



Weekly Update
Aug 10 - 17, 2026

The Premature Death of a Tax Measure

Whether you were a supporter or were opposed to Measure H, the San Luis Obispo County half-cent sales tax measure, the way that it fell apart and was removed from the ballot is a fascinating story.

The measure was born out of San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG) efforts to achieve self-help status for San Luis Obispo County. Such status would enable the county to qualify for potentially many millions of dollars in state transportation grants. The state requires that the citizens of any particular county tax themselves in order to qualify to get some of that tax money back for transportation projects.



A similar effort took place in 2016 and failed by around 400 votes. Several of the following election cycles featured local sales taxes in some of our cities, including Paso Robles and Atascadero. This meant that SLOCOG felt it had to put off bringing a new measure to the ballot. Finally, it looked like 2026 would be the magic year.



SLOCOG went out of its way to design a measure that stood up to concerns that community leaders had throughout the county. This included a number of guard rails to ensure that the funds would go specifically to transportation projects and not get squandered on general fund kinds of projects. They also went out of their way to try to achieve an equitable distribution of the anticipated \$35 million annually that the tax would raise.



Once the measure was finalized there was some concern about whether it would pass with the two-thirds vote required by statute. At that point a citizens' group

formed, called Better Roads for All trying to put the exact same measure on the ballot via signatures. This route would result in a vote requirement of only 50% or simple majority. That group hired a professional consultant to make sure that they had all their I's dotted and T's crossed so that they could qualify with a clean measure. Frustratingly for them, that consultant didn't do the job very well and left off an important bit of language from the petitions that were signed throughout the community. This oversight wasn't realized until the committee had over 12,000 valid signatures. It only required 12,400 signatures to qualify for the ballot.



As a result of the technical error, the Board of Supervisors chose to put the measure on the ballot in the two-thirds vote requirement category. The vote was 3-2, with Supervisor Peschong and Supervisor Moreno voting no. Moreno voiced serious concern that the measure would never pass and it wasn't worth the \$580,000 it could cost to put it before the voters. Peschong always opposes sales taxes because of their regressive nature towards low-income earners.

As it turns out, Moreno was prophetic. Once the measure was approved by the Board of Supervisors, the group that put the Citizens Initiative together went to work as an advocacy group. In their research, in putting a campaign together, they discovered that Moreno was correct that in this current economic environment there's no way a tax measure could get a two-thirds vote. They shared their research with SLOCOG who agreed that the measure should not be put before the voters with no chance of passing. SLOCOG then requested the board pull the ballot measure, which they did in a special session on August 5.

So now we wonder, when will the finger pointing begin? We might as well start it off by calling out our own County Board of Supervisors. Several years ago, they chose to take transportation off of their priority list. Since then, they've dedicated a measly \$6 million or so annually towards transportation. They haven't even bothered with cost-of-living increases.

So why are we blaming them for the failure (or lack of launch anyway) with measure H? Why should taxpayers be asked to pony up extra tax money to do something that they believe should be covered in their basic taxes to begin with? If the board of supervisors doesn't care enough to put some kind of priority in transportation, why should the voters have to do it as a work around?

At the August 5th special board session, convened just to address the Measure H issue, Supervisor Paulding illustrated the biggest problem we have with transportation funding.

His defensive comments about how the county does invest money in roads were illustrative. He mentioned that the board commits the same level of funding every year that it has for five years. Two problems: the funding was insufficient from the beginning and the cost of doing business has gone up almost double from what it was five years ago.

We agree with Supervisor Peschong's comments that the board needs to put roads back on its priority list and we were encouraged to hear Supervisor Ortiz-Legg agree with him and that she might be willing to do so as well. Supervisor Moreno had the good graces not to say, "I told you so." Supervisor Gibson said nothing but it must have really chapped his hide to be eliminating a potential tax.

To be fair, the county has had some serious and expensive storm repair work that has been done over the last three years to recover from the 2023 storms. And some of those costs have been significant. But much of that comes from FEMA and the state.

Our Board of Supervisors will take every opportunity possible to yammer on and on and on about housing. They're always happy to discuss homeless issues. They spend countless hours talking about coastal issues. They gleefully clap their hands when bicycle trails are opened up. But when it comes to roads, they're dour and ominously quiet.

Measure H was essentially a get out of jail free card for the board of supervisors. It allowed them to easily supplant money that they should be putting towards roads into other pet projects. That's what killed a lot of the support that Measure H should have otherwise had. It's expensive to live in San Luis Obispo County and a half-cent tax adding on to everything else probably doesn't mean a whole lot to most people. But it sure is aggravating to know that the tax dollars that should be going to roads are going to other things. And taxpayers were expected to dip into their pockets even deeper to cover those things that should be covered by basic tax revenues.

Supporters of Measure H say they're going to bring it back when they think things will be more favorable. The most favorable aspect that we can see is having a board that's already dedicated to doing something with transportation. Not just sitting back and letting SLOCOG and the taxpayers come up with the revenues and the solutions to make our roads safer and easier to use.

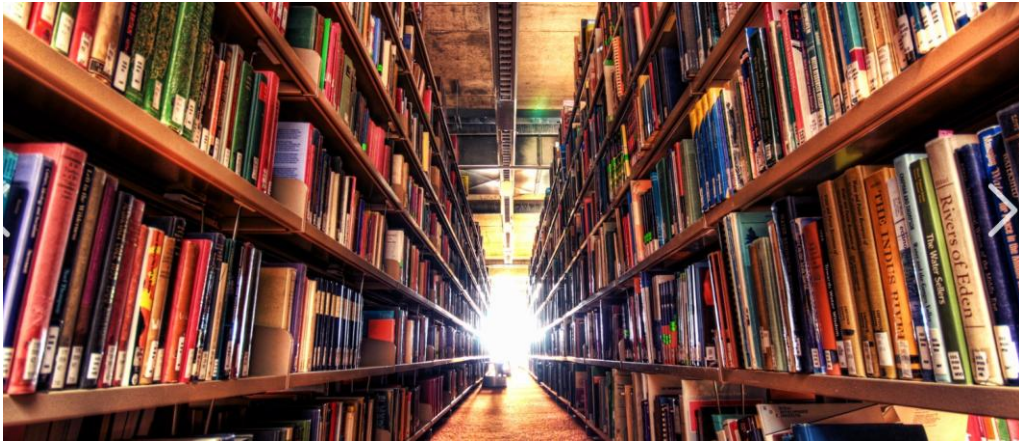
Don't Try to Shush Templeton Library Supporters

Sometimes local elected officials are put in a position where it's a no-win situation. A group of Templeton residents recently attended the County Board of Supervisors meeting and made a case for funding for their local library. They made some very persuasive arguments and made it very difficult for any of the supervisors to ignore their requests.

However, the only way to accommodate Templeton's wishes for library funding is to cut library funding from some other community.

It seems that many years ago the county chose to close a library branch in Templeton. Apparently, there were promises made that the library would be reopened in short order and that funding would be guaranteed for that library. Sadly, there's no written record of those promises.

