COLAB
San Luis Obispo County

The Coalition of Labor Agriculture and Business

WEEKLY UPDATE SEPTEMBER 10 - 16, 2023

COLAB
San Luis Obispo County

FALL FORUM

Wednesday, October 4th
5:30—7:30 PM
Thousand Hills Ranch
550 Thousand Hills Rd.
Pismo Beach, CA

Thousand Hills Rd. is off of Price Canyon. Please use caution, as the road is somewhat hidden around a bend in the road and it comes up on you suddenly. Once on Thousand Hills Road, follow the road for approximately one mile to the red roofed barn on right!

Featuring:

TRUCKS, HOMES, AND FOOD – HOW WE CAN DEFEND THESE VITAL ESSENTIALS IN AN AGE OF REGRESSIVE SUPPRESSION.

HEAR OUR LIVELY INDUSTRY EXPERTS AS YOU SIP BEER, LOCAL FINE WINES, AND HOT & COLD APPETIZERS.

Kindly RSVP by September 27th — there is no charge for this informative event!
Email: colabslo@gmail.com or call (805) 548-0340

ALERT!

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AGENDA
TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 12, 2023

9:00AM - ITEM 32 WILL FOLLOW PUBLIC COMMENT

SUPERVISORS GIBSON & PAULDING MAY REMOVE PROTECTION OF **PROP 13** FROM THE CURRENT COUNTY 2023 STATE LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM!
ORTIZ-LEGG COULD BE THE DECIDING VOTE

ANTICIPATING THE THREE MAY THEN SUPPORT **ACA 1** & **ACA 13** ATTACKS ON **PROP 13**!
FIGHT FOR PROPOSITION 13 NOW!
SEE YOU TUESDAY!

THIS WEEK
SEE PAGE 5

THIS AGENDA CONTAINS MAJOR POLICY ITEMS WITH LONG TERM IMPACTS UNDERSCORING THE BOARD MAJORITY'S CONTINUING POLICY BLITZ

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING

SURPRISE ITEM
COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UNIT PROPOSED
IT WILL FIRST PROMOTE THE OFFSHORE WIND PROJECT

OCEANO FIRE DEPARTMENT DYING - COUNTY TAKEOVER REQUESTED
ALL COUNTY TAXPAYERS TO FUND IT - PAULDING PATRONAGE?

COUNTY TO END SUPPORT FOR PROPOSITION 13?

SUPERVISORIAL REDISTRICTING COMMISSION FLOATED
BIG PROCESS TO DESIGN & AND ADOPT IS LIKELY TO BE APPROVED

STATUS OF BIG REACH ECON DEV PROJECT

SUPERVISOR REQUESTS FOR NEW POLICY WHEN NO ONE IS WATCHING

STANDING ITEM AT END OF MEETING

LAST WEEK

SEE PAGE 18

ABALONE BALONEY

PLANNING COMMISSION DIABLO CLOSURE WORKSHOP
COMMISSION IGNORES FLAWED DEIR
IT FAILED TO STUDY THE AVAILABILITY OF REPLACEMENT ENERGY, CO_2 IMPACTS OF CLOSING THE PLANT, OR ECONOMIC DISINVESTMENT
STAFF ASSERTS IT'S NOT RELEVANT

NO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING

NO SLOCOG IN SEPTEMBER

EMERGENT ISSUES
SEE PAGE 23

EV DRIVERS HAVE THE SADS BECAUSE OF NO-AMENITY CHARGING STATIONS

CALIFORNIA SENATE BILL 233 -

A LITERAL POWER VACUUM
And what is to be sucked? Your electric car

CONGRESSMAN CARBAJAL, SB COUNTY DA PROMOTE 'RED FLAG' LAWS AS TOOL TO PREVENT GUN VIOLENCE

PROTECT PROPOSITION 13
This week is crucial with votes in the State Senate on 2 Bills designed weaken Proposition 13 to the point where it will be impotent

COLAB IN DEPTH
SEE PAGE 29

I ONCE THOUGHT CALIFORNIA WOULD FIX ITSELF. I WAS WRONG
BY LEE OHANIAN

WHAT THE LEFT DID TO OUR COUNTRY
WILL THEIR UPHEAVAL SUCCEED?
BY VICTOR DAVIS HANSON

THIS WEEK'S HIGHLIGHTS

ALL MEETINGS ARE AT 9:00 AM UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

Board of Supervisors Meeting of Tuesday, September 12, 2023 (Scheduled)

Item 4 - Amendment to Item # 4 - Request to 1) approve a resolution amending the Position Allocation List (PAL) to add a 1.00 FTE Principal Administrative Analyst to the Administrative Office focused on offshore wind energy development; and 2) approve a corresponding budget adjustment in the amount (of $XXwas missing) from state grant funding to FC 104 - Administrative Office to provide salary appropriation for this position, by 4/5 vote. Staff is amending the corresponding budget adjustment amount to $135,000, replacing the staff report to reflect those changes. This is a major policy consideration and should not be taken on the consent calendar. Instead, it should be moved to the afternoon and considered prior to or after **Item 36**.

A Major Policy Question: Do the people of San Luis Obispo County and its Board of Supervisors support the development of the windfarm in the first place? We don't recall the Board actually having staff prepare an analysis and holding a public hearing on the matter.

One fundamental question is – all in, just how much will a kilowatt hour of electricity cost, including government subsidies from the project.

The initial purpose of the item was to establish a principal analyst position in the CAO's office to push the offshore wind energy project.

This appropriation was in response to a request from the County of San Luis Obispo to State legislators to provide funding for staff time and resources dedicated to supporting the State in meeting its offshore wind (OSW) deployment goals. Since 2021, County involvement in offshore wind has been supported primarily from the Administrative Office and Public Works, with additional expertise provided by County Counsel and Planning and Building.

These activities have included the following (with more details provided in section 3 of this discussion): • Participating in intergovernmental taskforces and serving on technical advisory committees related waterfront infrastructure;

• Engaging with offshore wind developers and industry representatives;
• Representing the community's interests in the federal lease process;
• Representing the community's interests in state legislative and regulatory processes, including *the AB 525 strategic planning process;*
• Representing the County at various offshore wind industry conferences and forums;
• Coordinating with counterparts in other potential offshore wind host communities on common *areas of common interest; and*

• Collaborating with local, state, regional, and federal stakeholders on issues such as waterfront infrastructure siting opportunities, environmental and cultural concerns, community benefits, permitting, and economic development and workforce development opportunities

The balance of the item covers the expansion of the of unit, which would ostensibly be dedicated to wind energy development and other economic development issues.

The forthcoming proposal is expected to include elevating the Economic Development Manager position and tightening the connection with the County's workforce development team and activities. The Economic Development Manager will continue to take the lead on legislative and regulatory efforts regarding offshore wind. The Principal Administrative Analyst – Offshore Wind position under consideration by your Board today would be reporting into this division upon its creation and would be closely connected to economic development activities. County staff is also identifying opportunities to further strengthen economic development at the County through additional grant funding opportunities to support an Administrative Analyst position dedicated to expanding broadband infrastructure and access, traditional economic development activities (business attraction, retention and expansion), and other identified economic development priority areas and grant management opportunities.

In fact, the newly proposed unit could become the policy development think tank/staff for expanding the leftist Board agenda.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The recommended PAL change will result in an annual cost of the position at top step estimated at $229,668. It requested to allocate $123,467 for salaries and benefits and $11,533 for services and supplies related to the positi for a total of $135,000 in FY 2023-24. The additional increases in salary and benefits are shown in the table below.

Principal Administrative Analyst

FY 2023-24 Estimated Annual Expense						
Action	**Classification**	**FTE**	**Salary**	**Benefits**	**Total**	**Step Estimate**
Add	Principal Admin Analyst (FC 104)	1.00	$74,610	$ 48,857	$123,467	Step 1 for 6 months Step 2 for 2 months
	Net Change FY 2023-24	**1.00**	**$74,610**	**$48,857**	**$123,467**	
FY 2024-25 Estimated Annual Expense						
Action	**Classification**	**FTE**	**Salary**	**Benefits**	**Total**	**Step Estimate**
Add	Principal Admin Analyst (FC 104)	1.00	$117,031	$76,597	$193,628	Step 2 for 10 months Step 3 for 2 months
	Net Change FY 2024-25	**1.00**	**$117,031**	**$76,597**	**$193,628**	
Estimated Annual Expense at Maximum Step (Step 6 of 6)						
Action	**Classification**	**FTE**	**Salary**	**Benefits**	**Total**	**Step Estimate**
Add	Principal Admin Analyst (FC 104)	1.00	$ 141,086	$88,582	$229,668	Step 6 for 12 months
	Net Change FY 2024-25	**1.00**	**$141,086**	**$88,582**	**$229,668**	

Go to **Item 36** on page 10, below, to see a related item on economic development.

Item 31 - Request to receive a report and provide direction regarding: 1) the County's option to assume fire responsibility as named in Oceano Community Service District's application of divestiture of fire authority to the Local Agency Formation Commission; and 2) the level of fire service the County, as the successor agency, would provide to the community of Oceano if responsibility is directed to be assumed. The Oceano Community Service District has requested that the County assume responsibility for its fire and all hazard protection. The costs of operating the fire service have outstripped the District's (revenue) growth, due to increasing salary and benefit growth, especially pension cost. The District citizens have rejected a ballot measure to impose a tax increase. The Board is asked to give further direction. There does not seem to be a professional recommendation from staff, on which of several paths, the Board should take.

As we have forecast over the years, this will be a growing trend as weaker districts and some cities begin to collapse under the unsustainable structure of California State and local government costs and financing mechanisms. Several years ago, the Cayucos Fire District went through the same process and wound up costing the County an additional million dollars per year.

Several different levels of service and corresponding levels of cost are detailed in the tables below.

By comparing the level of service in the first table to the new costs in the second table, the reader can ascertain the choices.

