



WEEKLY UPDATE FEBRUARY 27- MARCH 5, 2022

**RUSH TO THE MARCH 24, 2022 ANNUAL COLAB
DINNER - FUNDRAISER - MADONNA EXPO, 5:00
PM, HOSTED COCKTAILS, DINNER, PAGEANTRY,
LIVE AUCTION, CELEBRATE FAMILY, HERITAGE
AND FREEDOM**



COLAB San Luis Obispo is looking for someone with an interest in regional politics and time to dedicate to our organization. This is a paid position, not volunteer, that will assist our Board and Executive Director with meetings, membership, and administrative functions. Approximately 10-15 hours per week. (Mostly) flexible scheduling. Interested? Shoot us an e-mail at colabslo.com .We look forward to hearing from you!

13th Annual



DINNER & FUNDRAISER



**Come Support the Work We Do to
Preserve Heritage, Family &
Freedom**

**THURSDAY,
MARCH 24, 2022
MADONNA EXPO CENTER**

**5:00 pm Social Hour, Open Bar
6:15 pm Filet Mignon Dinner & Wine
Exciting Auction Too!
\$125 a person
\$1,250 a table, seating for 10**

For tickets:
On-Line Reservations & Payment can be made at
www.colabslo.org/events.asp
or
Mail your check to
COLAB SLO County, PO Box 13601, SLO, CA 93406
Cocktail Attire Optional
More info at (805) 548-0340 or
colabslo@gmail.com

THIS WEEK

PENSION TRUST

2021 WAS A GOOD INVESTMENT YEAR

**ACTUARIES MAY STILL RECOMMEND A MORE CONSERVATIVE DISCOUNT RATE
6.50% vs Current 6.75?**

BOS MEETING

**PROJECTED FY 2022-23 BUDGET GAP GROWS
BUDGET POLICY IS SELF FULFILLING PROFICY – BASE COSTS + GROWTH
PROJECTIONS DO NOT INCLUDE NEW SALARY AND BENEFIT COSTS**

SIX MILLION IN FEDERAL ARPA¹ FUNDS FOR MORE HOMELESS PROJECTS THAT WON'T WORK

STAFF WILL ALLOW BOARD TO END COVID STATE OF EMERGENCY

LAST WEEK

NO BOS MEETING

OTHER AGENCIES DORMANT

PLANNING DEPARTMENT WORKSHOP

**NO DISCUSSION OF SMART GROWTH FAILURES
NO DISCUSSION OF IRRATIONAL ENERGY POLICIES**



**WHY ALLOW RUSSIA TO USE OIL AND GAS BLACKMAIL TO FINANCE AGGRESSION? EVERY BARREL OF OIL WE PRODUCE CAN HELP THESE PATRIOTIC BABUSHKA FREEDOM FIGHTERS
DOES SLO COUNTY SUPPORT FREEDOM OR WOKE FAKE GREEN DOCTRINE?
ASK YOUR CANDIDATES!!!!!!**

¹ American Rescue Plan Act – Trillions all funded by debt and inflation.

EMERGENT ISSUES

COVID DOWN

MASKS NO LONGER REQUIRED FOR THOSE VACCINATED

RUSSIANS SEND SEPARATE FLEET TO SYRIA – WHERE IS THE MASKIROVKA?

US DEFENSE POSTURE NOW AT DEFCON 2 – AS PUTIN THREATENS NUKES

KEEP YOUR CARS GASED UP AND YOUR LARDER FULL OF NON-PERISHIBLES

COLAB IN DEPTH

SEE PAGE 15

THE GATHERING STORM IN THE WEST

*Few are listening any more to the clueless Justin Trudeaus and
bumbling Joe Bidens and all the toxic hypocrisies they embody*

BY VICTOR DAVIS HANSON

CALIFORNIA'S ELECTORATE IS REJECTING PROGRESSIVE POLICIES

*Underfunded grassroots organizations, using cheap online resources, can
reach millions to fight and win against out-of-touch progressive interests.*

But they have to work together

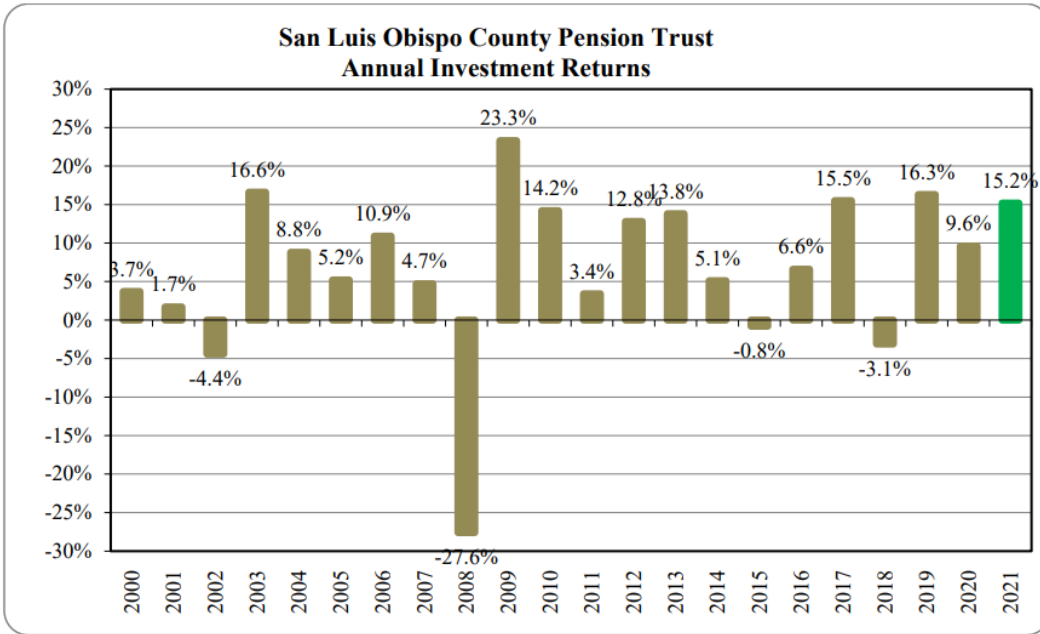
BY EDWARD RING

THIS WEEK'S HIGHLIGHTS

ALL MEETINGS ARE AT 9:00 AM UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