Templeton community members got tired of waiting for the county to reopen a library and they took the initiative to open one on their own with local community support. For a couple decades now, that library has been functioning as a community center, a homework location for school kids, and of course a resource for books and literature.



Unfortunately, some of their significant local funding is running out and they are turning to the county to help keep the doors open in their own community library.

Aside from the frustration that the Templetonians feel about the (undocumented) betrayal from the county, they are also quite irritated that a portion of their property tax is dedicated to library funding, but they can't get any of that returned to Templeton.

The county library system points out that the Atascadero Library is seven miles away from Templeton and is frequently used by Templetonians. They also point out that many people throughout the county are much further than seven miles from their nearest library.



The Templeton Library is a source of pride in the community

San Luis Obispo County Library System's website can be found at: [Library - County of San Luis Obispo](#). Its description of its services reads as follows:

The San Luis Obispo County Library was established in 1919 under authority of the County Free Library Act. The Library is a San Luis Obispo County department operating under the authority of the County Board of Supervisors. Today the library provides service to residents of 6 of the 7 incorporated cities and the unincorporated areas of San Luis Obispo County, a service area that extends over 3,000 square miles. The Library offers circulation of books, magazines, newspapers, government publications, and other special publications, and also offers downloadable media of all types.

Following the remarks of the 6-8 Templetonians who requested help from the Board of Supervisors, there was discussion among the board members that a library bond might be appropriate.

It's impossible to predict the outcome but we give the Templetonians extra points for their organized presentation and their reasonable request.

Cannabis Tax Problems Persist

The discussion about the cannabis tax at the Aug 4 BoS meeting was an interesting look behind the scenes of how they do business. Frequent readers may recall that the tax is automatically scheduled to increase by two percent annually in June unless the BoS intervenes. This is part of the language that was passed in 2018 when the local initiative legalized pot locally.



For the last few years, the board has consistently voted to keep the tax at six percent. This year, however, the June deadline to waive the tax increase came and went without notice. Those preparing the budget have been instructed never to

presume board actions, so they budgeted for the 8% tax revenue. Now with the board going back to 6%, they have to adjust the revenue figures and fill in the gap that was left with the lower tax revenues from cannabis.

It was noted that both Santa Barbara and Monterey counties have lower tax levels than we do. Several cannabis producers who spoke expressed frustration at trying to compete with the illegal cannabis market. They are particularly confounded that this minor clerical error means that they have to pay three months at the higher tax rate.

When Supervisor Ortiz-Lag asked about changing the effective date of the tax increase, she was reminded by Justin Cooley of the auditor tax collector's office that since the law was passed by voter initiative, the only way to change it would be to go back to the voters. He also mentioned that each percentage of the tax equates to about \$100,000 of revenue.

We can't fault the people in the business, but it is amazing how when pot growers wring their hands and talk about the burden of high taxes, people seem to listen. When other businesses talk about the same issue, nobody seems to care.

Opportunity Zone for Cal Poly

Item 10 on the August 4 Board of Supervisors agenda called for recognizing the recent adoption of one of the census tracts surrounding Cal Poly San Luis Obispo as a federal opportunity zone.



Among the Whereases and Therefore is the following language:

WHEREAS, the federal Opportunity Zones 2.0 program authorizes states to nominate eligible census tracts for designation by the United States Department of the Treasury to encourage private investment through federal tax incentives;

WHEREAS, the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz) invited local jurisdictions to submit recommendations for eligible census tracts, with recommendations due July 20, 2026;

WHEREAS, Census Tract 06079010903 encompasses the California Polytechnic State University main campus and serves as a regional center for higher education, workforce development, research, innovation, entrepreneurship, and economic development;



Census tract map for the new Opportunity Zone

The following list includes those kinds of projects that are considered appropriate for opportunity zones:

- Aerospace & Defense (Aircraft, Shipbuilding, Space, Defense & Satellites)
- Childcare
- Clean Economy (Batteries, Wind, Solar, ZEV, Critical Minerals, Hydrogen, Carbon Management)
- Creative Economy
- Education & Skilled Workforce
- Financial & Professional Services
- Healthcare
- High-Tech (Semiconductors & Microelectronics, Hardware, Software & Services, Artificial Intelligence, Fusion, Robotics, Quantum)
- Housing
- Infrastructure (Broadband, Transportation Infrastructure, Transmission & Distribution, Water)
- Life Sciences (Medtech, Pharma/biotech)
- Manufacturing (Advanced and/or Precision)
- Tourism & Outdoor Recreation
- Transport & Logistics
- Working Lands & Water (Agricultural Production, Food Processing, Agtech & Farm Equipment, Bioeconomy, Blue economy/tech)

We are all for tax incentives and programs that make investment and innovation more viable. However, we can't help but wonder that if this particular census tract deserves extra help, why not all census tracts?

Congratulations to Cal Poly and we hope many good things come of this achievement.

A Good Idea Doesn't Get Choked by Red Tape

The last item on the agenda for the August 4 Board of Supervisors meeting was a hearing to adjust requirements for a housing project;

A request for authorization to process an application by Monarch Dunes LLC to amend the Monarch Dunes Specific Plan (County File Number: LRP2026-00006). The proposed amendment would increase the maximum allowable lot coverage for attached single-family dwellings in specific sites from 54% to 65% or 2,970 square feet, whichever is less. Exempt from CEQA.

The request seemed entirely reasonable. The builders simply sought to have slightly more square footage in some of the homes so that they could rearrange some of the lots to accommodate ADUs. Should they be part of the project in the future.



The Monarch Dunes housing project

The board saw no issue with making a slight adjustment and granted the request.

We applaud the board's decision but wonder why just a week earlier, when Supervisor Moreno asked for a simple, minor adjustment to low-income housing codes, they couldn't seem to find their way to approve another simple common-sense approach.

Public Comment from the Comfort of Home

The new zoom call-in feature for commenting during Board of Supervisors meetings is working fairly well. Most public commenters dialing in are able to make their point. We have had a couple of wannabe comedians demonstrate why they'll never make it in that field.



Again, this is a nice opportunity for people who don't want to or are unable to attend in person just to get their three minutes of messaging through.

We encourage anyone who has a point to make to the Board of Supervisors to try it. The standard rules for public commentary apply. The three-minute rule is always in effect unless there is a very crowded agenda at which time those three minutes may be trimmed to two or even one minute. Here are the details.

It's a great way to have your opinion heard while avoiding the parking hassles of downtown SLO.

Zoom Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86117844410?pwd=NPIyUIE3AGQqP8LRJXYURPqCijsvnQ.q9SDQ7CaxjwBaAo9>

Telephone: +1 786 635 1003

Meeting ID: 861 1784 4410

Passcode: 486471

An Opportunity to Meet the Candidate

COLAB does not endorse candidates running for office. However, we are very supportive of opportunities for voters to learn more about candidates and issues – especially in person. In this case we have learned that one of our candidates for governor, Steve Hilton, will be holding a town hall meeting in our community. We would encourage anyone interested in the governor's race to attend.