Summary of Service Level Options for the County

Option	Responding Station	Increased Resources to Responding Station	Estimated One Time Cost	Estimated Annual Ongoing Cost	Response Time	Service Level Impact to Oceano and Surrounding Area Compared to Current Service Level
County Fire/CAL FIRE						
1	Nipomo 22	None	$0	$0*	11-12 minutes as available	Significant Decrease
2	Nipomo 22	Increase from 2-0 to 3-0 staffing	$360,000	$1.4M*	11-12 minutes as available	Significant Decrease
3	Nipomo 22	Add 2-0 engine company	$1.9M	$2.1M*	11-12 minutes (dedicated engine)	Slight Decrease
4	Oceano	Add 2-0 engine company	$3.5M min	$2.1M	3-7 minutes	Significant Increase
Five Cities Fire Authority						
5	FCFA AG/GB	Contract for 2-0 staffing	$0	$1.8M	AG 7-11 minutes GB 7-9 minutes	Equivalent

*Assuming no change to Automatic and/or mutual aid agreements (potential to increase)

Pending Board direction, and assuming the majority, if not all, property tax and other assets are transferred to the County, there may be a significant General Fund impact. The following table outlines the Summary of Costs for Options 1-5.

Summary of Annual Cost Options for the County

Option	Responding Station	Estimated Funding Available for Operations	Estimated Annual Ongoing Cost	Estimated Annual Operational Funding Gap	Estimated One-Time Costs for Equipment and Infrastructure
1	Nipomo 22	$1,337,044	$0*	$0	$0
2	Nipomo 22	$1,337,044	$1.4M*	$(62,956)	$(360,000)
3	Nipomo 22	$1,337,044	$2.1M*	$(762,956)	$(1.9) M
4	Oceano	$1,337,044	$2.1M	$(762,956)	$(3.5) M min
5	FCFA AG/GB	$1,337,044	$1.8M	$(498,783)	$0

*Assuming no change to Automatic and/or mutual aid agreements (potential to increase)

Supervisor Paulding will want to deliver the bacon on this one.

Item 32 - Request that the Board consider amending the San Luis Obispo County 2023 State Legislative Platform. The Board majority will push removing planks 14 and 15 from its Legislative Program, which enshrine the County's support for the protection of Proposition 13. The full text of the item is presented below. The public should be outraged and should show up to oppose removing these planks from the Program. Removal would constitute a serious attack on homeownership, small business, the aging, and suburban and country living.

The proponents of the destruction of Proposition 13 argue that it would be more democratic for people to exercise a purely majority vote on authorizing millions and even billions of dollars of tax increases and assessments. In the end, and given the insatiable government demand for money and the current matasticizing collapse of Calfiornia society, the taxes and assessments would accumlate to the point that for-profit businesses, creative enterprises (like entertainment), and investors would be driven out of California. It would become another post Soviet socialist oligarchy run by the current alliance of subsidized state capitailist oliogarchs and government unions.

Supervisor Gibson has been a consistent advocate for its elimination. Both Supervisors Ortiz-Legg and Paulding have stated that they support Proposition 13. Supervisors Arnold and Peschong have consistently voted to protect Proposition 13. The votes will reveal the truth. You can't be half pregnant on this one.

In the big picture, weakening the protection is a major attack on the middle class, private property and our heritage.

COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Administrative Office / John Nilon / (805) 781-5011

DATE: 9/12/2023

SUBJECT: Request that the Board consider amending the San Luis Obispo County 2023 State Legislative Platform.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board consider amending the San Luis Obispo County 2023 State Legislative Platform.

DISCUSSION

On August 22, 2023, the Board of Supervisors approved a staff referral, "Direct staff to return with an item revising the County's 2023 Legislative Platform by removing items 14 and 15 in Platform, and that were referenced in public comment. The first comment having to do with the voter thresholds and the second one, a more general one, regarding Prop 13 and split rolls. Further direct staff to refrain from advancing any opinions of the County of San Luis Obispo to agencies or individuals or anyone outside, on this matter, until such time as our Legislative Platform has been considered for revision."

On February 7, 2023, the Board of Supervisors approved the 2023 State Legislative Platform. The platform is a statement of priority and establishes the basis for advocacy efforts with the Executive and Legislative branches of the State of California.

Within the 2023 State Legislative Platform are general principles and they are presented in pertinent part:

14. Oppose any measures or legislation that reduces the super-majority vote required to raise taxes from 2/3rd to 55%.

15. Oppose any legislation or initiative that proposes to modify Proposition 13. Specifically, oppose any legislation or proposal that would establish a so-called "Split Roll" for property tax, which would thereby reduce protections for commercial property owners. Oppose any legislation that would further the effort to modify Proposition 13 in lieu of the ballot proposition.

As requested in the Board referral, these items are listed for consideration in your deliberations.

Continued on the next page:

During the August 22, 2023, Board's deliberation on the motion to refer, the concept of the voters' right to place matters on the ballot was discussed. Accordingly, the Board may want to consider the following addition to the 2023 State Legislative Platform:

> "In general, the County supports the right of its residents to qualify measures for the electorate's consideration. However, the County's position on individual qualified measures must be consistent with the general principles listed within the legislative platform or by other actions taken by the Board."

The Board may also wish to make additional amendments to the 2023 State Legislative Platform and if so, may want to consider such amendments during discussion of this item.

It is, therefore, recommended that your Board consider amending the 2023 State Legislative Platform.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT/IMPACT

The Administration will communicate any changes to the County's State lobbyist, delegates, and advocacy organizations.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

No financial impact to the General Fund with this action.

Actually, elimination of Prop.13. will lead to vast private sector disinvestment, accelerated flight from the state, and ultimately reduction in State and local revenues.

RESULTS

Action from the Board will result in removing items 14 and 15 from the Legislative Platform, where no opinion on tax measure thresholds or changes will be stated.

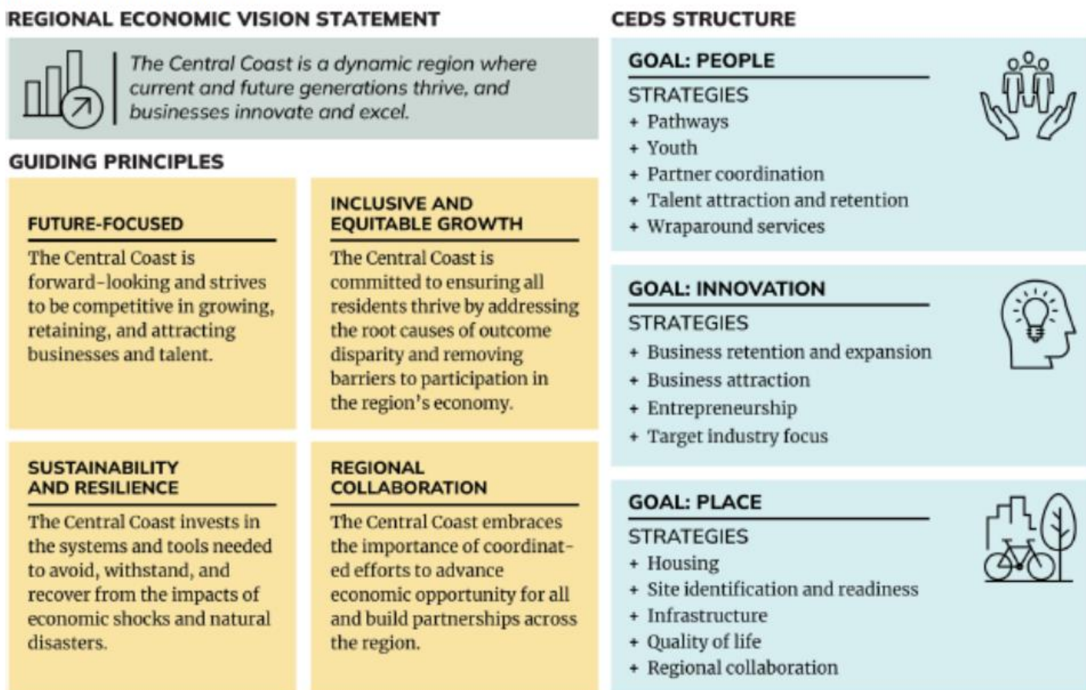
In the end it's all about dispossessing the middle class.

Matters After 1:30

Item 36 -Surprise Item - Added Board Business. Request to receive and file the draft, "Resilience Roadmap: A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the Counties of San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara." Staff recommends the item placement be the first item of Afternoon Board Business. This item will be heard before **Item 34,** below. The item outlines how San Luis Obispo County and Santa Barbara County will work together under the REACH umbrella.

The purpose of the agenda item and presentation to your Board is to receive and file the draft Resilience Roadmap: A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the Counties of San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara. The draft report (Attachment 2) is being released for a 30-day public comment period on September 12, 2023, and therefore is being presented at both the County of San Luis Obispo and County of Santa Barbara's Board of Supervisors meetings on the same day. The discussion in the staff report is divided into five sections: 1) a background of the report; 2) an overview of the stakeholder engagement and data gathering process; 3) highlights of the CEDS report; 4) instructions for public comment; and 5) next steps.

Figure 1. CEDS Framework



Source(s): TIP Strategies, Inc.

The project seems to focus on working with the educational institutuons in the area to prepare for actual jobs in the region. This serves as an attractant for business retention and in-location. If the Board majority rejects protection of Prop 13 and it is eventually terminated or watered down, none of this will mean a thing.

The REACH Project Manager in charge is Quinn Brady, of leftist organizing fame. REACH swears that she is the best CEDS Director in the entire State of Calfiornia.

Item 34 - Overview of options for creating an independent redistricting commission. There is no such thing as a truly independent redistricting commission. No matter how hard the designers try to make it independent of politics, it is impossible. This is because, ultimately, the members must be appointed within the confines of the creating jurisdiction, in this case, the County. The fact that the members must have some fundamental knowledge of public affairs and how governments work means that truly independent people will not be selected. In fact, our observation of other jurisdictions' commissions suggests that in the end, the current societal ideological split between conservatives and socialists always infects the process and ultimately members of these commissions. Moreover, the staff people assigned to assist the commissions, usually lawyers, are most often socialist hacks from government or from law firms that are heavy government contractors. Would the County contract with Chuck Bell (a Constitutionalist) to assist this process? Fat chance!!!