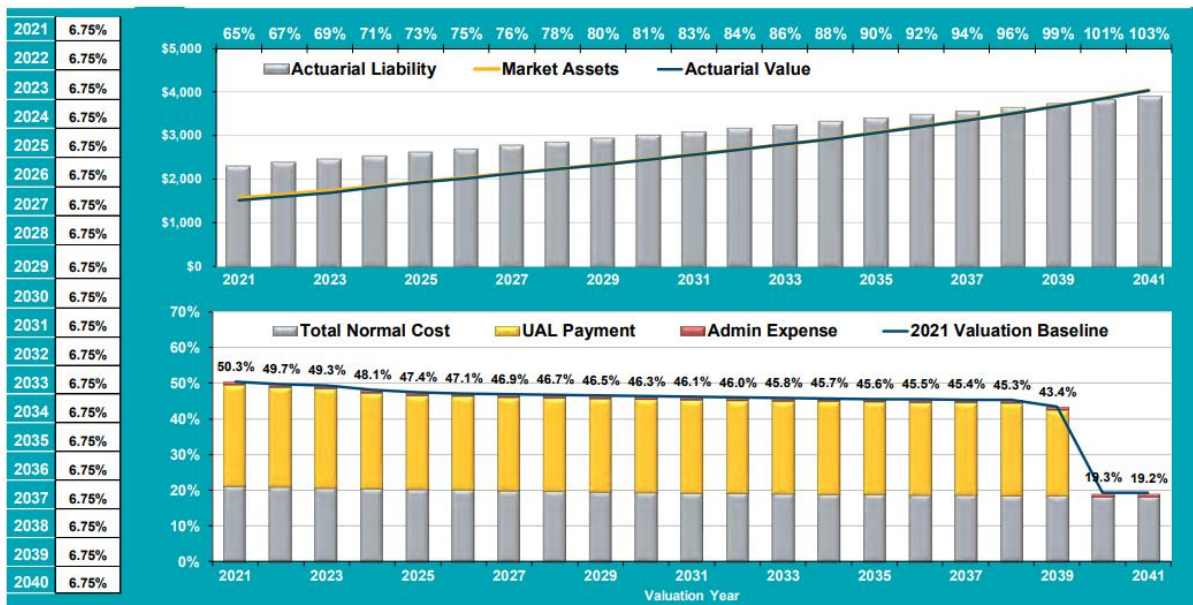
SLO County Pension Trust Meeting of Monday, February 28, 2022 (Scheduled) 9:30 AM

Item 9 - Quarterly Investment Report for the 4th Quarter of 2021. The Trust experienced good returns, which could reduce pressure to raise rates. However, the actuaries are warning the Trust Board that investment returns, over the long haul, could be in the 6% range. In May, the Pension Board will have to decide whether or not to lower the assumption rate in this regard. It is currently 6.75%.

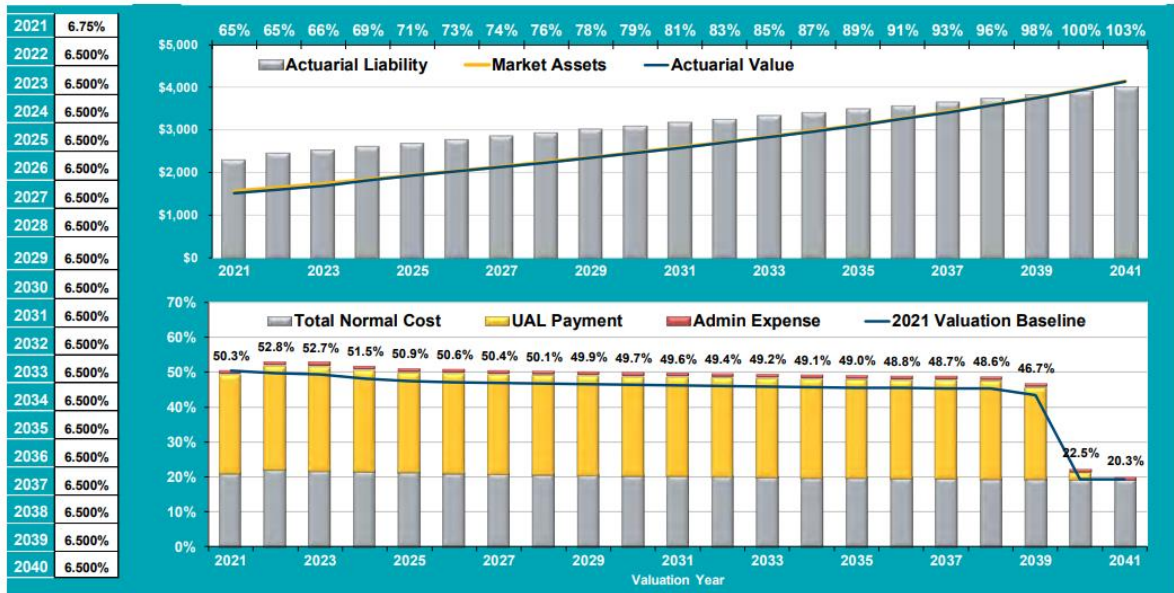


The two graphs below show the difference in rates that could be charged between a 6.75% assumption and a 6.50% assumption. The lower the assumption rate, the higher the County’s and employees’ contributions. This in turn puts pressure on the ability of the Board to fund service and staff levels.

Baseline Projections – 6.75% Discount Rate



Projections – 6.50% Discount Rate



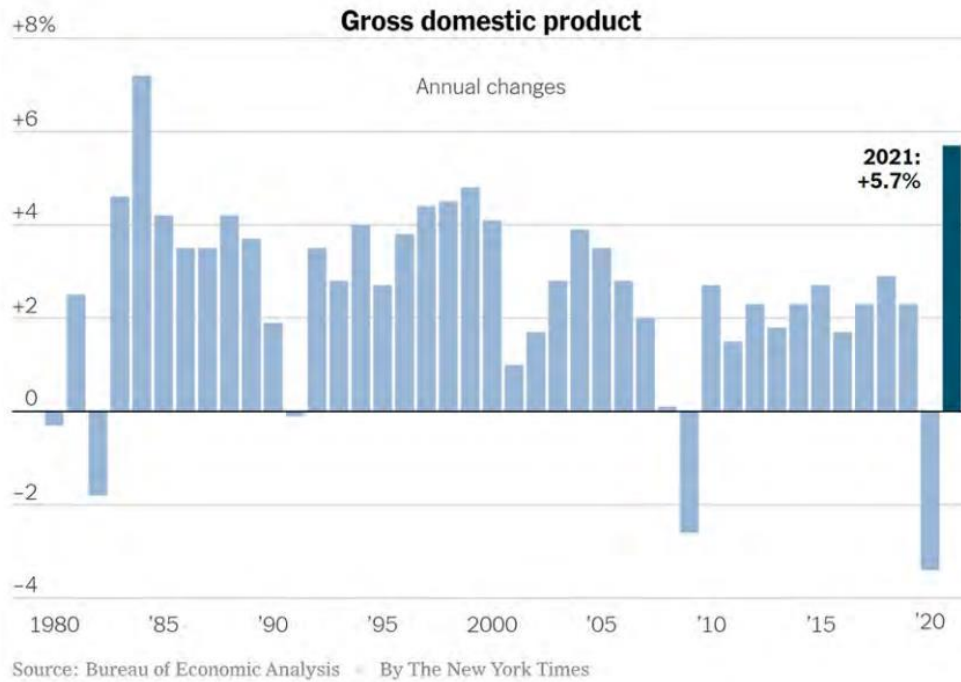
Item 10 - Monthly Investment Report for January 2022. January was a negative month. February is likely to be much worse. Except for 2018, the investment returns have exceeded the actuarial assumption rate, which is now 6.75%

	January	Year to Date 2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Total Trust Investments (\$ millions)	\$1,735		\$1,775	\$1,552 year end	\$1,446 year end	\$1,285 year end	\$1,351 year end
Total Fund Return	-1.8% Gross	-1.8% Gross	15.2% Gross	8.9 % Gross	16.3 % Gross	-3.2 % Gross	15.5 % Gross
Policy Index Return (r)	-2.7%	-2.7%	12.8%	10.0 %	16.4 %	-3.2 %	13.4 %

- (r) Policy index as of Nov. 2021 Strategic Asset Allocation Policy with 2022 Interim targets:
- Public Mkt Equity- 24% Russell 3000, 17% MSCI ACWI ex-US
 - Public Mkt Debt- 11% Barclays US Aggregate,
 - Risk Diversifying 8% Barclays US Aggregate, 4% Barclays 7-10yr Treasury, 3% Barclays 5-10yr US TIPS
 - Real Estate & Infrastructure- 13% NCREIF Index (inc. Infrastructure)
 - Private Equity- 7% actual private equity returns
 - Private Credit- 4% actual private credit returns
 - Liquidity- 6% 90 day T-Billst
- Pending annual updates to interim targets.