The Town Hall meeting is free. We understand there is also a small separate fundraising event with Mr. Hilton's visit to our community. Anyone interested in supporting his candidacy should call the campaign for details.

RSVPs are requested. Visit the following address to respond.

[Paso Robles Town Hall with Steve Hilton](#)



FALL FORUM



Wednesday, October 21st
5:30–7:30 PM



Thousand Hills Ranch
550 Thousand Hills Rd.
Pismo Beach, CA

SAVE PROP 13 - **KNOW WHAT WE ARE** **PROTECTING AND WHY**

Join Jon Coupal, President of the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association and California's preeminent tax fighter, for a discussion on the "Save Prop 13" ballot measure and the protections it would provide for California taxpayers.



Jon Coupal
President of HJTA



**BEER, LOCAL FINE WINES,
AND
HOT & COLD APPETIZERS
WILL BE SERVED**

RSVP'S ARE APPRECIATED BY OCTOBER 14TH

THERE IS NO CHARGE FOR THIS INFORMATIVE EVENT!
colabslo@gmail.com | (805) 548-0340



Driving note: *Thousand Hills Road is off Price Canyon Road. The entrance is somewhat hidden around a bend and may come up suddenly. Continue approximately one mile to the red-roofed barn on the right.*

Last Week

Disenfranchised Voters – Too Bad, So Sad

As the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors was going about certifying the June primary election results, Supervisor Peschong asked our County Clerk Ilaina Cano about the number of votes that were disqualified due to late postmarks. In a shocking revelation, she explained that the post office doesn't always deliver mail in the most timely fashion. She went on to say that this is a big problem statewide.

We agree with Ms. Cano on that point. Nearly 3,000 voters had their ballot rejected in San Luis Obispo County because postal policies do not ensure that ballots are postmarked the day they are sent.

Perhaps we are beating a dead horse, and perhaps a few percent of votes being thrown out shouldn't ruin the integrity of the election process, but why can't we deliver on the basic promise that everybody's vote counts? Why aren't voters warned that the closer to the election, the less likely their vote will get counted?

In the case of San Luis Obispo voters, some of the mail travels to a main processing center in Goleta where it is sorted and postmarked. Apparently, this can add a couple days to the transit time for our mail to go from one part of the county to another. We can't help but wonder if this is a regional problem within our county. For example, are North County voters more likely to have this problem than those from South County? We also wonder if there is any way for those thousands of voters who were shortchanged by the system to know that their vote was thrown out? We hope there is no opportunity for partisan shenanigans.

Cano's advice (post-election) was to take the mail-in ballot to the local post office, stand in line and watch the person at the post office stamp the current date on the return ballot. We can't help but wonder if most people are going to go through all that. Why not just go to the polling place and cast a ballot there?

Here is what Mr. Googly has to say about disqualified ballots in California:

In California's June 2, 2026, primary, **93,479 vote-by-mail ballots were disqualified due to late postmarks**, making it the largest single reason for rejections. State data show that a total of **148,241 mail ballots** were rejected in that election, representing **1.73% of all returned mail ballots** — the highest rejection rate for a California primary in over a decade. The late postmark category alone accounted for nearly two-thirds of all rejections, far exceeding the roughly 76,000 late ballots rejected in the 2024 primary and about 70,000 in 2022.

We stand by our criticism that our community leaders and the people running our election systems are always very dismissive about any potential for votes being disenfranchised. They would have everyone believe that the system has no faults, and everyone is guaranteed their vote will be counted. We now know that that is not true.



San Luis Obispo County Clerk Elaina Cano

We didn't see anything leading up to the election from Ms. Cano cautioning people to be wary of slow postal service. We didn't see anything from her suggesting that it might be better to go to the polling place and cast a physical ballot rather than to rely on sending a ballot through the mail. But she's always quick to assure anyone who asks that the system is working just fine.



Good 'ol reliable Post Office – except when it isn't

When the California Secretary of State and the County Clerk make the vote by mail system the leading method for voters to cast their ballot, they have a responsibility to promote a system that works flawlessly. It's clear that they are aware of the problem with the post office, yet they do nothing about it.

Obviously, if a voter took the time to fill out their ballot and put it in the mail, they were expecting their vote to be counted. Does anybody have the moral fortitude to let those thousands of voters know that they were cancelled by a flawed system?

Yes, waiting until the last minute has consequences. That said, most voters are under the impression that they can post their ballot right up to election day. When will our flawed system start educating voters that they need to post their ballot early?

Reach Contract

The contract between the county and REACH (Regional Economic Action Coalition) that we covered a few months ago was up for some amendments at the July 28th BOS meeting. Readers might recall the contract is to create a list of potential economic development projects throughout the unincorporated parts of San Luis Obispo County.



At the time we called it an “inventory of opportunity” because no one else is really looking at all the kinds of economic development that could benefit our local economy and business community. We were excited to see some new ideas being kicked around.

Unfortunately, it's beginning to look like REACH will treat this as just another blah blah housing report. It was mentioned at the BoS meeting that REACH is working with the Planning and Building Department to look at housing regulations. We were under the impression that KPMG was working on ideas of how to improve our planning and building department.

We already have housing summits, housing subcommittees and housing associations. There seems to be a housing expert full of answers on every street corner. We have more presentations, graphs and pie charts about housing than probably any other issue in our community. They never result in anything productive.

REACH has the opportunity to bring forth projects such as light manufacturing, clean tech, hospitality, aerospace development, vocational and specialized education and other kinds of small to medium ventures that bring employees, attract investment, and foster opportunity in our community. We all know one of the biggest impediments with any good local idea is housing. However, we don't need another big fat study with lots of charts and graphs pointing out all the shortcomings of our silly planning process. We don't need to know that if only housing were cheaper, we would probably have a lot more economic development going on.

REACH

Ideas + Action for a Thriving Central Coast

Reach does great things for the community. They bring together all kinds of wonderful business opportunities. They highlight solutions. And they seek innovation. But what they don't do is tell their story very well.

Supervisor Gibson criticized REACH because he didn't think the taxpayers were getting value for their money from REACH. While we don't agree with him, we see how he could come to that conclusion. This contract is a fantastic opportunity for Reach to demonstrate just how much value they have to offer to the San Luis Obispo community. If they flub the project by making it about housing, Gibson will be proven right in many people's opinion.

We encourage the Board of Supervisors and the leadership at REACH to think beyond just housing. If REACH can bring something new to the discussion about housing, fine. However, the best opportunity for new ideas for economic growth and to bring vitality to our community is with all the other kinds of projects that make up economic development.

ICE Haters

About 40 Ice Haters showed up at the July 28 BoS meeting with the same old accusations about the San Luis Obispo County Sheriff. Their big beef was a misunderstanding about the resolution passed by the BoS a couple months ago that really does nothing but reaffirms the inability of the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors to tell the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency (ICE) how to do their job when they are in our community. Almost any ninny that got better than a D- in High School civics knows that a county government has no ability whatsoever to tell the federal government what to do. It's called the Supremacy Clause and can be found in Article VI, Clause 2 of the United States Constitution.