Perhaps artificial intelligence could solve the probem. After all, it is now writing student term papers, doing surgery, and landing airliners.

None the less, you can expect a long and complicated process to figure out what type of commission should be created. It will also be commensurately expensive for the consultants and staff. The Santa Barbara County Board version was so corroupt that they selected a leftist croney law firm that had sued the County on an election matter in previous years.

The write-up states in part:

In the 2020 redistricting cycle, twenty-two cities and counties had independent redistricting commissions redraw their boundaries.

Types of Redistricting Commissions

1. Advisory Redistricting Commission: An "advisory redistricting commission" is defined as a body that recommends to the legislative body placement of district boundaries for that legislative body. (Elections Code, section 23000(a)). If the legislative body desires to create an advisory redistricting commission, they may do so by proscribing the manner in which members are appointed. The only limitation is that an elected official of the local jurisdiction or a family member, staff member or paid campaign staff of an elected official shall not be appointed to serve on the commission. The legislative body may, if they so choose, impose additional requirements or restrictions on commission members or applicants.

2. Hybrid Redistricting Commission: A "hybrid redistricting commission" is defined as a body that recommends to a legislative body two or more maps and the legislative body is required to adopt one of those maps without modification, except as may be required to comply with state or federal law. (Elections Code, section 23000(c)).

3. Independent Redistricting Commission: An "independent redistricting commission" is defined as a body, other than a legislative body, that is empowered to adopt the district boundaries of a legislative body. (Election Codes, section 23000(d)

Details are included in the link to the Board letter. It's fairly hefty, so it may need a control click and then takes a few seconds to open.

[155427 (ca.gov)]

Item 35 - Any Supervisor may ask a question for clarification, make an announcement, or report briefly on his or her activities. In addition, Supervisors may request staff to report back to the Board at a subsequent meeting concerning any matter or may request that staff place a matter of business on a future agenda. Any request to place a matter of business for consideration on a future agenda requires the majority vote of the Board.

During the August 22, 2023, Board's deliberation on the motion to refer, the concept of the voters' right to place matters on the ballot was discussed. Accordingly, the Board may want to consider the following addition to the 2023 State Legislative Platform:

> "In general, the County supports the right of its residents to qualify measures for the electorate's consideration. However, the County's position on individual qualified measures must be consistent with the general principles listed within the legislative platform or by other actions taken by the Board."

The Board may also wish to make additional amendments to the 2023 State Legislative Platform and if so, may want to consider such amendments during discussion of this item.

It is, therefore, recommended that your Board consider amending the 2023 State Legislative Platform.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT/IMPACT

The Administration will communicate any changes to the County's State lobbyist, delegates, and advocacy organizations.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

No financial impact to the General Fund with this action.

RESULTS

Action from the Board will result in removing items 14 and 15 from the Legislative Platform, where no opinion on tax measure thresholds or changes will be stated.

Central Coast Community Energy Authority Joint Meeting of the Policy Board and the Operations Board of Wednesday, September 13, 2023, 1:00 PM - Paso Robles Inn, 1103 Spring Street, Paso Robles, CA 93446 (Scheduled)

As noted, the meeting is being held in Paso Robles instead of Monterrey at their headquarters. This is likely to celebrate the fact that the 3 members of the new SLO Board of Supervisors majority voted to join 3CE. The meeting itself contains no business items, but instead a series of presentations hyping the3CE model and an all-electric society. There are no regular business items or decisions.

REGULAR AGENDA

1. Workshop: Powering the Future, Inspiring Leadership, and Innovation in Renewable Energy
    - **Panel Discussion: *The Clean Energy Frontier: Exploring Innovative Solutions***
        - Moderator: Jena Price, Partner, TrattenPrice
        - Arne Olson, Senior Partner, Energy +Environmental Economics
        - Pete Skala, Dir. for Procurement, Efficiency, & Electrification, California Public Utilities Commission
        - Delphine Hou, Deputy Director, California Department of Water Resources
        - Alexander Morris, General Manager, California Community Power
    - **Panel Discussion: *Community Electrification Exchange: Leaders in Dialogue***
        - Moderator: Bob Hill, Sustainability Official, City of San Luis Obispo
        - Rachel Zook, Senior Program Manager, Nuvve
        - Katherine Garrison, Transportation & Toxics, California Air Resources Board
        - Kevin Johnston, Associate Council, California Farm Bureau Federation
        - Cliff Staton, Head of Government Affairs and Community Relations, OhmConnect
    - **Keynote Address: Reshaping Energy: Overcoming Challenges on the Path to a Clean Grid**
        - Elliot Mainzer, President and CEO, California Independent System Operator
    - ***Powering the Future***
        - Dewayne Woods, Chief Financial Officer
        - Dennis Dyc-O'Neal, Chief Operating Officer
        - Catherine Stedman, Chief Communications Officer
        - Robert Shaw, Chief Executive Officer

Of course, no one is invited to present any other point of view, e.g., fake workshop.

Central Coast Community Energy Authority (3CE) Operations Board Meeting of Wednesday, Septermber13, 2023 - 4:30 PM Paso Robles Inn, 1103 Spring Street Paso Robles, Ca. 93446 (Scheduled)

Item 3 - Authorize the CEO to sign a contract for additional EV charging stations.

On January 11, 2023, the Operations Board authorized the CEO to execute Amendment No. 1 to the Agreement with Frontier Energy Inc. to add $150,000 to the initial agreement to support *additional customer segments with technical assistance services. The current Agreement has a total not to exceed amount of $389,378 and a term ending September 30, 2023.*

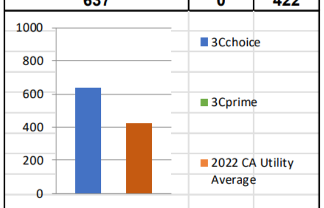
The lack of availability of abundant and reliable EV charging infrastructure remains a key barrier to the widespread adoption of EVs throughout the Central Coast, particularly in publicly accessible areas and at multifamily building properties

The report does not indicate how many they already have in service, how many are working, how many this contract will add, for how long the network will be provided, the unit cost per station, or where they will be located.

Item 7 - Adopt Resolution No. OB-2023-02 attesting to the Veracity of 3CE's 2022 Power Content Label. The CPUC requires all load serving entities (utilities and CCA's) to disclose the mix of their power in terms of CO_2 power content. The Board must certify it by Resolution. Note that for 58% of its power, 3CE has no idea of the CO_2 content.

2022 POWER CONTENT LABEL
(Central Coast Community Energy)
https://3cenergy.org

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Intensity (lbs CO_2e/MWh)		
3Cchoice	3Cprime	2022 CA Utility Average
637	0	422



Energy Resources	3Cchoice	3Cprime	2022 CA Power Mix
Eligible Renewable[1]	**35.8%**	**100.0%**	**35.8%**
Biomass & Biowaste	1.4%	0.0%	2.1%
Geothermal	12.0%	0.0%	4.7%
Eligible Hydroelectric	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%
Solar	12.5%	50.0%	17.0%
Wind	9.8%	50.0%	10.8%
Coal	**0.0%**	**0.0%**	**2.1%**
Large Hydroelectric	**5.9%**	**0.0%**	**9.2%**
Natural Gas	**0.0%**	**0.0%**	**36.4%**
Nuclear	**0.0%**	**0.0%**	**9.2%**
Other	**0.0%**	**0.0%**	**0.1%**
Unspecified Power[2]	**58.3%**	**0.0%**	**7.1%**
TOTAL	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**
Percentage of Retail Sales Covered by Retired Unbundled RECs[3]**:**	**0%**	**0%**	

[1]The eligible renewable percentage above does not reflect RPS compliance, which is determined using a different methodology.

[2]Unspecified power is electricity that has been purchased through open market transactions and is not traceable to a specific generation source.

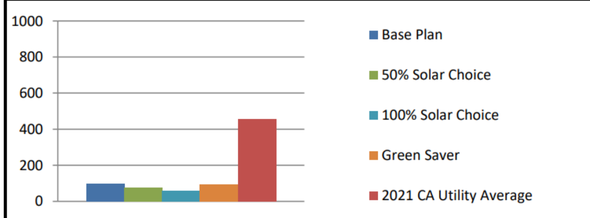
[3]Renewable energy credits (RECs) are tracking instruments issued for renewable generation. Unbundled renewable energy credits (RECs) represent renewable generation that was not delivered to serve retail sales. Unbundled RECs are not reflected in the power mix or GHG emissions intensities above.

For specific information about this electricity portfolio, contact:	**Central Coast Community Energy (831) 641-7222**
For general information about the Power Content Label, visit:	https://www.energy.ca.gov/programs-and-topics/programs/power-source-disclosure-program

Per the table below, note that even when nuclear and large hydro are not counted, PG&E contains more eligible renewables, 47% more than 3CE, at 38.5% for the base plan. If the State allowed PG&E to count nuclear and large hydro (which are CO_2 free), it would be 91.1 % CO_2 free. A small amount of natural gas (8.9%) would be the only non-renewable.

2021 POWER CONTENT LABEL
Pacific Gas and Electric Company
www.pge.com/billinserts

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Intensity (lbs CO_2e/MWh)				
Base Plan	50% Solar Choice	100% Solar Choice	Green Saver	2021 CA Utility Average
98	**78**	**58**	**95**	**456**



Energy Resources	Base Plan	50% Solar Choice	100% Solar Choice	Green Saver	2021 CA Power Mix
Eligible Renewable[1]	**47.7%**	**70.9%**	**93.9%**	**89.9%**	**33.6%**
Biomass & Biowaste	4.2%	2.1%	0.0%	0.0%	2.3%
Geothermal	5.2%	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%	4.8%
Eligible Hydroelectric	1.8%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%
Solar	25.7%	59.8%	93.9%	89.9%	14.2%
Wind	10.9%	5.5%	0.0%	0.0%	11.4%
Coal	**0.0%**	**0.0%**	**0.0%**	**0.0%**	**3.0%**
Large Hydroelectric	**4.0%**	**2.0%**	**0.0%**	**0.0%**	**9.2%**
Natural Gas	**8.9%**	**7.4%**	**0.0%**	**0.0%**	**37.9%**
Nuclear	**39.3%**	**19.7%**	**0.0%**	**0.0%**	**9.3%**
Other	**0.0%**	**0.0%**	**0.0%**	**0.0%**	**0.2%**
Unspecified Power[2]	**0.0%**	**0.0%**	**6.1%**	**10.1%**	**6.8%**
TOTAL	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**
Percentage of Retail Sales Covered by Retired Unbundled RECs[3]**:**	**4%**	**0%**	**0%**	**0%**	

What a sad ideological racket is being foisted on the people by their State and local governments.