- **The Economy**

- **GDP Growth** – The 4Q21 report on U.S. domestic real GDP growth (adjusted for inflation) came in at a quarterly increase of 1.7% bringing the full year of 2021 to a 5.7% increase. This was the fastest growth rate for the U.S. economy since 1984.



Of course, it is based on the worst year in recent history, which preceded it $(-4 + 5.7) = 1.7$. Accordingly, this not some great achievement. It is lower than all of the prior years except two others.

Board of Supervisors Meeting of Tuesday, March 1, 2022 (Scheduled)

Item 17 - Submittal of the Fiscal Year 2022-23 County and State Budget update. Earlier in the fiscal year the staff forecast that next Fiscal Year could contain a projected \$2.1 to \$8.0 million revenue/expenditure gap. This update indicates that it is now a firm \$8.2 million gap, which will have to be remediated by reduced expenditures and/or increased revenues. Further exacerbating the problem is that the County is in labor negotiations with 7 unions and has not included estimates for higher salary and benefit costs for those units. The highlighted sentence below indicates that millions of dollars in un-estimated cost increases will be added to the gap.

Employee Compensation and Workforce Investment Consistent with past practice, the FY 2022-23 budget will include funding for salary and benefit increases that were incurred as of November 2021. The County recognizes that improvements to and success of programs and services for the community is dependent upon recruiting and maintaining a talented and skilled workforce. In the last year, the County has successfully negotiated labor agreements with two of the bargaining units; and is in, or soon will enter into, negotiations with seven additional units.

Employee compensation is negotiated with the intent to balance affordability, competitive employee salary and benefits, operational and employee interests, and recruitment and retention strategies.

The basic reason given for the gap is that once the Departments submitted their Budget requests for next year, the expenditures proposed were greater than projected earlier.²

The table below compares the status quo budget to the November forecast, by major revenue and expenditure category:

	Forecast	Status Quo	\$ Diff	% Diff
Non-Departmental Revenue	243,052,627	255,121,406	12,068,779	5.0%
Departmental Revenue	344,453,326	354,190,897	9,737,571	2.8%
Fund Balance Available	33,084,430	34,693,823	1,609,393	4.9%
Cancelled Reserves	-	6,813,845	6,813,845	
Total Revenue	620,590,383	650,819,971	30,229,588	4.9%
Salary and Benefits	342,452,556	359,527,816	17,075,260	5.0%
Non-Salary Expense	253,359,706	265,658,876	12,299,170	4.9%
5% Contingency	29,790,613	31,259,335	1,468,722	4.9%
New Reserves	-	2,611,808	2,611,808	
Total Expenditures	625,602,876	659,057,835	33,454,959	5.3%
Available Funds/(Gap)	(5,012,493)	(8,229,639)		

The County uses a philosophy of incremental budgeting, which assumes that the prior year’s budget, plus it inflationary and new labor costs, becomes the base from which the future budgets are built. They call this the “Status Quo” budget.

A Status Quo budget is defined as one that takes current year staffing and program levels and costs them out for the next year with no material changes (i.e. inflationary increase only, no increases or decreases to staffing levels, and no new or expanded services levels).

The chart shows that the revenues are not keeping up with expenses. There is uncertainty about what State and Federal allocations for various programs will look like in FY 2022-23 (many allocations from the State are based on sales tax receipts, driven by consumer spending). Fortunately, many County departments are seeing an improvement in revenues specific to their operations, compared to what was projected in November 2021. However, expenses came in higher than what was projected. The County has little discretion over expenditure requirements for mandated programs and services.

As noted in the blue chart above, it turned out that the salaries and benefits were \$17 million higher than had been forecast. Also and as noted in the highlighted yellow area on page 7 above,

² Note that this chart only encompasses the General Fund Budget. The overall Budget will be somewhere over \$ 800 million and includes self -supported enterprises and utilities. WE wish staff would present some comprehensive tables.

salary increase projections have not been included for 7 unions. What if this number is \$20 million?

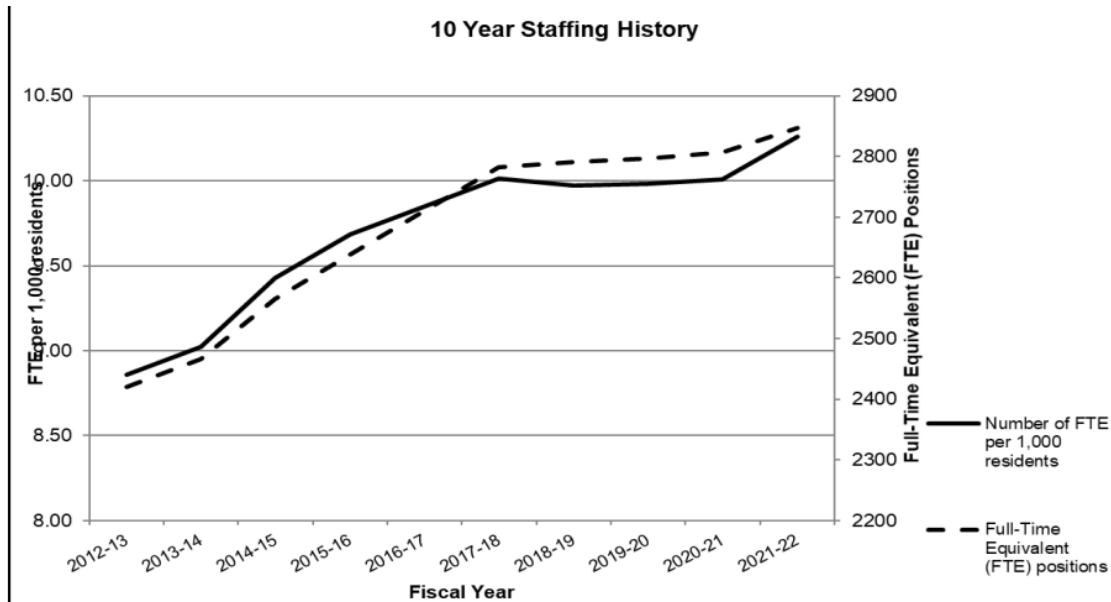
Self-Fulfilling Prophecy:

By adhering to the status quo philosophy, the staff creates a self-fulfilling prophecy. The overall goal becomes one of not reducing or eliminating any programs to live within the natural growth of revenues. This in turn creates relentless pressure to increase fees and relentless pressure to seek more revenue from the State, which in turn pushes demand for more and higher State taxes.