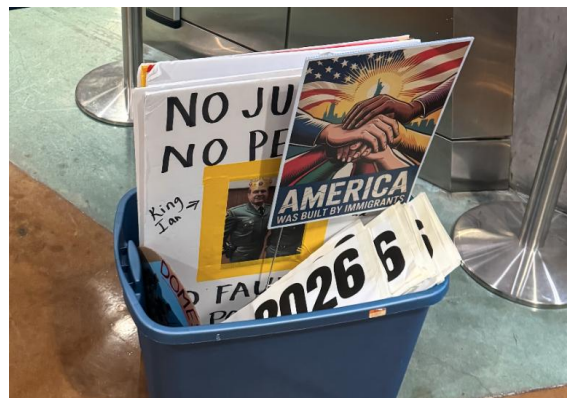
A good resource for ICE haters

ICE Haters were present several times when County Council advised the BoS that the law does not allow any subset of the public to be prohibited from public spaces such as lobbies and waiting rooms. According to County Council, it is possible to restrict people from entering nonauthorized spaces such as inner offices.



ICE haters are resolute in their desire to protect criminals

The BoS resolution restated County Council's position in a formal statement. The ICE Haters seem to have misread the resolution, because now they are saying the Sheriff is breaking the law by allowing ICE to enter the lobby of the jail.



Mass produced signs for faux grassroots ICE haters

Aside from not understanding the BoS resolution and not caring about our constitution, the ICE haters don't seem to fathom being respectful in public meetings. They continuously waived their mass-produced signs during serious

discussions about nonrelated issues and childishly positioned themselves behind speakers in order to get on camera. If this was some sort of attempt to appear threatening or purposely overbearing, it failed. The result was stupid annoyance.



A speaker on an unrelated subject gets the ICE hater sophomoric treatment

The ICE haters are complaining that 79 “of us” have been taken. They didn’t mention anything about federal warrants, nor did they mention anything about what was taken from the victims of many of those 79. Victims include women who have been assaulted and raped along with many people who endured violence.

One of the “demands” coming from the ICE haters is that the Board of Supervisors establish a “citizen oversight committee” to tell the elected (and highly qualified) Sheriff how to do the job.



Evidently, none of these folks have been crime victims

We are all for civil rights and due process, but we are also all for law enforcement removing dangerous law breakers from society whatever their nationality. We hope that none of the ICE haters become victims of violence or painful crime themselves, but we encourage them to become familiar with a few of those who have had traumatic, sometimes lifechanging, assaults from criminals.

Common Sense Buried in Bureaucracy

Supervisor Moreno requested a simple, common-sense amendment to the SLO County low-income housing regulations at the July 28 Bos meeting. She was met with a remarkable display of red tape bureaucracy.

She has a constituent who is building a multi-family four plex. The builder will comply with all conditions and requirements for the low income housing program. However, the current regulations require that the structure be condominium – with shared walls.



Moreno's request was that the shared walls requirement be waived or made optional when all other requirements are met. County Planning and Building staff reported that the change would not be a problem for staff.

The project that she is trying to assist in would not change in any way at all with the amendment except that the builder believes the end product would be more marketable as four stand alone units.

The majority of the board hemmed and hawed and attempted to refer the matter to the Housing Subcommittee. Moreno replied that it was a simple amendment and that she hoped the board could be nimble and accommodating rather than tie the request up in far too much discussion and wasted time.

It's hard to imagine what would cause any of the majority to want to delay such a good idea. They were clearly casting about trying to find a good excuse, but when

they couldn't, they fell back to their love of slow, expensive and frustrating big government.

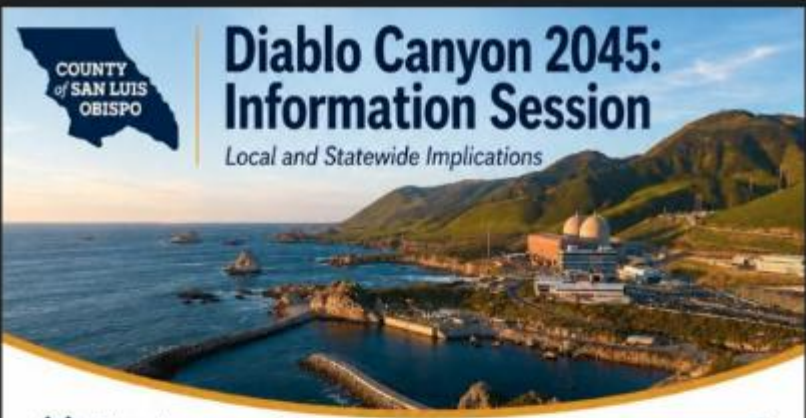
When the BoS next brings up the “housing crisis” as they often do, this example should be pointed out as precisely why we have a problem in the first place. We wish Moreno success in her efforts to bring this simple common-sense measure to reality – but we are not holding our breath.

Diablo Info Session

An overflow crowd attended the July 30 Information Session on the Diablo Canyon Power Plant. The program featured remarks from one of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's plant inspectors, along with data rich reports from a UC Berkeley economist and an energy researcher from MIT. Garret Olsen from the San Luis Obispo Chamber of Commerce led a panel discussion with a Local IBEW union leader, a local builder and the County Superintendent of Schools. Each offered the kind of insights about the impacts of a potential plant closure that usually gets overlooked in most discussions about the issue.



A great deal of information was shared – almost all of it new to the dialogue of the plant's future. Surprisingly, members of the public who spoke (we are guessing that there were about 50) were about two to one in favor of extending plant operations. All of the college and high school students were in favor, as were a wide cross section of business people and community members.





Diablo Canyon 2045: Information Session

Local and Statewide Implications



**Thursday,
July 30, 2026**
6:00 – 9:30 p.m.



**San Luis Obispo County
Katcho Achadjian
Government Center**
1055 Monterey Street
San Luis Obispo, CA



Livestream
(viewing only):
www.slo-span.org

PURPOSE

To gather stakeholders for an update on Diablo Canyon Power Plant.

PROGRAM

- Welcome and Opening Remarks**
 - SLO County Supervisor Dawn Ortiz-Legg
 - Matt Pentes, SLO County CEO
- Federal Oversight**
 - Mahdi Hayes, Senior Resident Inspector, Nuclear Regulatory Commission
- California's Only Nuclear Power Plant: Energy Reliability and Economic Impact**
 - Kate Ballantyne, Assistant CEO, SLO County Updates
 - Dr. John Parsons, Deputy Director of Research, MIT Center for Energy and Environmental Policy Research
 - Dr. David Roland-Holst, Executive Director, Berkeley Economic Advising and Research
- Diablo Canyon Power Plant Operations**
 - Maureen Zawalick, Senior Vice President & Chief Risk Officer
 - Tom Jones, Senior Director, Regulatory, Environmental, and Repurposing
- County Role in Emergency Preparedness and Response**
- Community Perspectives Panel**
 - Moderator: Garrett Olson, President & CEO, San Luis Obispo Chamber of Commerce
 - Panelists:
 - Aaryn Abbott, President, Abbott | Reed Inc.
 - Dr. Eric Prater, Superintendent, San Luis Coastal Unified School District
 - Robert Dean, Business Manager, IBEW Local 1245
- Public Comment**
In-person listening session only
- Adjourn**



This meeting will be streamed live on **SLO-SPAN** (www.slo-span.org) for online viewing.