Staff Report Item 2.3: Delegate Authority to the CEO to Participate in Pacific Gas & Electric's and Southern California Edison's Spring 2023 PCIA Market Offer for Long-Term Renewable Energy Credit Products; and to Execute Agreements for up to the Awarded Volumes in Amounts Not-to-Exceed a total of $177,000,0000 with terms of at Least 10 Years. As we have previously reported, 3CE is having trouble finding enough renewable energy credits to comply with State mandated power source mix requirements for CO_2 reduction. Staff seeks authorization to spend up to $177 million to attempt to acquire such credits from PG&E, which are actually generated by it use of nuclear power. Huh?

The state will not allow PG&E to count nuclear power as part of its CO_2 free portfolio, but once it is laundered through a CCA, it's OK?

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:

On March 7, 2023, the IOUs each issued a Long-Term Market Offer for PCIA-eligible RPS energy. These Solicitations allow load serving entities (LSEs) to offer to purchase the unallocated portion of each IOUs PCIA renewable energy portfolio. The projects being sold off by the IOUs have contract end dates out through 2043. If awarded, and if 3CE accepts the award, 3CE is required to enter a contract with a term equal to the IOUs contract end dates out through 2043, or up to a 20-year term.

The REC products offered through the IOUs' Solicitations are critical to 3CE's strategy for compliance with its SB 350 obligation, which requires 40% of 3CE's retail load be met with RPS eligible resources over the next compliance period of 2021 through 2024 ("Compliance Period Four"). PPA project delays caused by supply chain constraints and inflationary pressures are impacting 3CE's compliance strategy which relied on aggressively pursuing new incremental RPS projects. Current project delays may result in 3CE being as much as 22% short of its RPS requirements instead of the planned 31% long in Compliance Period 4. Penalties for Compliance Period 4 deficiencies are significant at $50/MWh. The IOUs Spring 2023 PCIA Long-Term Market Offer provides 3CE an opportunity to pick up additional RECs to avoid penalties while hedging against further project delays and reducing the PCIA obligation of its customers.

Trouble is accumulating in the CCA business model.

Item 14 - Support seeking the Policy Board's approval to adopt the Fiscal Year 2023-24 Recommended Budget for Central Coast Community Energy (3CE) including updated Financial Policies and cost-based rate adjustments. The proposed 3CE Budget is interesting in that it shows that circumstances are tightening up as regulatory pressure and the cost of energy, combined with lack renewable energy credits on in the marketplace, will compel rate increases. The write-up states in part.

The increase in COE and other expenditures is financed by a recommended adjustment to electricity generation rates as follows: increases by an average of $0.025 per kilowatt-hour (kWh) in the PG&E service area and maintaining the 2%-minus per kWh rate in the Southern California Edison (SCE) service area, resulting in a $101 million increase in revenue collection. The COS rate increases will be effective October 1, 2023, and January 1, 2024, to provide a phased in approach to minimize overall increases to customers.

To keep rates as low as possible for our customers, this year's Recommended Budget does not anticipate adding to the agency's Net Position given that reserves are within an acceptable range as defined by the Recommended Financial Policies.
While 3CE has demonstrated success bringing new clean and renewable resources online, the electricity generation sector, including 3CE, faces several challenges that could impact 3CE's aggressive renewable goals.

Project Delays *Developers continue to claim impacts to contractual online dates from supply chain disruptions, inflation, the Russian War in Ukraine, and mounting interconnection issues. Delays to 3CE's new generation projects jeopardize our ability to meet compliance obligations, and to stabilize the cost of energy with fixed low-cost contracts. 3CE is working with developers to help address these impacts, ensure value for customers, and bring resources online as fast and cost-effectively as possible.*

Wholesale Market Volatility *Natural gas storage and distribution constraints, a colder-than-usual winter, prolonged summer heat events throughout California and the western United States, and many of the same macroeconomic conditions impacting developers, continue to fuel unprecedented wholesale market volatility. A strategic and layered procurement approach in accordance with 3CE's Energy Risk Management Policy, maintenance of a strong credit rating, and disciplined fiscal management by our Boards has enabled 3CE to minimize the cost impacts to date.*

Resource Adequacy Resource Adequacy *(RA) is not energy and does not create additional capacity for the grid. Rather, RA is a compliance product that commits generators to be available to dispatch when needed. Regulatory changes have increased the amount of RA that Load Serving Entities (LSEs) are required to purchase, while the retirement of fossil-burning generators and limitations on qualifying imports have decreased the supply of available RA resources. The imbalance of supply and demand has spiked RA prices by over 200% year over year to levels that exceed price caps set by many regulatory commissions across the country. While California has no resource adequacy price cap, states that do generally set the cap below* *what officials deem excessive.*

The chart below provides a summary of the FY 2023-24 Recommended Budget:

FY 2023-24 Budget Summary

	FY 22-23 Final Adopted	FY 23-24 Baseline	FY 23-24 Recommended Augmentation	FY 23-24 Recommended Budget	FY 23-24 Variance Prior Year Budget
REVENUE					
Total	$461,797,031	$455,128,399	$107,705,049	$562,833,447	$101,036,416
COST OF ENERGY SOLD					
Subtotal	$403,427,380	$520,297,514		$520,297,514	$116,870,134
SALARIES & BENEFITS					
Subtotal	$9,190,535	$9,537,076		$9,537,076	$346,541
SERVICES & SUPPLIES					
Subtotal	$30,416,173	$29,968,253	$3,030,605	$32,998,858	$2,582,685
CAPITAL					
Subtotal	$202,779				($202,779)
Total Appropriations	$443,236,867	$559,802,843	$3,030,605	$562,833,448	$119,596,581
Total Financing Sources	$461,797,031	$455,128,399	$107,705,049	$562,833,448	$101,036,416
Total Budgeted Change to Net Position	$18,560,164	($104,674,444)	$104,674,444	($0)	($18,560,164)

It appears that in the current FY 22-23 fiscal year and the FY 23-24 projected base line energy costs are exceeding revenue from sales. This is why they need to raise rates by more than $100 million. They say they are raising the rates by an average of $0.025 per kilowatt-hour. How does this generate a new $107 million, which is about a 21% increase?

They claim that their rate structure is lower than that of PG&E per the tables below.

Customer Classes	Average Difference 3Cchoice to PG&E Rates
Residential	-16%
Small Commercial	-17%
Medium Commercial	-22%
Large Commercial	-21%
Agricultural	-18%
Streetlights	-3%

3Cchoice Rate Comparison to PG&E	
PG&E Average $/kWh	$0.138
3Cchoice (PG&E Territory) $/kWh	$0.116

Then, why has everyone's bill gone up so much in the last year? Are they subsidizing medium and large commercial at the expense of residential?

LAST WEEK'S HIGHLIGHTS

No Board of Supervisors Meeting on Tuesday, September 5, 2023 (Not Scheduled)

The next scheduled meeting is on Tuesday, September 12, 2023.

Planning Commission Meeting of Tuesday, September 5, 2023 (Completed)

Item 1 - A study session regarding the Diablo Canyon Power Plant Decommissioning Project, and the Draft Environmental Impact Report. The Applicant, Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E), is seeking a Development Plan/Coastal Development Permit/Conditional Use Permit (DP/CDP/CUP) to allow for decommissioning of the Diablo Canyon Power Plant (DCPP). The decommissioning project would proceed in two phases extending over approximately 15 years: Phase 1 (2024 -2031) includes pre-planning, decontamination, and dismantling activities; and Phase 2 (2032 - 2039) includes soil testing, additional soil remediation and final site restoration. The project site is located approximately 7 miles northwest of the community of Avila Beach, within the San Luis Bay Coastal and the San Luis Bay Inland Sub Area North Planning Areas. After COLAB presented the problems below, the Commission allowed the Planning Department CEQA consultant to rebut the information. She stated that the DEIR only covers the demolition and transport issues and therefore the larger issues of energy, CO_2, and economic disinvestment should not be considered as part of the DEIR. COLAB was not allowed to respond – "some workshop". COLAB will continue to press the issue. Keep in mind that both the Commission and Board of Supervisors ultimately should consider the problems, whether or not the bureaucrats control the CEQA process. The utter hypocrisy of the staff response is outrageous. Of course, the DEIR consumes 6 volumes and thousands of pages about abalone, weeds, a firing range, and other minutiae designed to distract decision makers and the public.

A PUBLIC POLICY DISASTER[1]

1. PG&E is proceeding on parallel paths with respect to the Plant's future. The first path is to process a permit application with SLO County to shut down the Plant in 2024 and 2025 and then dismantle it over a period of years. This is probably the most complex permit ever reviewed by the County. It covers demolishing large industrial structures, transportation and disposal of demolition debris, and on-site storage of decaying nuclear fuel for an indefinite period. As noted below at **point 3**, the EIR fails to adequately analyze the societal energy impacts of the shutdown.

The second path is to seek relicensing of the Plant for 5 years or perhaps longer, assisted by government subsidies, as the State and the PG&E service area lack sufficient power, at least in the near-term years, absent the Plant's 2,240 MGW of 24/7 constant power.

The subject of the study session is the status of path one.

[1] This is not PG&E's fault. The State of California has forced PG&E into this series of events as outlined herein.

2. For a decade PG&E sought to relicense the Plant, but was opposed at every juncture by both SLO County and Santa Barbara County leftist Boards of Supervisors and the usual coterie of environmental luddites. It wasn't until 2016, when the SLO County Board achieved a conservative majority, that the County switched policy and sought to retain the Plant. Santa Barbara County has never advocated for retention of the Plant. Hysterical fears of the Plant being inundated by a tidal wave similar to the Fukushima, Japan disaster were fanned relentlessly. Of course, the Fukushima Plant sits at sea level, while the Diablo Plant is situated on top of an 85-foot-high bluff.