Situation at Budget Adoption after June 2021:

Description	2019-20 Actual	2020-21 Actual	2021-22 Recommended	2021-22 Final
Uses of Financing by Type				
Salary & Benefits	307,285,080	315,637,608	342,825,761	344,173,488
Services & Supplies	201,164,873	207,364,627	219,499,571	223,834,811
Other Charges	109,704,017	108,679,876	102,996,506	119,368,067
Fixed Assets	31,680,223	32,949,799	21,251,283	24,461,918
Transfers	(31,785,971)	(67,137,824)	(37,262,222)	(37,262,222)
Increases to Reserves/Designations	0*	0*	15,302,572	49,074,952
Increases/(decreases) to Fund Balance	33,264,954	93,085,035	0	0
Contingencies	0*	0*	28,723,663	30,723,379
Total Financing by Type	651,313,175	690,579,121	693,337,133	754,374,393

*use of reserves and designations and contingencies are included in individual financing types



Item 18 - A request to consider: 1) a funding plan for \$5,346,000 in American Rescue Plan Act Housing and Homeless projects; and 2) Approval of a corresponding Budget Adjustment in the amount of \$5,346,000 by 4/5 vote as outlined in the recommendation.

The County has tens of millions of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars burning a hole in its pockets. One of the priority uses allowed by the Feds is to beef up homeless programs.

Overall County ARPA Priorities.

ARPA Nexus Buckets

Eligible Use Category	Sub area	BOS direction 6/15/2021
Public Health and Negative Economic Impacts Response		
	Public Health Emergency	\$14M
	Business, Non-Profit, Childcare Grants	\$9M
	Housing / Homelessness	\$6M
	ARPA administrative costs	\$1M
	Total Category	\$30M
Restoration of Government Services		\$10M
Water, Sewer, Broadband		\$15M
		\$55M

Accordingly, the staff proposes the allocation of a portion of the \$6 million per the table below with more to come:

Table 1: Recommended Affordable Housing and Homeless Projects

Affordable Housing Projects	ARPA Housing and Homeless	Project Description
Anderson Hotel Preservation (HASLO)	\$2,000,000	Preserves 68 units of very low-income housing
Arroyo Grande Affordable Housing (HASLO)	\$1,946,000	Adds 63 new units to serve up to 124 low to very-low income individuals
Homeless Projects	ARPA Housing and Homeless	Project Description
Non-Congregate Shelter (5Cities Homeless Coalition)	\$400,000	New temporary non-congregate emergency shelter providing 80 very low-income individuals with non-congregate shelter

Staff is also recommending that the County retain \$1 million to continue and expand operations of its Safe Parking program. On August 10, 2021, your Board approved one-time funds for the program. Since then, the Kansas Avenue Safe Parking Site has been implemented and today has approximately 100 program participants. The \$500,000 in one-time funds set aside for this program will be fully spent at the end of this fiscal year. Therefore, it is imperative that ARPA funds are prioritized for the continuation of this program.

The larger policy dilemma is that experts are divided on the remedies. One group advocates for permanent housing with supportive services. This is based on the theory that individuals in

housing will “stabilize” and be susceptible to treatment. The other group advocates for treatment first, because many of the homeless refuse housing and/or continue abusing drugs and alcohol even if they are in housing. Both groups are wrong as demonstrated by the chaos on our streets.

Leadership at all levels continue to refuse to engage the real problem, which is failure to enforce community behavioral standards. There are certainly homeless people who deserve care and housing, as they have fallen out of the economy due to divorce, abandonment, job loss, illness, or mild cognitive impairments. But overall, there are estimated to be at least 70% who are very mentally ill, addicted to hard drugs, or addicted to alcohol, or all three. They are incapable of functioning or even behaving in society and need to be placed in a protective setting where drugs and alcohol are not available and they cannot wander about trashing our cities, committing crimes, and harassing people, all the while openly using.

Accordingly, all this federal money, entirely funded by debt, is being wasted. If one is insane, taking fentanyl, and drinking quart bottles of vodka, that person will never “get better.”³

Instead of the massive high cost and high staff brick and mortar asylums of the first 2/3rds of the 20th Century, we need locked down care centers with modular group and single sleeping units, central cafeterias, bathrooms, and treatment facilities. The patient days should be structured with exercise, public service, sanitary training, self-discipline training, and spiritual guidance.



Item 23 - Request to receive and file the: 1) Order to Terminate the Proclamation of Emergency effective February 25, 2022, and the 2) Order to Terminate the Declaration of Local Public Health Emergency effective February 25, 2022. The write-up states that the

³ Note the City of San Francisco is now distrusting drugs and setting up centers for people to use them.

County Administrator (CA) and the Health Officer terminated the state of emergency which has been in force for 2 years on Friday February 25th. The members of the Board majority had repeatedly asked that it be terminated earlier but were told that they could not legally command their staff to do so. It is expected that the Board will “ratify” the decision when it approves this item.

The stalemate has caused considerable concern among citizens that the County staff should be accountable to the elected Supervisors. Some have called for disciplining of the CAO, County Counsel, and Health Officer in this regard. A problem is that such an action would be regarded as retaliation and could subject the County to legal action and costs, since the Board had ratified the declaration in the first place. Moreover, during the declaration of a health emergency, the County Health Officer becomes a quasi-State officer and is not subject to Board of Supervisors direction on matters related to emergency during its declared period.

Readers may remember that the back in 2013 the Board declared a state of emergency with respect to the water usage in the Paso Basin. No one ever proved that there was an imminent threat to public health and safety, as required by the state statute. The regulations that were imposed during that “emergency” have survived under follow-on amendments to the zoning Ordinance.

In the future the Board may wish to set strict time limits when it approves a state of emergency to compel the staff to return for re-ratification and extension.

As we have noted in previous editions of the Weekly Update, there is growing frustration of the public that runs across many agencies related to staff control based on the sheer volume of activity and the power of “expertise.” Your Cardiologist may warn you not to smoke three packs of Luckys per day and not to drink a quart of scotch per day, but you don’t have to listen. On the other hand, governments, with their “expertise” and their monopoly of force and violence, can get away with forcing you to be locked down, be vaccinated, register firearms, allow rioters and homeless deviants to beat you up and loot your store, and accept the verdict of elections where voters do not have to prove they are citizens or live in the jurisdiction.

In the end, the write-up also states that if COVID surges again, they will reinstate the emergency:

At the present time, termination of the County’s proclamation of local emergency and declaration of local public health emergency will have little consequence on the County’s ability to respond with all the rigor and timeliness as is necessary based on current conditions and to maintain a well-governed and healthy community. Should the need arise for reinstatement of the emergency orders, that can be undertaken with dispatch.

Accordingly, when the next COVID strain emerges, the Board may wish to carefully consider the actual dangers, and if it does agree, limit the timeline to 30-day increments.

LAST WEEK’S HIGHLIGHTS

The Board of Supervisors and most other regional agencies did not meet last week. Activity picks up again in the first week of March.

Planning Commission Meeting of Thursday, February 24, 2022 (Completed)

The Commission held the first of a 2-part set of workshops to examine various aspects of its work. The write-up stated in part.