Public comment will be accepted **in person only** during the designated public comment period.



This is an informational session.

www.slocounty.ca.gov

There were about a dozen Mothers for Peace speakers in opposition. Their messaging was mostly about fault lines, embrittlement and the cost of operations of the plant. There was also a contingency of parents who voiced frustration about budget cuts to their local schools as a result in a change to the Unitary Tax paid by PG&E ratepayers. They mostly seemed fine with continued operations as long as the tax revenues were restored.

COLAB's testimony thanked the BoS, their staff and the presenters for the new information that was offered. We then suggested that the information be provided

to our state legislators who will be the gatekeepers, choosing whether to pass enabling legislation that will permit the 20-year extension.

What is Right is Right

After 13 years of “David Vs. Goliath style litigation over property and water rights, David has prevailed. The “Quiet Title” litigation began in 2013 when nearly 800 property owners primarily located in the Paso Water Basin filed suit against the City of Paso Robles, SLO County, Templeton CSD, and San Miguel CSD claiming that those municipalities were violating their private property rights by seeking to regulate how they used the water under their own property.

The victory affirms that the overlay of a property has the ultimate control over the water under their property.

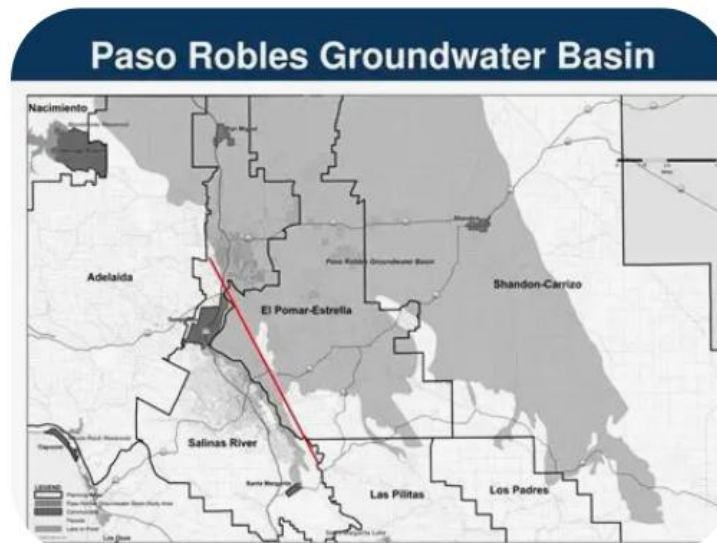
The term “quiet title” refers to clearing the title of the property from any undue encumbrances. In this case, the water agencies were attempting to claim control.



The above municipalities argued that the California Sustainable Groundwater Act (SGMA) created the authority that allowed them to regulate the groundwater in the basin. With that in mind, they spent many millions of dollars on the worthless defense that so many predicted from the start would never hold up.

These are agencies serving the public while spending millions of the public’s dollars to take rights away from the very same public. We hope that there is some sort of tally that sums up all of the millions that were spent, as well as a clear list of the failed attorneys that collected so many

of those dollars.



The agencies will probably (if ever challenged) say that the SGMA rules left them no choice but to fight for the prescriptive rights that they needed in order to manage the Paso Water Basin. That argument might have made some sense in the early stages of the litigation. However, at practically every juncture of the lawsuit, the agencies were unsuccessful. Prudent management of the process would have been to get out of the suit then and figure out some other way to address the groundwater issue.

Despite the victory, several questions remain:

What impact will this have on the Prop 26 “fee”?

Will PRAGA still be able to “just keep the lights on”?

Will this cut into the \$1.1 million that PRAGA is depending on through its new fee structure?

Will this decision protect landowners who were not part of the Quiet Title suit?

Will plaintiffs recover any of their legal expenses?

Will anybody working for the water agencies be held accountable for wasting so many millions of rate payer dollars?

This is a key property rights victory and should be celebrated by everyone who opposes big government efforts to take rights away from property owners.

Congratulations to Cindy Steinbeck, who led the coalition, and to Greg Grewal who kept the public informed about the issue.

This story will continue to unfold over the next few months, and we will try to bring you answers to these and a myriad of other questions that will arise.

FALL FORUM OCTOBER 21

Be sure to mark your calendar for our October 21 forum featuring Jon Coupal, President of the Howard Jarvis Taxpayer Association and leader of the Save Prop 13 ballot measure, Prop 43.

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The Polling Paradox of 2026

How the most-pollled midterm in American history became the least predictable — and why the numbers themselves are now a campaign weapon

By John Feliz, August 8, 2026

Eighty-nine days before the midterms, the single most-watched number in American politics cannot agree with itself. CNN's poll with SSRS puts Democrats ahead by eight points on the generic congressional ballot. Emerson College says eleven. The Washington Post-Ipsos survey says three, and Reuters/Ipsos says two. These are reputable shops fielding in the same weeks, asking essentially the same question, each carrying a margin of error near three points. A nine-point spread among them is not sampling noise. It is a disagreement about what the American electorate actually is — and somebody's model of that electorate is wrong.

The aggregate tells the same story in slower motion. The RealClearPolitics generic-ballot average stood at D+7.4 on June 1 and had slipped to D+4.7 by late July. Nothing happened in those seven weeks that plausibly moved three points of the national electorate. What changed was the mix of pollsters releasing surveys and the choices inside their weighting decks. When the average moves because the inputs churn rather than because voters do, the average has stopped measuring the race and started measuring the industry.

The paradox, stated plainly

Here is the paradox I have been working through in my own notes on this cycle:

- **First**, public polling has shown a propensity to favor the anti-Trump respondent. The people angriest at the administration are the ones most eager to spend eighteen minutes with a survey taker, and no weighting scheme fully cures a response pool that self-selects on intensity.
- **Second**, Democrats have simultaneously been cast — effectively — as left-leaning and pro-socialist, a brand liability that operates underneath the horse-race numbers.
- **Third**, these two forces together have confounded midterm predictions and tainted the generic ballot as an instrument.

- **Fourth**, voters may be upset with the president and the economy while remaining deeply skeptical that Democrats would be any better — or suspecting they would be worse.
- **Fifth**, the practical result is a pure toss-up for control of Congress, no matter what the topline says.