Additionally, the State imposed the community choice aggregation (CCA) program, which allowed the creation of new tax-free government entities to compete against PG&E, utilizing long term energy contracts and tax-exempt status. Meanwhile, PG&E was forced to serve those areas opting into the CCA programs while maintaining its massive infrastructure to transmit power. Further compounding the problem, PG&E was compelled to fund a wide variety of energy saving grants to individuals and governments. Over the years, the company determined to abandon the energy generation portion of its business. In 2016 it announced that it would cease seeking approval for relicensing Diablo.

3. The EIR fails to analyze the adequacy and legality of the replacement energy required. Unlike most EIRs, which generate multiple reasons to deny projects, the Diablo Closure EIR approaches the issue narrowly, by focusing on the short-term temporary impacts of the de-construction project and the debris disposal. In terms of the societal energy impact of the project, it deliberately avoids any discussion of the loss of energy capacity to the customers and the state. Rather, it focuses on the energy required to execute the demolition project. **Section 4.7.4** actually states in part:
Because the decommissioning of DCPP would be a consequence of PG&E's prior decision to not pursue renewal of the existing licenses to operate the DCPP reactors, this analysis focuses on the energy use that could occur during decommissioning activities themselves. See Impact EN-2 for a discussion of the effects of procuring replacement power.

The referenced impact of Section EN-2 essentially states that the CUPC conditions for closure issued in 2018 have already solved the problem of replacing Diablo's CO_2 free energy.

CPUC's 2021 order for statewide electric system reliability specifically establishes the emissions profile for the replacement capacity for DCPP's retirement to require procurement of 2,500 MW from firm, zero-emitting resources by 2024. The order assigned the procurement responsibility to all load-serving entities based on their share of peak demand (CPUC, 2021). These requirements ensure that the replacement power for DCPP retirement would be procured in a manner that is consistent with statewide plans for promoting renewable energy.

Two CPUC Diablo Shutdown footnotes emphasize the point:

CPUC D. 21-06-035, June 24, 2021 (p.44): *"Nonetheless, to ensure no ambiguity, we will require that at least 2,500 MW of the resources procured by the LSEs [load-serving entities] collectively, between 2023 and 2025, be from zero-emission resources that generate electricity, or generation resources paired with storage, to replace Diablo Canyon."*

The CPUC defined "firm" resources as "resources must be able to deliver firm power (with a capacity factor of at least 80 percent). This means that the resource must not be subject to use limitations or be weather dependent. The resource must be a generating resource, not storage, able to generate when needed, for as long as needed. In addition, the resource may not have any on-site emissions, except if the resource otherwise qualifies under the RPS program eligibility requirements." D.21-06-035 at p. 36

Obviously, solar (after dark) and wind (on calm days) are totally weather dependent.

The EIR has determined that the CPUC's decision solved this problem. Were the Planning Commission and ultimately the Board of Supervisors to accept this "reasoning," they would be grossly deficient in performing their duty.

The Planning Commission should carefully examine staff, PG&E, Central Coast Community Energy, and the California Independent System Operator on the egregious failure of this EIR to accurately analyze this issue.

The assertion that the CPUC 2018 decision covers the issue is patently not true. As we have noted, the State has extended deadlines for the closure of existing gas plants, has warned Central Coast Community Energy that it is in violation of proven reserve resource adequacy requirements, is allowing importation of large tranches of energy from coal and nuclear-powered Arizona Public Service at night, and is now actively promoting the retention of Diablo.

Table 4.7-2. Electricity Consumption for Load Served by PG&E (GWh per year)

Customer Sector	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Ag & Water Pump	6,692	5,100	5,832	4,567	6,638
Commercial Building	30,661	30,753	30,148	30,069	26,247
Commercial Other	4,546	4,353	4,266	4,424	3,949
Industry	10,619	10,515	10,519	9,877	9,814
Mining & Construction	1,909	1,765	1,594	1,670	1,748
Residential	28,625	29,138	27,700	27,485	29,834
Streetlight	355	321	311	298	290
PG&E Total Usage	**83,408**	**81,945**	**80,369**	**78,390**	**78,519**

Source: CEC, 2021b.
[1] Usage expressed in gigawatt-hours (GWh); one GWh equals one million kilowatt-hours.

Just exactly how is this level of energy going to be provided when the Plant closes?

4. The EIR fails to analyze the Greenhouse gas generation impact of closing the Plant. Again, similarly to Section 3, above, the EIR analyzes only the greenhouse gas generation for demolition and debris transportation aspects of the decommissioning project itself. It totally ignores the generation of CO_2 and other greenhouse gasses necessary to the replace CO_2 free energy from the plant. This will be provided primarily by gas, coal, and oil when the nuclear generation ceases. Diablo offsets 7 million metric tonnes of CO_2 per year when compared with energy generated by natural gas, coal, and oil. The EIR contains no analysis of this impact whatsoever. Just how much CO_2 free energy will be available beginning in 2024 to replace Diablo's 2240 MGW over the next 5- and 10-year periods?

Again, the EIR simply relies on the 2018 CPUC approval conditions of the Plant closure. The Planning Commission would be derelict in its duty to not require an analysis of the current situation, which is out of compliance with the CPUC stipulated conditions.

5. The EIR fails to disclose the negative economic impacts and resulting public safety impacts caused by the closure of the Plant. The EIR does inadvertently provide a forecast of the decline of employment resulting from the Plant closure as part of its traffic and transportation analysis.

Table 4.16-2. Project Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Generation

VMT Generator	Existing Conditions	Phase 1	Phase 2
DCPP			
Number of DCPP Employees	1,157	864	268
DCPP Employment VMT per Working Day (miles)	56,080	41,612	12,880

It is not clear where the figure 1,157 comes from, since many other sources report the plant's staffing of PG&E employees and others to be around 1,700. For example, the County's 2022 Annual Financial Report pegs it at 1,700. The jobs that remain will primarily be the temporary construction jobs involved in the demolition and transportation of the demolition materials off site. These are not the $141,000 per year professional, engineering, technical, and skilled trade jobs, which are now permanent.

What is the economic impact? We thought that the County had determined to require an economic impact report on major projects. None is present here. One was required for the Dana Specific Plan.

County of San Luis Obispo
Principal Employers
Current Year and Ten Years Ago
(UNAUDITED)

	2022			2013		
Employer	Number of Employees	Rank	Percentage of Total County Employment	Number of Employees	Rank	Percentage of Total County Employment
County of San Luis Obispo*	2,847	1	2.04%	2,800	1	1.88%
Atascadero State Hospital	2,300	2	1.67%	2,300	3	1.55%
California Men's Colony	2,000	3	1.45%	2,000	4	1.35%
Cal Poly State University, SLO	1,912	4	1.39%	2,573	2	1.73%
Pacific Gas and Electric Company	1,700	5	1.23%	1,700	5	1.14%
Tenet Healthcare	1,312	6	0.95%	1,200	6	0.81%
Lucia Mar Unified School District	1,070	7	0.78%	1,000	7	0.67%
Community Action Partnership of San Luis Obispo County	942	8	0.68%	-	-	-
Paso Robles Public Schools	935	9	0.68%	935	8	0.63%
Cuesta College	854	10	0.62%	-	-	-
San Luis Coastal Unified School District	-	-	-	902	10	0.61%
Cal Poly Corporation	-	-	-	906	9	0.61%
Total Employment Labor Force	137,800			148,600		

Sources:
Pacific Coast Business Times
State of California Employment Development Department
2012-13 San Luis Obispo County Annual Comprehensive Financial Report
2021-22 County Budget Report*

It represents about $26 million in property taxes per year to a school district, the County, and other agencies.

County of San Luis Obispo
Principal Property Taxpayers
Current Year and Ten Years Ago
(In Thousands)
(UNAUDITED)

		Fiscal Year 2021-22			Fiscal Year 2012-13		
Taxpayer	Industry	Assessed Value	Rank	Percentage of Total County Assessed Value	Assessed Value	Rank	Percentage of Total County Assessed Value
Pacific Gas & Electric Co.	Utility	$ 1,482,778	1	2.31%	$ 2,641,186	1	6.32%
High Plans Ranch II LLC	Solar Ranch	762,251	2	1.19%	-	-	-
Southern California Gas Co.	Utility	154,628	3	0.24%	63,866	7	0.15%
Jamestown Premier	Commercial	153,163	4	0.24%	-	-	-
Phillips 66 Company	Oil Refinery	139,218	5	0.22%	-	-	-
E&J Gallo Winery/Vineyards	Winery	98,162	6	0.15%	-	-	-
CAP VIII - Mustang Village LLC	Apartments	98,068	7	0.15%	76,800	5	0.18%
Firestone Walker LLC	Brewery	91,595	8	0.14%	-	-	-
Treasury Wine Estates	Winery	89,935	9	0.14%	-	-	-
Sierra Vista Hospital	Hospital	84,246	10	0.13%	55,004	10	0.13%
TOSCO Corp	Petroleum & Gas	-		-	144,966	2	0.35%
Plains Exploration & Prod Co	Petroleum & Gas	-		-	81,401	4	0.19%
Beringer Wine Estates Company	Winery	-		-	89,873	3	0.22%
Pacific Bell Telephone Co	Communications	-		-	71,897	6	0.17%
Martin Hotel Management	Hotel	-		-	62,521	8	0.15%
Pasquini Charles Jr Tre Etal	Private	-		-	55,665	9	0.13%
	Total	$ 3,154,044		4.91%	$ 3,343,179		8.00%
	Total County Assessed Value	$ 64,252,963			$ 41,796,284		

Sources:
County Property Tax System
2012-13 San Luis Obispo County Annual Comprehensive Financial Report

6. The costs of remedying the above gaps in the EIR should not be charged to PG&E, as they are the result of the County staff failure to properly manage the project in accordance with CEQA, the County's own policies, and concern for the public interest.