The purpose of the workshop is to provide the Planning Commission with an opportunity to review the applicable processes, procedures, and legislative documents that govern the land use entitlement review process, and to identify improvements that will ensure process consistency. Purview Workshop Part 1 will occur on February 24, 2022, and will cover the Planning and Building Department Priorities for 2022. Purview Workshop Part 2 will occur on February 24, 2022, and will cover Processes, Procedures, Ordinances, and State Laws.

It turned out to be a pretty low level review of various matters pending before the Commission. The next one will focus on the long-range planning workload as it pertains to ordinance revisions, plan updates, and the related staffing and funding.

We suggested that they step back and take a look at the County's overall scheme of land and resource rationing based on the concepts of so-called smart growth. They should ask, is this actually working for the average citizen, and if not, what are some alternatives? You could hear the thud as the suggestion hit the floor.

One might also ask what they think of pushing instead of punishing fossil fuel development as the Russians finance their aggression with oil and gas blackmail. There are millions of barrels of oil in the Monterey shale and off shore. These are directly under the purview of the Commission and the Board of Supervisors. Would they actually do something real to aid the AK-47 toting Babushkas and children in Ukraine and potentially in Poland, the Baltics, Finland, and the Balkans?

Ukrainian children trained to use rifles against Russian soldiers



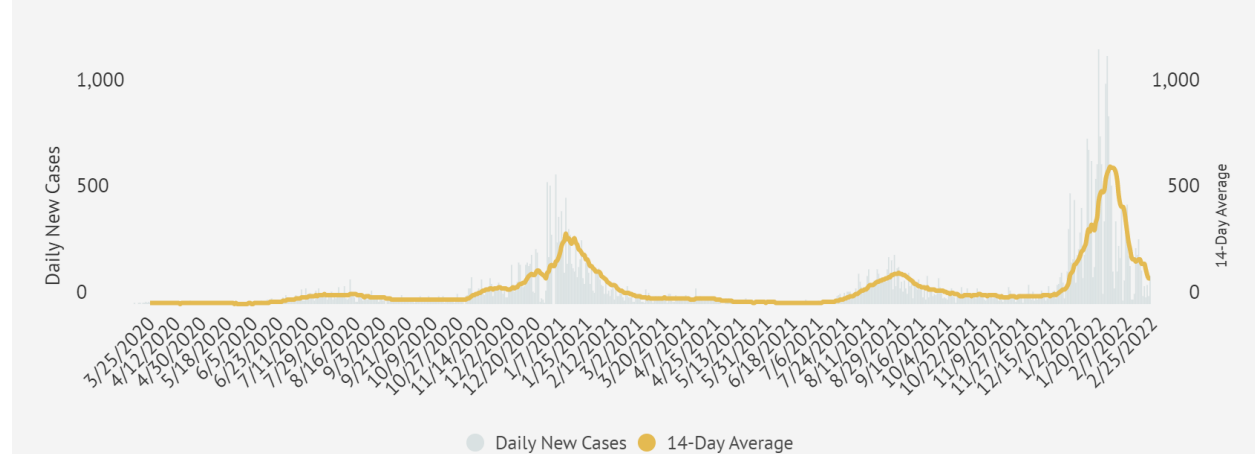
KIDS TOO! Of course, in the US, if you practice with an AK-47 or an M-16, your government will throw you in jail.

EMERGENT ISSUES

Item 1 - COVID: The downward trend continued for the 3rd week, but then seemed to have paused. Last week the rolling 14-day average resumed declining.

The indoor masking requirement was lifted on February 16, 2022, for those who have been vaccinated.

Daily New Cases (and 14-Day Average)



17 (2 ICU)** SLO County Residents with COVID-19 in Hospital

Item 2 - Is the Maskirovka Some Kind of Major Action in Syria?⁴ While the US and NATO are focused on Ukraine, the Russians have moved an augmented 16-ship Navy task force into the eastern Mediterranean just off the Syrian coast.

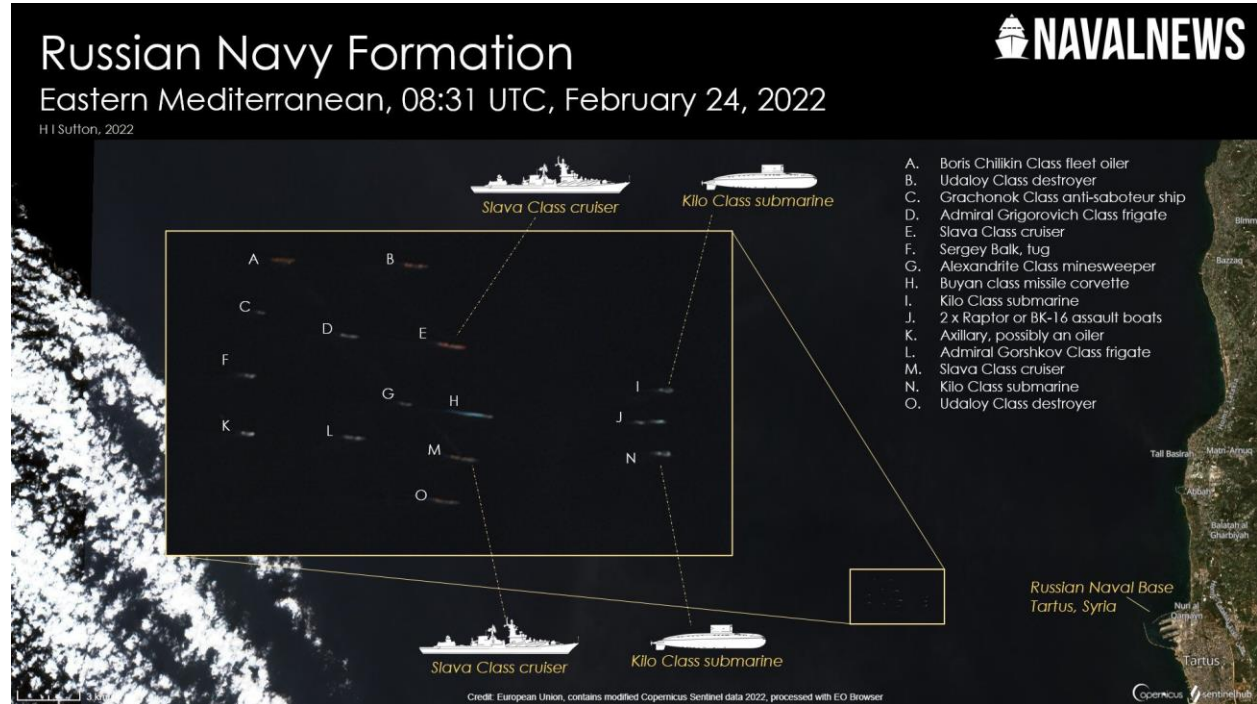
February 25, 2022 - It appears 'the whole Russian Navy in the Mediterranean Sea (that we know of) sailed to Syria this morning while the invasion of Ukraine was unfolding'. Information provided by well-known Defense analyst H I Sutton, writer for Naval News.

With NATO tied up in Ukraine, Poland, and the Baltic states, it is likely that some diversion is planned in the Middle East. Their cruisers, destroyers, frigates, and submarines are loaded with cruise missiles and longer-range strategic missiles.