The data backs the skepticism embedded in that framework. In the same Economist/YouGov survey that shows a six-point Democratic lead, 27 percent of respondents are undecided, backing another candidate, or not planning to vote at all. Emerson finds “threats to democracy” overtaking the economy as the top voter issue — 28 percent to 27 percent — which is less a policy verdict than a portrait of an electorate voting against things rather than for them. An angry electorate that trusts neither party is precisely the electorate that polling instruments handle worst.

We have seen this movie before

Twenty years ago, in January 2006, I broke down an AP/Ipsos poll that carried the headline “Voters Seem More Ready To End GOP Control Of Congress.” The topline was dramatic: a 49–36 Democratic advantage on control of Congress. The crosstabs were the story. The sample leaned 52–40 toward Democrats in a country that had split its 2004 electorate 37–37. Nineteen percent of respondents claimed no religion, against 10 percent of actual 2004 voters. Rural voters — a 57–42 Bush constituency — were 17 percent of the sample but had been 25 percent of the electorate. Married voters were underrepresented by seven points; the under-\$15,000 income bracket was overrepresented by nearly double. Every single skew ran the same direction.

The question I asked then is the question that defines 2026: was the purpose of conducting the poll to get good results, or to push an agenda? The mechanics have changed — the landline is dead, the online panel is king — but the game is identical. The difference is that in 2006 you could catch it by reading the demographic tables. Today the skew lives somewhere harder to audit: the weighting deck.

Where the skew lives now

The most honest demonstration of this came, to his credit, from a pollster. G. Elliott Morris ran his own Verasight polling data through four defensible party-weighting schemes — same interviews, same questions, same field dates. The published result was D+7.1. Re-weight to an updated three-way party-ID target and it becomes D+7.9. Weight leaned partisans into their parties and it is D+8.7. Pin a five-way party distribution to Pew’s benchmark and it reaches D+9.2. Two full points of margin — the difference between a competitive House and a wave — produced not by a single voter changing his mind, but by an analyst choosing among equally respectable assumptions.

Rasmussen’s Fran Coombs said it without embarrassment back in 2016: run the same raw numbers through a model with slightly more GOP turnout among men and older voters and Trump leads by one; run it with a few more young voters and women and Clinton leads by four. “Same numbers, slightly different formula, different results.”

Underneath the weighting problem sits the deeper one: nonresponse. The American Statistical Association’s guidance is blunt — a low response rate produces more questionable results than a small sample, because there is no scientifically valid way to infer what the nonrespondents think, and weighting adjustments “should not be considered a complete solution”. Public polls now routinely complete interviews with a low single-digit percentage of the people they attempt to reach. At that point the poll is no longer a measurement wearing a margin of error; it is a model wearing a survey’s clothes. The margin of error describes the sample. It says nothing about whether the sample was ever the electorate.

Polling as a campaign weapon

All of this would be a methods seminar if polls merely described races. They do not. They shape them — and every operative on both sides knows it. A released poll is an intervention in the race it claims to observe, and it skews elections through at least four channels.

- **Money and recruitment.** A D+11 headline moves donor dollars, PAC targeting decisions, and candidate recruitment months before a single vote is cast. Early polls decide which challengers get funded and which districts get written off — which is why the incentive to publish a favorable number is strongest precisely when the number is least reliable.
- **Enthusiasm and complacency.** A manufactured blowout tells one side’s marginal voters the race is over. Whether the intended effect is demoralization of the trailing side or complacency in the leading one, the target of a skewed topline is never the forecaster — it is the low-propensity voter deciding whether Tuesday is worth the trip.
- **Narrative laundering.** The outlier gets the headline; the correction gets the footnote. CNN’s D+8 among registered voters becomes “Democrats surge” across a hundred downstream outlets, while the Post-Ipsos D+3 — fielded days earlier — barely dents the narrative. By the time the averages digest both, the frame is set.
- **Expectation-setting.** Polling now also functions as pre-litigation. Gallup finds 67 percent of Americans concerned that political leaders will pressure election officials to change outcomes. In that environment, a party’s polling narrative doubles as its post-election argument: a loss that contradicts months of favorable topline becomes, to its voters,

presumptive evidence of theft. The skewed poll does its most dangerous work after the election, not before it.

The tell is the difference between public and private research. Campaigns treat their own survey work the way the Army treats reconnaissance — continuous, unglamorous, and ruthlessly honest, because a commander who lies to himself gets people killed. Private tracking polls exist to inform decisions. Public polling, increasingly, exists to influence them. That distinction is the whole ballgame.

The information war is already on the record

None of this is a private theory of mine. Salena Zito documented the pattern in the Washington Examiner after the 2024 election, and called it what it is: an information war in which polling is a weapon. Her lead exhibit is instructive. Days before the 2024 vote, Ann Selzer — then treated as the gold standard — published an Iowa poll showing Kamala Harris up three points in a state Donald Trump had carried by eight in 2020. The New York Times, the Washington Post, the Wall Street Journal, and Politico gave it saturation coverage as a November surprise. One hour earlier, an Emerson poll had shown Trump up ten in Iowa. It was barely noticed. Trump won the state by 13.2 points — the ignored poll was nearly right, and the celebrated one was off by sixteen.

Zito traces the same pattern back through the cycle before it: an ABC News battleground poll in the final days of 2020 showing Joe Biden up seventeen points in Wisconsin — a state he won by half a point — and forward through the institutional campaign against the outlets that got it right. FiveThirtyEight dropped Rasmussen from its averages; Rasmussen and the Wall Street Journal were the two shops that called the 2024 popular vote almost exactly. RealClearPolitics, whose averages have been reliable for two decades precisely because they refuse to filter pollsters by pedigree, was attacked in the New York Times and stripped from Wikipedia's 2024 polling page for "bias" — despite conducting no polls of its own. Her conclusion is the one that matters for 2026: news organizations fighting this war "are not being honest to their readers about the fact that they are just using the poll results they like and ignoring the results they don't like". That is narrative laundering with a press badge, and it is the environment into which every generic-ballot number this cycle is being released.

Even an honest topline cannot deliver what it promises

Suppose the generic ballot were measured perfectly. It still would not tell you who controls the House, because the American system does not convert national preferences into seats in any linear way — mathematicians from Condorcet to Kenneth Arrow have proven that no districted voting system can. The 2026 version of that old theorem is concrete: Nate Cohn estimates Democrats need to win the national popular vote by roughly 3.1 points just to barely flip the House, after a

round of mid-decade redistricting engineered to minimize Republican exposure. The New York Times' own panel of pollsters and pundits concedes that a six-point Democratic lead — roughly where their tracking sits — portends a majority but nothing like a wave, and that without the new maps the GOP would be staring at a 25-to-30-seat loss. The redraw is no abstraction in California. The Proposition 50 map — upheld by the Supreme Court in February — targets five Republican-held seats, and the analysts' watchlists now run straight through the Central Valley and San Diego County. By design, the new lines leave as few as four safely Republican districts out of fifty-two. Control of the House runs through this state, which means every skewed national topline is, functionally, a California story: the numbers being weaponized in Washington are aimed at turnout in Fresno, Kern, and Riverside counties. The polls are the soft half of the skew. The hard half was drawn onto the maps in advance, and no survey instrument can weight it away.

