____

(Revised 2/2017)