Note: on Sunday, the US raised its overall defense readiness level to DEFCON 2 (defense condition 2) which is the highest since the Cuban missile crises in 1962. This was as a result of Putin's threat to use nuclear weapons. US European Command has been at DECON 2 since the Russians threatened to invade Ukraine. Russian President Vladimir Putin has now ordered Russia's nuclear deterrent forces on alert in response to Western sanctions and rising tensions over Putin's invasion on Ukraine. Putin's forces are on an equivalent to DEFCON 2 now. Taken

⁴ Russian military deception, sometimes known as maskirovka, is a military doctrine developed from the start of the twentieth century. The doctrine covers a broad range of measures for military deception, from camouflage to denial and deception.

from DEFCON Level Warning System: Gas up your cars, get cash, and keep your larder stocked with non-perishable supplies and water.



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



THE GATHERING STORM IN THE WEST

Few are listening any more to the clueless Justin Trudeaus and bumbling Joe Bidens and all the toxic hypocrisies they embody.

BY VICTOR DAVIS HANSON

Canada is now governed by absurdism, and it is symptomatic of an ailing Western elite.

Liberal Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau last week invoked martial law to arrest and financially destroy truckers on the charge that their largely peaceful protests are “dismantling the Canadian economy” that had already been dismantled for two years under some of the most draconian lockdowns in the world. The trucker “sect,” Trudeau added, is guilty of felonious “unacceptable views.” But his rhetoric still cannot square the circle of demonizing vital workers while conceding he cannot run his country without them.

He has invoked the Emergencies Act for the first time in the law’s 34-year history, even as the highly infectious Omicron variant wanes after spreading natural immunity and yet proving relatively mild in its effects. Trudeau has neither science nor good governance on his side, especially given how civil the protests have been. The truckers, who more or less work in solitary cabs, are better informed about the “science” and are themselves mostly vaccinated.

Whether by accident or intent, the truckers have now become iconic of far larger issues. Their resistance to government vaccination mandates transcends them. And so, they are playing the role of the proverbial straw that may break the back of a once compliant Canadian citizenry, burdened by over two years of masks, lockdowns, and vaccination mandates.

They are Howard Beales yelling, “I’m mad as hell and I’m not going to take it anymore!” or the iconic Tunisian peddler Tarek el-Tayeb Mohamed Bouazizi whose self-immolation prompted the Arab Spring, or Tank Man who stood erect in Tiananmen as an oncoming tank finally swerved around him. The truckers are saying to the Canadian people, “Watch and we will kindly show you why you always privately suspected that this prime minister and his ilk were frauds.” As in the case of earlier exasperated rebels, we do not know the exact consequences that will follow, only that the leaders who targeted the dissidents will likely end up worse than their targets.

The North American public has endured almost daily nonsensical changes in “follow the science” state edicts, as well as vast asymmetries between those who profited and those who were hurt by the government reactions to the pandemic. On the one hand, Trudeau threatens to use his state powers to ruin financially the protestors and their supporters. On the other hand, the prime minister brags that he participated in the Canadian versions of the BLM protests in summer 2020. Here in the United States, the combined BLM/antifa riots of summer 2020 caused the greatest property damage claims of any riot in U.S. history, around \$2 billion. The violence eventually led to over 35 deaths, the torching of a federal courthouse, police precinct, and historic Washington D.C. church, over 1,500 police injuries—and, mysteriously, very few indictments of the some 14,000 people arrested. Is Trudeau’s point to stress that destroying things make protestors more authentically left-wing and thus exempt, while mostly peaceful protests lose deterrence and therefore can be crushed?

The North American Left justifies such asymmetry both in crude terms and in ideological gobbledygook. A Trudeau official called the truckers “Trump supporters,” as if that label has any relevance other than to justify the government’s violation of civil liberties. Does Trudeau think a “Trump supporter” necessarily polls worse than a “Trudeau supporter”? The foppish man who in his youth thought it cool to be photographed sporting blackface is quick to demonize a multiethnic and multiracial protest as “racist”?

Left-wing administrations in Toronto and Washington feel that the supposed higher social goals of the antifa and BLM violent protests (that purportedly advance their own political agendas) warrant exemptions of every sort. More than 1,000 U.S. healthcare workers went on record in 2020 justifying street protestors' flagrant violations of strict COVID-19 lockdowns, at the height of the pre-vaccination pandemic.

We were lectured that curbing any BLM protest might cause mental health problems. Should noncomplying truckers and their boosters try that ruse?

The asymmetric application of punishment depends solely on the degree to which any given violation aids or detracts from left-wing agendas. A postelection *Time* magazine [piece](#) by Molly Ball gave the game away. She bragged how CEOs and plutocrats conspired to modulate the pulse of the Antifa/BLM violence to ensure calm for Joe Biden's election—and more or less summed up the larger progressive elite impulse (“There was a conspiracy unfolding behind the scenes, one that both curtailed the protests and coordinated the resistance from CEOs. Both surprises were the result of an informal alliance between left-wing activists and business titans.”)

COVID accentuated a larger and growing cultural, political, social, and economic split in the West. Partly, the fissures were brought on by the displacements of globalization. Partly they appeared with the final dominance of a huge class of credentialed government apparatchiks. And partly the split derives from the paradox of governments inviting millions of non-Western immigrants into Europe and North America from impoverished, and dystopian societies. Their inequality upon arrival, supposedly predicated on race rather than class, then becomes political nourishment for progressive redistributive agendas that otherwise had little political support among their citizen populations.

Again, the truckers symbolize this gap, in an age when elites do not care much for class divides, only racial distinctions as a way of demonizing the less well-off.

After all, those who smear the truckers are mostly of the zoom and laptop class. Their chief agendas during the last two years of crisis were sheltering in place to avoid contact with anyone, while zooming and skyping to maintain and boost their already generous incomes. Few like Trudeau ever wondered how the elite remained fully employed, but rarely present at work—much less why millions of others were expected to scoff at the virus and come physically to work, while their incomes often dived or ended due to government lockdown policies.

The muscular classes enjoyed no such exemptions. Their kids went to public schools that were shut down or required masks. Parents lost incomes as they stayed home to watch children that tenured teachers would not teach. Truckers had no such margin of safety or security, but were out among the public delivering food, fuel, clothing, and the appurtenances of the Western comfortable lifestyle. In our current inflationary spiral, they earned a bit more, while inflation made them poorer, while those they served earned far more.

The truckers remind Western audiences that modern progressivism equates muscular labor and hourly wage compensation with a sort of Neanderthalism. That is, the unfortunate clingers supposedly never quite understood globalization, much less how an 8-billion-person market

rewards those who type on keyboards and, in relative terms, punishes the supposedly less aware who physically deliver, fix, make, and repair things.



DAVE CHAN via Getty Images

We can almost reduce the divide to the embarrassing optics of a pouty-face pajama-boy prime minister, with a pompadour coiffure, issuing threats to calm, but beefy and calloused workers. Each time Trudeau speaks to his nation, the visual message is that any of the truckers could do a better job than he in both setting and explaining policy, while he would become a helpless weeping child if placed behind the wheel of a big rig.

Somehow the elite class extrapolates moral worth from its rigged superiority in financial compensation. And given its economic and cultural leverage—social media, entertainment, academia, professional sports, the corporate boardroom, Wall Street—it has institutionalized the idea that, in circular fashion, the more the credentialed and better compensated, the more the elite *deserve* even more influence on how societies should run in a manner that mostly benefits themselves.