Watch turnout composition, not toplines

There is a better way to read a race, and it starts by abandoning the fiction that a district — or a country — has one partisan lean. It has a different lean at every turnout level. In my firm's legislative work, we ranked districts by their "flip score": the turnout-propensity level at which the registration advantage flips from one party to the other. Correlating raw registration advantage with final vote share explained 41.5 percent of the variance. Flip scores explained 71.7 percent. The composition of who shows up beats the composition of who exists, and it is not close.

That is the lens for November. The indicators worth watching are the ones no weighting deck can manufacture: the enthusiasm differential (CNN finds Democrats with a 20-point edge among voters extremely motivated to cast ballots); which side banks a built-in lead in early and absentee voting; where in-state small-dollar money flows in the final six weeks; the demographics of the undecided vote; and — in a cycle where two-thirds of the country worries about pressure on election officials — which party controls the electoral and judicial apparatus that will adjudicate the close ones.

The paradox, resolved

Two things are true at once, and 2026 requires holding both. The public polling is skewed — in its response pools, its weighting discretion, and its function as a persuasion instrument. And Democrats are probably ahead anyway. The paradox is that the public numbers cannot tell you how much of the lead is real, because the same releases that measure the advantage are being used to manufacture it. An honest reading of the reliable indicators — enthusiasm, money, turnout mechanics, and maps — lands where my August note did: a Democratic-leaning House fight, a Republican-leaning Senate map, and a pure toss-up for the shape of Washington next year.

A poll is an argument wearing a lab coat. The question I asked of AP/Ipsos in 2006 — was this conducted to get good results, or to push an agenda? — now has to be asked of every public release in the cycle. In 2026, too often, the answer is both. Read the crosstabs first. The topline is the last thing you should believe.



John Feliz

John Feliz is an experienced law enforcement professional who honorably served with the Los Angeles Police Department. During his tenure, he held the position of street policeman and supervisor with a selection to a specialized management task force, where he contributed to the development of a strategic and comprehensive personnel planning for the department.

His expertise extends into national security and public safety, having conducted advanced training in urban terrorism with a specialized focus on counterterrorism methodology and operational readiness. John possesses extensive credentials in narcotics enforcement and organized crime investigations, working in direct coordination with the Prison Gang Task Force to combat high-level criminal enterprises operating within and beyond correctional institutions.

John Feliz received his M.P.A. from the University of Southern California with a specialization in systems analysis and personnel management. He also received his Bachelor of Science (cum laude) from U.S.C. and was elected to the national political science honor society - Pi Sigma Alpha.

Feliz also holds a community college teaching credential earned at California State University, Los Angeles. Mr. Feliz continued his academic career as an adjunct Professor of Media Communications at California State University, Sacramento in the Communications Studies Department.

One Party Tyranny: Liberal Judges Allow CA's Corrupt Politicians to Rig Election Against Prop 39's Bipartisan Voter ID Initiative

'Corrupt politicians are showing every voter why we need to enact Prop 39 to implement a bipartisan solution to Voter ID'

By Katy Grimes, August 6, 2026

Assemblyman Carl DeMaio (R-San Diego) just announced that liberal judges have sided with California’s corrupt politicians trying to rig the election against Prop 39’s bipartisan voter ID initiative, after AG Rob Bonta issued a new ballot title to Proposition 39.

“Corrupt politicians are showing every voter why we need to enact Prop 39 to implement a bipartisan solution to Voter ID,” DeMaio said.

The Globe reported:

California Attorney General Rob Bonta faces accusations of rigging the ballot language for Proposition 39, the **Voter Identification, Citizenship Verification, and Registered Voter List Administration Initiative**, just months before the November 2026 election.

The initiative, which gathered over a million signatures from Democrats, Republicans, and Independents after more than a year of petition circulation under previously approved wording, now faces what opponents call a last-minute rewrite designed to tilt public perception against it.

To note, California law **explicitly states** that *“in providing the ballot title and summary, the Attorney General is required to give a true and impartial statement of the purpose of the measure in such language that the ballot title and summary is neither an argument, nor likely to create prejudice, for or against the proposed measure. The Attorney General is required to invite and consider public comment in preparing each ballot title and summary.”*

Original Approved Language (over a year in circulation):

“ESTABLISHES ADDITIONAL VOTER IDENTIFICATION AND CITIZENSHIP VERIFICATION REQUIREMENTS. INITIATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT.”

This version outlined requirements for government-issued ID at the polls (or the last four digits for mail ballots), free voter ID cards, and annual citizenship verification reports by counties.

New language issued by Bonta’s office:

“PROHIBITS CITIZENS FROM VOTING UNLESS THEY PRESENT GOVERNMENT-ISSUED IDENTIFICATION. INITIATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT.”

Here is Assemblyman DeMaio’s statement – predictably, most voters expected this decision:

YES _{ON} 39

For Voter ID

DeMaio Not Surprised Liberal Judges Allow California's Corrupt Politicians to Try to Rig Election Against Prop 39's Bipartisan Voter ID Initiative

"Once again, California politicians are trying to rig our elections by putting biased titles on ballot propositions they don't like."

CA State Assemblymember Carl DeMaio says he is not surprised by today's court rulings allowing Attorney General Rob Bonta to change the official Ballot Title on the Prop 39 Bipartisan Voter ID Initiative in a "blatant attempt to rig the November election." DeMaio says despite the expected unfair title, he still expects Prop 39 to pass.

"California politicians know that a supermajority of California voters support Prop 39's bipartisan solution for Voter ID — so now they are corruptly trying to rig the election by putting a biased and dishonest title on this common-sense measure," said DeMaio.

The Prop 39 coalition filed a lawsuit after Bonta changed the Prop 39 Ballot Title to begin with the inflammatory and unfair wording **"Prohibits Citizens from Voting..."**

DeMaio points out that the Attorney General had already provided a ballot title for Prop 39 in September of 2025. That original ballot title was on the initiative petitions signed by over 1.3 million California voters to force the bipartisan Voter ID initiative on the ballot this November.

"When Rob Bonta didn't think we could get the signatures on Prop 39, he provided a relatively fair ballot title — but now that the citizens have forced Prop 39 on the ballot, he decides at the last minute to corruptly try to rig the election against Prop 39 by changing the ballot title to a biased and dishonest one," DeMaio notes.

Read the two different ballot titles for Prop 39 - and judge for yourself:

ORIGINAL PROP 39 TITLE (September 19, 2025):

ESTABLISHES ADDITIONAL VOTER IDENTIFICATION AND CITIZENSHIP VERIFICATION REQUIREMENTS. INITIATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT. This measure would amend the California Constitution to further require that voters present government-issued identification at the polls or the last four digits of a government-issued identification number when voting by mail; the State provide voter identification cards on request; and elections officials annually report percentage of each county's voters whose citizenship they have verified.