No SLOCOG Meeting on Wednesday, September 6, 2023 (Not Scheduled)

EMERGENT ISSUES

Item 1 - EV drivers have the sads because of no-amenity charging stations. This is an excerpt from a longer article

By Andrea Widburg

I just returned from a half-day road trip. We tanked up twice and, both times, we headed for the building attached to the gas tanks. There, we had clean restrooms (complete with toilet paper) and, if we so desired, access to a bit of food and drink, too. Not great food and drink but, when you're tired, hungry, and thirsty, good enough. All those things are lacking when you're hanging out for an hour at a roadside charging station for your EV, and EV drivers are not happy. Heh.

According to JD Power, a research firm that keeps close tabs on consumer sentiment around EVs, drivers are consistently unhappy with the availability of things to do while charging their cars. Getting a solid charge typically requires about 30 minutes, much longer than the wait to pump a full tank of gas.

If they were developing through the free market, aside from the slave labor, torn-up roads, slow charging times, dependency on the Chinese, etc., maybe they'd be fine. After all, cars and planes had growing pains, too. The problem is that the government is jamming them down our throats. We are being forced to give up comfort, convenience, and our hard-earned money for these ridiculous cars. So, if someone has to pee on the side of the road, miss out on a snack, or sit all alone in a scary, dark parking lot at night…well, fine.

Item 2 - A literal power vacuum – that is what California Senate Bill 233 proposes.

By Thomas Buckley
And what is to be sucked? Your electric car.

The bill—which has passed the Senate and is now winding its way through the Assembly—states that all new electric vehicles to be sold in California after 2030 be "bidirectional."

Because the state has decided to essentially go all electric without having the ability to actually provide enough electricity, the climate warriors have gotten a bit creative and now see the millions of electric vehicles (EVs) in the state as tiny batteries to make up for their incompetence.

Currently, not every EV can send power back to the grid (like home solar panels that ship excess power to their local utility.) The bill—almost certain to pass because this is California—would change that.

The bill, however, is only the first step in the process of being able to drain your EV, as the technology to get the electricity back onto the grid does not actually exist. As with so many other Golden State climate-related projects, it is based on being able to do it someday . . . probably . . . maybe.

While this approach allows solons and nabobs to tout their green-a-fides, set even more absurd future goals by assuming things will work eventually, increase state spending to fund such projects, and create an excuse to not actually do anything practical—like build natural gas generators—to shore up the state's extremely wobbly grid, it does nothing to address California's self-imposed "energy insecurity."

The idea becomes even more absurd when one considers that shortly after announcing all new vehicles sold in the state by 2035 must be electric, the state asked the public to not charge their

EVs after work because the grid couldn't handle it. In theory, this bill raises the specter of electricity being drained out of your full Tesla to power your neighbor's empty Volt.

Furthermore, the concept is extremely dangerous. Imagine an emergency situation in which you have to leave your home immediately but you cannot because the state drained your car. The implications for fire evacuations, earthquake response, etc. are terrifying.

And it's not terribly clear if you would get paid for your power and/or if you would have to buy it back.

Beyond the impracticalities, the concept does shine a light, as it were, on how easily the electrical power supply can be controlled and—if the grid is you're only power option (no gas cars, no gas stoves, no propane, etc.)—how easily the public can be controlled through it.

From "The Psychology of Electricity":

Now, a person can go to a gas station, put solar panels on their roof, buy propane at the hardware store, use natural gas in their home, even cut down trees to burn for heat. In other words, there are options other than electricity; there are literally millions of ways to not need to use electricity.

But imagine a literally all-electric world—you are reduced, confined, required to get the energy you need to live from one source, one centrally (by necessity) controlled source that everything you own runs on, one centrally controlled source that can cut the power to your specific home anytime it wants.

Conceivably—see China/social credit systems/central bank digital currency/"you'll own nothing and be happy" and smart city concepts—[the] reasons for the power being cut will move beyond just being bill-related but conduct-related.

The power of energy as a social control lever is nearly limitless.
And that's another reason why this legislative initiative is a very bad idea.

Thomas Buckley, Mises Wire, Sept 7, 2023

Item 3 - Congressman Carbajal , County DA Savrnoch Promote 'Red Flag' Laws as Tool to Prevent Gun Violence.

Congressman Salud Carbajal and Santa Barbara County District Attorney John Savrnoch held a webinar on Wednesday to discuss California's "red flag" laws.

Carbajal and Savrnoch discussed how the gun violence restraining order works, how to bring awareness and how residents can utilize the laws.

The Extreme Risk Protection Act, which was Carbajal's bill to provide funding for expanded use of red flag laws, was signed into law by President Biden last summer.

California’s red flag law was introduced in 2014, shortly after the mass shooting in Isla Vista.

Savrnoch said on Wednesday that red flag laws allow for people to take preventable action against violence. If someone sees the signs of gun violence in someone they know, they can go to court and petition for any guns or ammunition to be taken away from that person.

“Red flag laws only work if people know about them and how to use them,” Carbajal said on Wednesday. “That’s for both citizens, those in the courts and our law enforcement.”

As long as a person can prove they have had sufficient contact with the subject of the restraining order for a year, anyone from the person’s spouse to their coworker can petition the court, according to Savrnoch.

The petitioner also has to prove that the person owns guns and that less restrictive measures either have not worked or wouldn’t work. The decision is ultimately up to a judge to decide whether the evidence warrants a gun violence restraining order.

Some of the warning signs that can fall under a gun violence restraining order include making online threats, stalking, previous incidents with assault weapons, and domestic violence.

“Aggressive behavior or professing to engage in aggressive or dangerous behavior are the things that people should look out for,” Savrnoch said.

There are several levels to how long the restraining order will be in place. A temporary order can be in place for 21 days and then apply for a “permanent order” that lasts for one to five years, Savrnoch said.

Savrnoch suggests that if someone sees these warning signs and feels that there is an immediate threat to contact law enforcement. Law enforcement can also file for a gun violence restraining order and often has more experience doing so.

Savrnoch said the laws will help with education around gun violence and make it easier to bring awareness to the resources available to the public and law enforcement.

“It’s a huge boost to an otherwise burdened law enforcement system and the legal system we work in,” Savrnoch said.

Carbajal and Savrnoch ended their webinar by saying there still needs to be more action to end the pattern of gun violence across the country.

“We need to do more,” Carbajal said. “We need to pass other laws, but this law in particular gives us another tool to continue to address these mass shootings and avoid tragedies in the future.”

Rebecca Caraway, Noozhawk Staff Writer, September 7, 2023

Item 4 - Protect Proposition 13. This week is crucial, with votes in the State Senate on 2 Bills designed weaken Proposition 13 to the point where it will be impotent. Where will our Board of Supervisors be on Tuesday relative to this issue?

NOTE ACTION TO BE TAKEN! CALL THE NINE STATE SENATORS LISTED BELOW!

CALL SENATOR JOHN LAIRD ALSO!
916-651-4017
OUR SENATOR

Friends,

I have some really BAD NEWS from yesterday’s vote in the State Assembly and we absolutely must get your help to prevent a disastrous tax hike measure from passing!

Late yesterday, both ACA-1 and ACA-13 bills to gut Prop 13 passed the Assembly by just ONE vote! But we aren’t done yet! Now these measures head to the State Senate – where we need your help IMMEDIATELY to KILL THESE BILLS!

Both ACA-1 and ACA-13 eliminate Prop 13’s two-thirds public vote requirement for any new tax hikes – and are specifically designed to block our California Taxpayer Protection Initiative that would require honest ballot titles on all future tax hikes and would retroactively invalidate billions in tax hikes Democrats recently imposed in California!

If we are to have a chance to stop the Democrat’s tax-raising bill from passing, I need your help in two ways:

HELP US FUND STATEWIDE TEXT MESSAEGS:

We need to fund an emergency statewide text message blast and phone banks to voters in key State Senate districts to put pressure on the politicians to back down from this terrible and costly idea! We exhausted our funds in hitting the State Assembly districts yesterday. Can you chip in to the fight IMMEDIATELY so we can alert voters today?

Contribute Securely: Protect Prop 13 and Block Tax Hikes

CALL THESE TARGET STATE SENATORS TODAY

I need you to immediately CALL the following swing State Senators and tell them "VOTE NO ON ACA-1 and ACA-13! Don't allow our taxes to be increased or we'll vote you out of office!"

State Senator Catherine Blakespaere – (916) 651-4038

Senator Marie Alvarado-Gil – (916) 651-4004

Senator Ana Caballero - (916) 651-4014

Senator David Min - (916) 651-4037

Senator Josh Newman - (916) 651-4029

Senator Susan Eggamn - (916) 651-4005

Senator Melissa Hurtado - (916) 651-4016

Senator Steve Glazier - (916) 651-4007

Senator Richard Roth - (916) 651-4031

Time is running out – as the State Senate has until next Thursday September 14 to pass or block these bills!

We only need six of these votes to either vote NO or PRESENT on the bills to kill them and stop the gutting of Prop 13 – so please help us ramp up pressure ASAP by making these calls to Senators above and chipping in an emergency contribution NOW to help fund our text messages to voters!

Best,

Carl DeMaio
Chairman
Reform California

PS: I wouldn't ask you to act TODAY if this weren't crucial and if we didn't have a good chance of winning this fight! The calls are crucial – and we need to get these texts out ASAP so help us fund those so we can hit voters in these target seats TODAY!

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I ONCE THOUGHT CALIFORNIA WOULD FIX ITSELF. I WAS WRONG

BY LEE OHANIAN

For the last five years, my Hoover colleague Bill Whalen and I have written about the economics of California, its state policies, and its state politics in this column. Before I began writing *California on Your Mind*, I knew that some California economic policies were poorly designed and creating significant waste and dysfunction. But it wasn't until after I began studying these issues in detail that I found out just how badly California is politically managed.

The problems are so numerous, so glaring, and so costly, that I thought California politicians would self-correct. I was wrong.

Every major policy error I have observed has become worse in the last five years, including budget waste, the failure of politicians to prioritize what Californians want, the lack of oversight and accountability within state and local government, and a deepening of the costly symbiosis between state politicians and the political interest groups who lie at the center of nearly all of California's policy failures. And this nexus will preserve California's deeply flawed policy status quo until voters decide that they have had enough.