Paradoxes arise constantly. Government grandees are caught without masks at tony restaurants. Climate change demagogues fly private jets. Pro-teacher union, anti-charter and anti-home school zealots ensure their children stay in private schools. The gated estate crowd ridicule the fossilized idea of a border wall. Professional bureaucrats routinely lie under oath to Congress and to federal investigators without any consequences whatsoever—as John Brennan, James Clapper, Anthony Fauci, and Andrew McCabe can attest.

To explain California Governor Gavin Newsom sporting about without a mask at elite gatherings, we are supposed to assume that his class deserves exemption from the ramifications of its ideology—in order to travel faster, sleep better, have a larger support network, and relax in deservedly larger homes and gardens—all so that they could better save us chumps and clueless dregs from ourselves.

Our elites like Trudeau and Newsom seem angry they are unfairly underappreciated by their clueless beneficiaries. The latter supposedly never appreciate the needed remedies for climate change, the thought cleansing required to eliminate systemic racism, and the mind reprogramming demanded for true diversity, equity, and inclusion thinking.

Instead, the losers cling to unwoke and incorrect notions that class, not race, remains the real postmodern divide, that printing money does not make us richer, that a nation without a border is an amorphous nothing, that affordable gasoline and diesel fuel (not wind and solar) for now keep the West alive, that a fetus is alive at conception, that biology largely determines gender, that assimilation and integration are the only cures for tribalism, and that the law reflects a natural innate morality, and should not be applied on the basis of perceived victims manipulated by it, or the supposed victimizers manipulating it.

That wound of an imperious but counterfeit elite has supplicated too long beneath a smooth scab. And abruptly, the truckers at least tore some of it off.

What is now following is amplification and clarification of the Western divide. We the public are at the global theater. And we are watching a tragicomedy. On stage, a petulant cast of clueless Justin Trudeaus and bumbling Joe Bidens simply cannot fathom why few anymore are listening to them. More and more North Americans are perplexed why anyone would wish to follow such unimpressive mental and physical figures along with all the toxic hypocrisies they embody and weaponize.

Victor Davis Hanson is a distinguished fellow of the Center for American Greatness and the Martin and Illie Anderson Senior Fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution. He is an American military historian, columnist, a former classics professor, and scholar of ancient warfare. He has been a visiting professor at Hillsdale College since 2004. Hanson was awarded the National Humanities Medal in 2007 by President George W. Bush. Hanson is also a farmer (growing raisin grapes on a family farm in Selma, California) and a critic of social trends related to farming and agrarianism. He is the author most recently of [The Second World Wars: How the First Global Conflict Was Fought and Won](#), [The Case for Trump](#) and the newly released [The Dying Citizen](#). This article first appeared in the February 20, 2022 edition of American Greatness.

CALIFORNIA'S ELECTORATE IS REJECTING PROGRESSIVE POLICIES

Underfunded grassroots organizations, using cheap online resources, can reach millions to fight and win against out-of-touch progressive interests.

But they have to work together

BY EDWARD RING

In the battle to define our future, California is ground zero. With a gross domestic product of over \$3.1 trillion, 189 billionaires, and politically active public-sector unions that collect nearly \$1 billion per year in membership dues, the Golden State's influence is not limited to its status as a social media and mainstream entertainment hub. The state's political influence is predicated on raw financial power, with its billionaires and government unions exporting hundreds of millions in political spending every year into the other 49 states to support progressive candidates and causes.

Political strategists and political donors who oppose the progressive agenda in the rest of the United States should consider the return-on-investment that would accrue to fighting the devil in his den.

Populist movements in California defy partisan stereotypes and are growing stronger every day. Even in defeat, they tie up the financial resources of progressive donors for pennies on the dollar. And every dollar spent by a progressive in California is a dollar they don't spend in the heartland of America.

California's resistance, such as it is, is a fractious quasi-coalition that is only beginning to coalesce but nonetheless displays huge and transformative potential. Among the issues beginning to unite California's disaffected voters is the future of public education. Unfortunately, for the 2022 election cycle at least, reformers failed to effectively address that issue, and it is a tremendous missed opportunity.

In sports, an unforced error is defined as "a mistake in play that is attributed to one's own failure rather than to the skill or effort of one's opponent." Nothing better describes the fact that California's school choice advocates managed to come up with two competing ballot initiatives, so similar that it takes an expert to tell them apart.

While school choice efforts in California have been percolating for decades, the earliest entrant for the 2022 election cycle came from the California School Choice Foundation, led by Southern California activist Michael Alexander. The committee he formed, Californians for School Choice, is currently gathering signatures for the Educational Freedom Act.

Also qualified for circulation, but no longer engaged in signature gathering, is the awkwardly named "Education Savings Account" initiative, sponsored by Fix California, founded and led by President Trump's former acting director of national intelligence, Richard Grenell.

These two committees could have worked together to promote one school choice initiative. That might have allowed them to pool their paltry resources and take on the behemoth called the California Teachers Association, which combined with other education employee unions in California rakes in an estimated \$500 million per year in membership dues. But they didn't.

Both of these initiatives, if approved, would allow parents to receive into an "education savings account" the state funding for their child that ordinarily goes to the local public school. The parents could then use those funds to pay for their child to attend a private school of their choice. If a parent doesn't want to participate, nothing changes, and their children continue to attend a publicly funded school.

To people who aren't immersed in school choice issues, the differences between these two initiatives are underwhelming. Alexander's initiative would pay participating parents \$14,000 per year per child, while Grenell's would pay \$13,000 per year. Alexander's initiative grants eligibility to any parent of a K-12 student in California, while Grenell's restricts eligibility in the first few years to lower-income parents.

The fact that the two groups of proponents could not agree on one initiative to jointly promote, instead of filing two competing versions, is a textbook example of an unforced error. If you care about school choice, how and why this coalition of people and organizations sharing the same strategic goals managed to splinter over tactical details is an appalling disappointment.

Grassroots Supported Initiatives Are the Future

Over the past decade, the California state legislature has worked steadily to make initiatives more difficult to qualify. The window for ballot initiatives is now restricted to only general elections every two years, and when hiring signature gatherers, firms have to carefully adhere to the somewhat ambiguous provisions of Assembly Bill 5, which increases costs and legal exposure. But these barriers, and others including the COVID pandemic, do not begin to overcome the new opportunities offered by desktop printers and social media.

It is only a matter of time before a grassroots movement coalesces in California with sufficient critical mass to qualify a state ballot initiative overnight and at minimal cost. It will just take the right initiative with the right political objectives to crowdsource registered voters online and secure their signatures. With barely 40 days left to gather the requisite signatures, it is even possible, though unlikely, that the Educational Freedom Act could offer the breakthrough example.

Consider this link on their campaign website: [“Print your own petition.”](#) This link provides clear instructions, including a [printable PDF of the petition](#). A visitor to the Education Freedom Act website has merely to click these links, print the six-page petition, then carefully follow the instructions to gather signatures and return it to the campaign.

A Sacramento attorney who specializes in state ballot initiatives had this to say when asked if downloadable and printable state ballot initiatives are valid:

In theory, yes. In most cases, the petition will consist of numerous pages and with all the required info, use of 8.5 by 11 standard home printer paper leaves little room for signatures most of the time. In order to be a valid signed petition, all the pages would have to be printed, stapled, signed, and returned. That is a tall order for people to complete accurately.