REVISED PROP 39 TITLE (July 21, 2026):

PROHIBITS CITIZENS FROM VOTING UNLESS THEY PRESENT GOVERNMENT-ISSUED IDENTIFICATION. INITIATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT. Invalidates mail ballots that do not have last four digits of designated government-issued identification number written on envelope. Prohibits in-person voting without presenting government-issued identification.

In a separate lawsuit, California Democrat politicians sued to censor the ballot argument submitted by Prop 39 proponents. In that case, another judge sided with the politicians to strike legitimate arguments on why Voter ID is needed to improve election integrity.

DeMaio says, despite the effort by Bonta and other politicians to rig the election against Prop 39, he still expects voters will approve the measure in November.

"We expected corrupt politicians like Rob Bonta to try to deprive voters of a fair election on Prop 39 — but this biased and dishonest ballot title takes election rigging to a whole new level even for California," DeMaio notes.

"These corrupt politicians are showing every voter why we need to enact Prop 39 to implement a bipartisan solution to Voter ID," DeMaio concludes.

For more information on Yes on Prop 39, visit www.VoterIDInitiative.com



Katy Grimes

Katy Grimes, the Editor in Chief of the California Globe, is a long-time Investigative Journalist covering the California State Capitol, the co-author of *California's War Against Donald Trump: Who Wins? Who Loses?* and a contributor to *"Taxifornia 2016."*

A California native and Navy mom, Katy lives in Sacramento, CA.

Ringside: Debunking the Allegedly Prohibitive Cost of Desalination

The 'high' costs are the result of policy choices

By Edward Ring, August 5, 2026



Earlier this summer a **guest op-ed** appeared in the *Orange County Register*, “Learning the right lesson from San Diego’s desal water surplus.” But the “lesson” presented was only partly accurate.

What the authors, both affiliated with the Property and Environment Research Center (PERC), got right was the need to change regulations that restrict the ability for farmers to sell their water allocations to cities. This is consistent with PERC’s mission, which is to promote “free market environmentalism,” property rights, and market based solutions to environmental challenges. But when it comes to the economics of desalination, these critics of the technology were way off. It does *not* cost too much to make economic sense. The high costs are the result of policy choices.

The “lesson” we should be taking from desalination projects and proposals so far in California is that current policies have grossly inflated the cost of desalinated seawater here for two reasons: the construction cost is inflated thanks to California’s regulatory and legal environment, and the operating cost is inflated because California has the highest electricity rates in the nation.

The most recent construction cost estimate for seawater desalination in California was in 2022, when the Coastal Commission rejected a **\$1.4 billion proposal** to build a plant that would have produced 56,000 acre feet of fresh water per year. A construction bond priced at 4 percent per year for a term of 30 years would require a payment amounting to \$1,446 per acre foot.

Compare this to construction costs elsewhere in the world. In Saudi Arabia, on a 45 acre site about 50 miles north of Jeddah on the Red Sea, the **Rabigh 4 IWP Project** delivers 177,000 acre feet of fresh water per year, and the total construction cost was \$675 million. Under the same financing terms, that amounts to a payment of \$220 per acre foot.

A fluke? Maybe not. In Israel, the just completed **Sorek B BOT Desalination Facility**, on a 23 acre site on the Mediterranean Sea about 10 miles south of Tel Aviv produces 164,000 acre feet of fresh water per year. It cost \$600 million to

construct. A 30 year bond at 4 percent could be serviced in this case at a cost of \$211 per acre foot.

Moving on, the Mirfa 2 RO Water Desalination Company in the United Arab Emirates built a plant that desalinates 161,000 acre feet a year at a construction cost of \$620 million. Keeping to the same financing terms, that's \$223 per acre foot. Finally, in Singapore the newly commissioned Jurong Island Desalination Plant sits on 9 acres and produces 40,000 acre feet per year. It is **fully automated**, requiring "only 2-3 workers to man this highly automated plant." Its construction cost was not disclosed, but the private bidder, Singapore Technologies Marine Consortium, has guaranteed a **price of \$875 (US) per acre foot**. That covers financing, energy, labor, and profit.

It's reasonable to expect California's inherent costs to construct major infrastructure (materials, labor, and land), as opposed to inflated costs that are the result of political choices, to exceed the world standard. But it is not reasonable to expect those inherent construction costs to be five to seven times higher than everywhere else on earth. It is also not reasonable to suggest other sites on earth have "simpler geography." Unlike anywhere in the Middle East, California has strong offshore currents to disburse brine. And California has multiple preexisting coastal sites where power plants face decommissioning. These sites are close to consumers, and already have water intakes that can be modified, as well as high voltage connections.

Which brings us to the other source of seawater desalination's alleged high cost, which is electricity. The current electricity requirement for desalination to produce fresh water is 3,500 kilowatt-hours per acre foot. The electricity requirement will drop further as new desalination technologies mature. But at that rate, and priced at California's commercial rate for electricity of **\$0.26 per kilowatt-hour**, electricity costs add another \$910 per acre foot. If Californians paid the national average commercial price for electricity of **\$0.13 per kilowatt-hour**, the electricity cost would drop to \$455 per acre foot.

So let's imagine that California actually mustered the political and economic wherewithal to construct a desalination plant for only *twice* what people elsewhere in the world spend, and at the same time succeeded in driving the cost of electricity down to the national average. If so, the cost to finance new construction and pay for the requisite electricity would come in easily below \$1,000 per acre foot. As it is, the wholesale price for water charged by the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California is **\$1,528 per acre foot**, and that price is officially forecast to escalate at **8.5 percent per year** well into the 2030s.

In stark contrast to what critics allege, desalination has the potential to be the cheapest source of water to urban consumers. Advances in construction robotics along with new modular designs promise to lower construction cost for desalination, and advances across multiple energy technologies make dramatically lower

electricity rates inevitable. Nearly 40 million acre feet of fresh water is produced every year worldwide using seawater desalination. California should be a leader in this space.

Making it easier for farmers to sell water to cities makes obvious sense. But every element of that transfer, from aqueducts and pipes to reservoirs and pumping stations, also come with construction and operating costs, at least partially financed with government subsidies. The scholars at PERC are justly critical of subsidies, but the only way to be consistent is to examine the subsidies involved in *all* major water infrastructure, including conveyances.

Perhaps those who criticize desalination on allegedly economic grounds should examine in more detail why the costs of construction and the cost of electricity is so grotesquely inflated in California, and support a policy agenda to fix that problem. They would be doing California, and the entire nation, a big favor.



Edward Ring

Edward Ring is the director of water and energy policy for the California Policy Center, which he co-founded in 2013 and served as its first president. The California Policy Center is an educational non-profit focused on public policies that aim to improve California's democracy and economy. He is also a senior fellow of the Center for American Greatness. Ring is the author of two books: "Fixing California - Abundance, Pragmatism, Optimism" (2021), and "The Abundance Choice - Our Fight for More Water in California" (2022).

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