Overpayment and waste within state government is considerable, and it largely reflects the lack of incentives for state agencies to be efficient and the lack of accountability when they make costly mistakes. California's state budget has grown over 50 percent in the last five years, rising from $201 billion in 2018–19 to $311 billion this fiscal year, totaling nearly $24,000 per California household. Despite this budget, I doubt one could identify any major activity or department within state government that performs at a high level and is operated at a reasonable cost.

State employee compensation is one major cost component that appears to be too expensive. State workers on average received about $143,000 in total compensation in 2019, roughly twice as much as private-sector compensation that year. This reported difference is too low, however, because public-sector pension contributions are understated, prefunding of public-sector retirement health benefits are not included in compensation, and the value of additional public-sector compensated days off is not included. A state public-private compensation comparison has not been performed since 2019, but average state worker compensation today could be as high as $170,000 if it kept up with inflation.

One reason state government compensation significantly exceeds private-sector compensation is because few public-sector agencies seriously benchmark their compensation practices to those in the private sector. Private-sector compensation is disciplined by the value created by their employees. In a competitive marketplace, private-sector employers need to pay enough to attract the talent they seek but will suffer losses if they overpay. These compensation dynamics are largely absent in the public sector, which leads to public-sector workers receiving higher compensation than they would in the private sector. For example, average compensation in California's Highway Patrol was $209,000 in 2019.

For comparison, total compensation in the highest paying private-sector industry in the country (utilities) averaged about $128,000 in 2019. This is for an industry that is extremely capital intensive and that tends to hire highly skilled specialists. In contrast, the primary requirements for becoming a highway patrol officer are high school graduation or equivalent, a valid California driver's license, and no felony convictions. The reason highway patrol employees receive such high compensation is because they are represented by a powerful union, and there are inadequate incentives within state government to do anything other than agree every three years to the union's lucrative collective bargaining agreements.

The same issue holds for many other state workers, including California state prison guards, who earn twice as much as prison guards in the rest of the country and who are also represented by a powerful union. Total compensation for a senior prison guard exceeds $200,000 annually, but this compensation doesn't include overtime. In 2021, overtime pay within the prison system totaled over $500 million, reflecting union contracts that provide generous overtime rates. But the cost to taxpayers goes beyond inflated prison system salaries, because the prison guard union effectively fights prison reforms, ranging from those that would rein in the behavior of corrupt guards to those that would enhance job training and rehabilitation of inmates, which in turn would help support their social transition and job prospects after leaving prison.

The significant waste within state government reflects poor decision making by state agencies, which can have disastrous effects. One example is California's Employment and Development Department (EDD), which is responsible for the administration of state unemployment benefits. The EDD manages this activity using a patch worked mainframe computer from the 1980s, running software originally developed in the 1950s. The system has long been susceptible to fraud, which was successfully managed using third-party software that was costing about $1 million per year—about 0.5 percent of the department's budget. But the department chose to discontinue the software because of its cost. This led to over $30 billion in fraudulent unemployment claims being paid during the height of the COVID pandemic, and many legitimate claims affecting nearly one million workers being held up for months. To benchmark the size of this fraud, it is about 50 percent larger than the annual budget of Tennessee, the country's 15th largest state.

Why is the EDD running an ancient IT system that can't reliably detect fraud or pay legitimate claims on time? Because there are inadequate incentives and accountability within the department. The EDD has performed poorly for years and has been the subject of five audits in the last decade, but those audits have had little if any effect. Sharon Hilliard, who directed California's EDD during the pandemic, had been working at the EDD for 37 years, having started at the age of 19. She had been steadily promoted to the top in an agency that had become increasingly antiquated and inefficient during her tenure. No one within state government ever asked whether she was qualified to lead the agency, because it was simply easier to continue to run the EDD on autopilot.

But the saga of the EDD didn't end when the public health emergency did. The fraudulent payments led the state to take out a loan from the federal government to replenish the state's unemployment funds—a loan the state subsequently defaulted on earlier this year. Federal unemployment insurance law transfers the state's liability to California's private businesses, which now must pay higher unemployment taxes for years to pay off the state government's debt. The EDD is now the subject of a House of Representatives Oversight Committee investigation, in which the agency appears not to be complying with the committee's document requests.

California's high-speed rail is perhaps the most striking example of the state's pet political spending that provides no value to Californians. In 2008, voters were promised a transportation system that would connect Northern with Southern California and the Central Valley with the coast, with trains traveling over 200 miles per hour, at a cost of about $33 billion, to be built by 2020. Voters agreed to a $9.95 billion bond issue for seed money in 2008, with the expectation that private investment would be forthcoming.

Fifteen years later, the taxpayer seed money has been spent, and costs have increased to the point that the original $33 billion budget will not be enough to complete even a route between Bakersfield and Merced, which is perhaps more than a decade away—if it were to be completed at all. The project has never attracted private funding, as it has been plagued by mismanagement, lawsuits, and neglected oversight. Nearly all aspects of the project's management were turned over to consultants who were among the project's largest political supporters in 2008.

The project should never have even been initiated after reports from the state Legislative Analyst's Office in 2008 and 2009 showed that the original business plan and subsequent plans were deficient, including a failure to account for project risks and their mitigation, how funds would be secured, the allocation of costs, what methods were used to forecast ridership, the type of equipment to be used, an estimated date of completion for environmental reviews, or a ridership break-even point.

Even HSR's most ardent defenders admit that the project requires substantial federal funding if it is to ever have a chance, but the current makeup of the House of Representatives is likely to object, given the project's enormous delays and cost overruns. The vision sold to voters in 2008 has become a fantasy, yet the state's Democratic party continues to fund what has become a pet project, with no path to completion. There is so little accountability within the state that lawmakers don't feel the need to explain the failures of HSR to their constituents. The State Senate's Transportation Committee hasn't issued a report on HSR since 2016, and the State Assembly's Transportation Committee has no documents on HSR.

California's K–12 public education system is the most illustrative of the damage created by relationships between state policymakers and political interest groups. Over 75 percent of California students lack proficiency in math or reading, despite a $128 billion state education budget that exceeds the entire budgets of most states. And as the system fails to educate our children, the state's Department of Education threatens to sue education experts who would testify against the department for this failure.

Education in California fails because there are inadequate incentives and accountability within the system. Teacher tenure is frequently awarded after only 18 months of teaching, and it is extremely costly to fire a tenured teacher for poor performance. Education economists have estimated that replacing the worst teachers from California classrooms would substantially boost the achievement and future lifetime earnings of students. Teacher compensation is divorced from teacher effectiveness within unions' collective bargaining agreements, which means that highly performing teachers are not financially rewarded. But modifying teacher tenure rules or implementing merit-based pay have been impossible to implement within California K–12. And this is entirely because of the close relationship between state politicians and teachers' unions.

In 2018, two Democrats—Tony Thurmond and Marshall Tuck—ran for the office of state school superintendent. Tuck was a reform candidate who had turned around several failing schools in Los Angeles within just one year, by implementing modest reforms. Thurmond had no experience running a school and was the candidate supported by California's education establishment. In August 2018, just three months before the election, Tuck addressed the California State Democratic Party annual convention about his ideas to improve California schools. But he was shouted down until his time to speak had expired. He couldn't say one word. If he had been permitted to speak, he would have explained his ideas about creating lifelong training programs for teachers, raising pay for teachers and principals in poor communities, and rewarding teachers based on their performance.

But any change to the status quo is anathema to education interest groups and the politicians they support. Those who pay the ultimate price for this are the three out of the four children who go through our K–12 classrooms without learning enough to succeed in the world that they will inherit. It is not as if we don't know how to teach our kids. One extremely successful California charter school is achieving outstanding learning outcomes by giving teachers the flexibility they need and by eliminating confrontational union-management relationships. The blueprint is there for us to follow. If we did, we could immediately improve the lives of over five million children. It is hard to imagine anything sadder within the realm of our state policies that we don't.
I had hoped that California's political leaders would implement sensible policy reforms that would benefit so many Californians, particularly the 13 million people within the state who live in or near poverty, whose children suffer from the worst schools, who try to manage on an annual household income of $41,000 or less per year for a family of three.

But after watching California policies and politics up close for the last five years, I now realize that my hope that California's politicians would self-correct was so wrong. California's policy failures won't be resolved, because that would mean California politicians breaking away from the interest group status quo cocoons that they are so fully enmeshed within. These include a powerful environmental lobby that blocks policy reforms that would increase California's water supply and reduce building costs to create more housing; and a host of unions that block the implementation of market-based pay and work rules to enhance worker efficiency, as well as other reforms.

The policy reforms are there for the taking. Policies that would create better schools, less costly housing, better roads, more water, and lower energy costs. But those reforms will sit on the shelf until voters choose differently. I hope in another five years that I will be able to write that voters did just that.

Lee E. Ohanian is a senior fellow (adjunct) at the Hoover Institution and a professor of economics and director of the Ettinger Family Program in Macroeconomic Research at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).He is associate director of the Center for the Advanced Study in Economic Efficiency at Arizona State University and a research associate at the National Bureau of Economic Research, where he codirects the research initiative

Macroeconomics across Time and Space. He is also a fellow in the Society for the Advancement of Economic Theory.
His research focuses on economic crises, economic growth, and the impact of public policy on the economy. Ohanian is coeditor of Government Policies and Delayed Economic Recovery (Hoover Institution Press, 2012). He is an adviser to the Federal Reserve Banks of Minneapolis and St. Louis, has previously advised other Federal Reserve banks, foreign central banks, and the National Science Foundation, and has testified to national and state legislative committees on economic policy.

WHAT THE LEFT DID TO OUR COUNTRY

WILL THEIR UPHEAVAL SUCCEED?

BY VICTOR DAVIS HANSON

In the last 20 years, the Left has boasted that it has gained control of most of America institutions of power and influence—the corporate boardroom, media, Silicon Valley, Wall Street, the administrative state, academia, foundations, social media, entertainment, professional sports, and Hollywood.