It might be a “tall order,” but evidently it is not an impossible one. And Michael Alexander, a man with no quit in him, is putting the theory to the test. If you watch nothing else that comes out of this movement, watch this. Because it is a revolution. Imagine if millions of Californians mastered the skill of printing initiative petitions at home.

Gone are the professional printers, producing immaculate magna opera, formatted to accommodate 4,500 words of initiative verbiage on a single sheet 14-inches by 17-inches folded once, or 7,500 words of initiative verbiage on a single sheet 14 inches by 25.5 inches folded twice. Gone are the logistics of transporting millions of these initiatives from the printer’s shop to every county, every committee, every household, and every collection table at every public venue, in a state of 40 million people. Gone are the legions of paid signature gatherers, with all the cost and legal expenses they bring with them.

It's important not to understate the remaining logistical hurdles that initiative proponents have to overcome, and it's extremely unlikely an initiative campaign could ever completely bypass professional printing shops.

But online communications and desktop printing have revolutionized the business of initiatives and recalls in California. Find a competent attorney for advice, then build a website, format a PDF, put out the word via email or social media, and stand back while overnight, a million followers load standard copy paper in a home printer, click a link, and make history.

California's Growing Nonpartisan Populist Movement

Californians surprised the nation last week when an unstoppable multitude of enraged parents successfully recalled three of San Francisco Unified School District's elected school board members. As impressive as this accomplishment was by virtue of being a sweep, more impressive were the margins. As reported by EdSource, "In a landslide, voters recalled board President Gabriela López and members Alison Collins and Faauuga Moliga. Partial returns from 128,000 mostly mail-in votes, more than seven out of 10 backed the recall, with nearly 79% voting to oust Collins, 75% to remove Lopez and 72% to recall Moliga."

San Francisco is a city with only 7 percent registered Republicans. It is also a multiethnic city: 40 percent white, 35 percent Asian, 15 percent Hispanic and 5 percent black. According to the New York Times, "it also appeared to be a demonstration of Asian American electoral power."

Ward Connerly, a former member of the University of California Board of Regents and the author of Proposition 209, which outlawed affirmative action in California in 1996—an initiative upheld by voters as recently as 2020, when 57 percent of voters statewide rejected Proposition 16 which would have repealed Prop. 209—is working closely with Asian activists to eliminate racial discrimination in college admissions and elsewhere.

"Asians are realizing that California's institutions are failing," Connerly said, "and they're beginning to organize to repair the damage."

This is the stuff of realignment, and it's everywhere. For example, consider Latino leaders such as Gloria Romero, who had risen to become the majority leader in the California State Senate, then left after recognizing the toxic impact the teachers' unions were having on public education in the state. In addition there are black Californians such as Ward Connerly, and powerful Asian reform organizations.

Wealthy white liberals as well are belatedly realizing how broken some of California's institutions have become, as exemplified by David Welch, who was behind the Vergara v. the State of California and the California Teachers Association litigation in 2012. Welch, supported by luminaries such as former Los Angeles mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, has filed an initiative for the 2022 ballot called the "California Right to High-Quality Public School Education Initiative."

And then there are California's die-hard populists, stigmatized and stereotyped, but gathering in strength. That would include The California School Choice Foundation, along with Fix California. It would also include Orrin Heatlie's all-volunteer organization, famed for their stunning success qualifying the Newsom recall petition for the ballot in September 2021. Now renamed Rebuild California, Heatlie's group is quietly preparing to trigger another political earthquake.

Can all these groups find common cause and work together? They certainly can, and they should.

Grassroots movements, often led by volunteers, are bound to attract people with strong passions. Whenever people volunteer their time, their incentive to compromise is reduced. But the perfect is the mortal enemy of the good. In public education, along with a lot of other policy areas, the people running California are making grievous errors. An underfunded team, using cheap online resources, can reach millions. They can fight and win, by highlighting these policy errors and offering solutions via the initiative process.

But they have to work together. In California's growing nonpartisan populist movement, unforced errors have no place.

If the proponents of California's school choice initiatives had unified under one initiative, for a few million dollars they would have had the signatures to qualify that initiative on the state ballot this November. And for a few million dollars more they could have run an effective grassroots campaign to approve the initiative. And win or lose, the public sector education unions would have spent between \$50 and \$100 million—money that they couldn't then have spent elsewhere—to protect their monopoly.

If you're trying to stop California's progressives from dominating America, the math is pretty compelling. Every dollar you spend in a frontal assault on progressive power in California will pin down many times that much. Make them defend their turf.

There's much more to this picture, however, because even in California, progressive ideology is rapidly losing credibility. Imagine if California's electorate rejected progressive ideology. Imagine if their political donors—and possibly even some of their public sector unions—were to embrace a new direction that nurtured prosperity and freedom. Imagine that was California's export to the nation and the world.

Edward Ring is a senior fellow of the Center for American Greatness and co-founder in 2013 of the California Policy Center. This article first appeared in the February 22, 2022 edition of American Greatness



ANNOUNCEMENTS

ANDY CALDWELL SHOW NOW LOCAL IN SLO COUNTY

Now you can listen to THE ANDY CALDWELL SHOW
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
1290/96.9 Santa Barbara and AM 1240/99.5 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 You can also listen to The
Andy Caldwell Show LIVE on the [Tune In Radio App](#) and previously aired
shows at: 3:00 – 5:00 PM WEEKDAYS You can also listen to The Andy
Caldwell Show LIVE on the [Tune In Radio App](#) and

Previously aired shows at:

COUNTY UPDATES OCCUR MONDAYS AT 4:30 PM

MIKE BROWN IS THE REGULAR MONDAY GUEST AT 4:30
SUPPORT COLAB!

A Voice for Reason
3:00 PM to 5:00 PM Monday thru Friday
- Ventura to San Luis Obispo -

Listen to The Andy Caldwell Show "LIVE"

KSMA RADIO
NEWS • TALK
1240 | 99.5
1240ksma.com

KZSB RADIO
SANTA BARBARA
1290 | 96.9
am1290kzsb.com



knews985.com

*The Only Talk Radio Show to Cover
Santa Barbara, Santa Maria & San Luis Obispo !*



**PLEASE COMPLETE THE MEMBERSHIP/DONATION FORM
ON THE LAST PAGE BELOW**



MIKE BROWN ADVOCATES BEFORE THE BOS



VICTOR DAVIS HANSON ADDRESSES A COLAB FORUM



DAN WALTERS EXPLAINS SACTO MACHINATIONS AT A COLAB FORUM



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

JOIN OR CONTRIBUTE TO COLAB ON THE NEXT PAGE

Join COLAB or contribute by control clicking at: [COLAB San Luis Obispo County \(colabslo.org\)](http://COLAB San Luis Obispo County (colabslo.org)) or use the form below:

Coalition of Labor, Agriculture and Business
San Luis Obispo County
"Your Property - Your Taxes - Our Future"
PO Box 13601 - San Luis Obispo, CA 93406 / Phone: 805.548-0340
Email: colabslo@gmail.com / Website: colabslo.org

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: _____

How Did You Hear About COLAB?

Radio Internet Public Hearing Friend

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: _____