With such support, between 2009-17, Barack Obama was empowered to transform the Democratic Party from its middle-class roots and class concerns into the party of the bicoastal rich and subsidized poor—obsessions with big money, race, a new intolerant green religion, and dividing the country into a binary of oppressors and oppressed.

The Obamas entered the presidency spouting the usual leftwing boilerplate (“spread the wealth,” “just downright mean country,” “get in their face,” “first time I’ve been proud of my country”) as upper-middle-class, former community activists, hurt that their genius and talents had not yet been sufficiently monetized.

After getting elected through temporarily pivoting to racial ecumenicalism and pseudo-calls for unity, they reverted to form and governed by dividing the country. And then the two left the White House as soon-to-be mansion living, mega-rich elites, cashing in on the fears they had inculcated over the prior eight years.

To push through the accompanying unpopular agendas of an open border, mandatory wind and solar energy, racial essentialism, and the weaponization of the state, Obama had begun demonizing his opponents and the country in general: America was an unexceptional place. Cops were racist. “Clingers” of the Midwest were hopelessly ignorant and prejudiced. Only fundamental socialist transformation could salvage a historically oppressive, immoral, and racist nation.

The people finally rebelled at such preposterousness. Obama lost his party some 1,400 local and state offices during his tenure, along with both houses of Congress. His presidency was characterized by his own polarizing mediocrity. His one legacy was Obamacare, the veritable destruction of the entire system of a once workable health insurance, of the hallowed doctor-patient relationship, and of former easy access to competent specialists.

Yet Obama’s unfulfilled ambitions set the stage for the Biden administration—staffed heavily with Obama veterans—to complete the revolutionary transformation of the Democratic Party and country.

It was ironic that while Obama was acknowledged as young and charismatic, nonetheless a cognitively challenged, past plagiarist, fabulist, and utterly corrupt Joe Biden was far more effective in ramming through a socialist woke agenda and altering the very way Americans vote and conduct their legal system.

Stranger still, Biden accomplished this subversion of traditional America while debilitated and often mentally inert—along with being mired in a bribery and influence-peddling scandal that may ultimately confirm that he easily was the most corrupt president to hold office in U.S. history.

How was all this possible?

Covid had allowed the unwell Biden to run a surrogate campaign from his basement as he outsourced his politicking to a corrupt media.

Senility proved a godsend for Biden. His cognitive disabilities masked his newfound radicalism and long-accustomed incompetence. Unlike his past failed campaigns, the lockdowns allowed

Biden to be rarely seen or heard—and thus as much liked in the abstract as he had previously been disliked in the concrete.

His handlers, the Obamas, and the Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren radical Democrats, saw Biden's half-century pretense as a gladhander—good ole Joe Biden from Scranton—as the perfect delivery system to funnel their own otherwise-unpopular leftwing agendas. In sum, via the listless Biden, they sought to change the very way America used to work.

And what a revolution Biden's puppeteers have unleashed in less than three years.

They launched a base attack on the American legal system. Supreme Court judges are libeled, their houses swarmed, and their lives threatened with impunity. The Left promised to pack the court or to ignore any decision it resents. The media runs hit pieces on any conservative justice deemed too influential. The prior Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer whipped up a mob outside the court's doors, and threatened two justices by name. As Schumer presciently put it, they would soon "reap the whirlwind" of what they supposedly had sowed and thus would have no idea what was about to "hit" them.

Under the pretense of Covid fears, balloting went from 70 percent participation on election day in most states to a mere 30 percent. Yet the rates of properly rejected illegal or improper ballots often dived by a magnitude of ten.

Assaults now followed on hallowed processes, laws, customs, and institutions—the Senate filibuster, the 50-state union, the Electoral College, the nine-justice Supreme Court, Election Day, and voter IDs.

Under Biden, the revolution had institutionalized first-term impeachment, the trial of an ex-president while a private citizen, and the indictment of a chief political rival and ex-president on trumped up charges by local and federal prosecutors—all to destroy a political rival and alter the 2024 election cycle.

Biden destroyed the southern border—literally. Eight million entered illegally—no background checks, no green cards, no proof of vaccinations. America will be dealing with the consequences for decades. Mexico was delighted, receiving some $60 million in annual remittances, while the cartels were empowered to ship enough fentanyl to kill 100,000 Americans a year.

"Modern monetary theory," the Leftist absurdity that printing money ensures prosperity, followed. It has nearly bankrupted the country, unleashed wild inflation, and resulted in the highest interest rates in a quarter-century. Middle-class wages fell further behind as a doddering Biden praised his disastrous "Bidenomics."

Biden warred on fossil fuels, cancelling federal leases and pipelines, jawboning lending agencies to defund fracking, demonizing state-of-the-art, clean-burning cars, and putting vast areas of oil- and gas-rich federals lands off-limits to drilling.

When gas prices predictably doubled under Biden and the 2022 midterms approached, he tried temporarily to lease out a few new fields, to drain the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, and to beg the Saudis, and our enemies, the Iranians, the Venezuelans, and the Russians, to pump more oil and gas that Biden himself would not. All this was a pathetic ruse to temporarily lower gas prices before the mid-term elections.

Biden abandoned Afghanistan, leaving the largest trove of military equipment behind in U.S. military history, along with thousands of loyal Afghans and pro-American contractors.

Biden insulted the parents of the 13 Marines blown up in this worst U.S. military debacle since Pearl Harbor. He lied to the parents of the dead that he too lost a son in the Iraq war, and when among them later impatiently checked his watch as he seemed bored with the commemoration of the fallen—and made no effort to hide his sense that the ceremony was tedious to him.

Vladimir Putin summed up the Afghan debacle—and Biden's nonchalant remark that he wouldn't react strongly to a "minor" invasion of Ukraine if it were minor—as a green light to invade Ukraine.

When Biden did awaken, his first reaction was an offer to fly the Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskyy out of the country as soon as possible. What has followed proved the greatest European killing ground since the 1944-45 Battle of the Bulge, albeit one that has now fossilized into a Verdun-like quagmire that is draining American military supply stocks and killing a half-million Ukrainians and Russians.

Suddenly, there are three genders, not two. Women's sports have been wrecked by biological men competing as women, destroying a half-century of female athletic achievement. Young girls in locker rooms, co-eds in sororities, and women in prison must dress and shower with biological men transitioning to women by assertion.

There is no longer a commitment to free speech. The American Civil Liberties Union is a woke, intolerant group trying to ban free expression under the pretense of fighting "hate" speech and "disinformation."

The Left has revived McCarthyite loyal oaths straight out of the 1950s, forcing professors, job applicants, and students applying for college to pledge their commitment to "diversity" as a requisite for hiring, admittance, or promotion. Diversity is our era's version of the Jacobins' "Cult of Reason."

Race relations hit a 50-year nadir. Joe Biden has a long history of racist insults and putdowns. And now as apparent penance, he has reinvented himself as a reverse racial provocateur, spouting nonsense about white supremacy, exploiting shootings or hyping racial tensions to ensure that an increasingly disgusted black electorate does not leave the new Democratic Party.

The military has adopted wokeism, oblivious that it has eroded meritocracy in the ranks and slashed military recruitment. It is underfunded, wracked by internal suspicion, loss of morale and ginned up racial and gender animosity. Its supply stocks are drained. Arms productions is snail-like, and generalship is seen as a revolving door to corporate defense contractor board riches.

Big-city Democratic district attorneys subverted the criminal justice system, destroyed law enforcement deterrence, and unleashed a record crime wave. Did they wish to create anarchy as protest against the normal, or were they Jokerist nihilists who delighted in sowing ruin for ruin's sake?

Radical racial activists, with Democrat endorsement, demand polarizing racial reparations. The louder the demands, the quieter they remain about smash-and-grab looting, carjacking, and the swarming of malls by disproportionally black teens—even as black-on-black urban murders reach record proportions.

In response, Biden tried to exploit the growing tensions by spouting lies that "white supremacy" and "white privilege" fuel such racial unrest—even as his ill-gotten gains, past record of racist demagoguery and resulting lucre and mansions appear the epitome of his own so-called white privilege.

This litany of disasters could be vastly expanded, but more interesting is the *why* of it all?

What we are witnessing seems to be utter nihilism. The border is not porous but nonexistent. Mass looting and carjackings are not poorly punished, but simply exempt from all and any consequences. Our downtowns are reduced to a Hobbesian "war of all against all," where the strong dictate to the weak and the latter adjust as they must. The streets of our major cities in just a few years have become precivilizational—there are more human feces on the sidewalks of San Francisco than were in the gutters of Medieval London.

The FBI and DOJ are not simply wayward and weaponized, but corrupt and renegade. Apparently the perquisite now for an FBI director is the ability either to lie while under oath or better to mask such lying by claiming amnesia or ignorance.

Immigration is akin to the vast unchecked influxes of the late Roman Empire across the Danube and Rhine that helped to finish off a millennium-old civilization that had lost all confidence in its culture and thus had no need for borders.

In other words, the revolution is not so much political as anarchist. Nothing escapes it—not ceiling fans, not natural gas cooktops, not parents at school board meetings, not Christian bakeries, not champion female swimmers, not dutiful policemen, not hard-working oil drillers, not privates and corporals in the armed forces, not teens applying on their merits to college, not anyone, anywhere, anytime.

The operating principle is either to allow or to engineer things to become so atrocious in everyday American life—the inability to afford food and fuel, the inability to walk safely in daylight in our major cities, the inability to afford to drive as one pleases, the inability to obtain or pay back a high interest loan—that the government can absorb the private sector and begin regimenting the masses along elite dictates. The more the people tire of the leftist agenda, the more its architects furiously seek to implement it, hoping that their institutional and cultural control can do what ballots cannot.

We could variously characterize their efforts as destroying the nation to save it, or burning it down to start over, or fundamentally transforming America into something never envisioned by the Founders.

Will their upheaval succeed? All the levers of the power and money are on the side of the revolutionaries. The people are not. And they are starting to wake to the notion if they do not stop the madness in their midst they very soon won't have a country.

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 recently released The Dying Citizen. This article first appeared in the September 4, 2023 American Greatness and the Stanford University Hoover Institution Daily Update.*

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