



**COLAB**  
San Luis Obispo County

The Coalition of Labor Agriculture and Business

## **Weekly Update June 29–July 6, 2026**

The San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors is on their Summer Break which lasts from June 16 to July 7. Then, the following meeting will be held on July 29. Consider this as a vacation for taxpayers. No meeting, no new ways to spend Other People's Money.

### **Dunes Quagmire**

The never-ending litigation over off road vehicle access to the Oceano Dunes has a new player in the game. The Center for Biological Diversity, a Tucson, Arizona nonprofit organization, has filed suit alleging California State Parks' approval of their Oceano Dunes habitat conservation plan that allegedly imperils endangered wildlife such as the western snowy plover and the California least tern.

According to Jeff Miller, a senior conservation advocate at the Center, “Oceano Dunes is a place for all Californians and a refuge for some of our most imperiled birds. Letting hobbyists degrade it for another 25 years based on a flawed environmental study is unthinkable.” Apparently when he said “all Californians” he means except those who do things he doesn’t like.



As far as we know, the Dunes, like all other state parks, are already open to all Californians, as well as everybody else interested in enjoying the unique property. Of the 849 miles of coastline in our state, only the 5.5 miles of the Oceano Dunes State Park serve the off road and beach camping community. Of the nine states' off road vehicle parks, this is the exclusive seaside park.

Also joining in the lawsuit is the Northern Chumash Tribal Council. “The dunes are our ancestors’ breath and our children’s tomorrow,” said Violet Sage Walker, chairwoman of the Northern Chumash Tribal Council. “When we rise to protect the snowy plover and the least tern, we are saving ourselves — we are honoring the living spirit of these sacred lands and keeping the promise that every generation after us will still feel their healing power.”



This may seem insignificant to those who aren't interested in off-roading, but it is important on several levels. First, the park land was acquired by the state in 1974 and officially established as a State Vehicular Recreation Area (SVRA) in 1984. So, it's a property rights issue for off roaders who pay taxes and fees to keep the park open. Also, it is a great example of what amounts to a form of extortion by environmental groups. As (501)(C3) organizations with deep pockets, they amass millions of dollars in tax deductible contributions and file lawsuits that are too often easier settled than litigated.





Family Time at the Dunes

Here is a look at the Center for Biological Diversity by ProPublica Nonprofit explorer. [Center For Biological Diversity Inc - Nonprofit Explorer - ProPublica](#)

Fiscal Year Ending Dec.

## 2024

<b>Revenue</b>	<b>\$45,735,714</b>	
Expenses	Net Income	Net Assets
<b>\$34,630,171</b>	<b>\$11,105,543</b>	<b>\$54,908,003</b>

Notable Sources of Revenue		Percent of Total Revenue
Contributions	\$37,701,988	82.4%
Program Services	\$5,721,458	12.5%
Investment Income	\$1,243,841	2.7%
Bond Proceeds	\$0	
Royalties	\$0	
Rental Property Income	\$136,547	0.3%
Net Fundraising	\$0	
Sales of Assets	\$699,139	1.5%
Net Inventory Sales	\$0	
Other Revenue	\$232,741	0.5%

**Assets/Debt**

Total Assets	\$59,189,769
Total Liabilities	\$4,281,766
Net Assets	\$54,908,003

**Compensation**

Key Employees and Officers	Compensation	Related	Other
Kieran Suckling (Executive Di)	\$317,278	\$0	\$54,981
Paula Simmonds (Chief Dev. O)	\$291,155	\$0	\$36,201
Peter Galvin (Director Of)	\$289,946	\$0	\$46,432
Brendan Cummings (Conservation)	\$263,516	\$0	\$38,986
Michael Hudson (Treasurer/Fo)	\$260,359	\$0	\$31,306
Robin Silver (Secretary)	\$207,600	\$0	\$40,692
Eric Glitzenstein (Litigation D)	\$192,196	\$0	\$33,818
Heather Rauch (Chief Of Sta)	\$190,562	\$0	\$17,846
Miyo Sakashita (Oceans Direc)	\$182,590	\$0	\$34,444
Kassia Siegel (Law Inst. Di)	\$182,188	\$0	\$30,505
Todd Schulke (Senior Staff)	\$121,690	\$0	\$22,694
Sarain Fox (Director)	\$0	\$0	\$0
Matt Frankel (Director)	\$0	\$0	\$0
Marcey Olajos (Chair)	\$0	\$0	\$0
Regina Romero (Director)	\$0	\$0	\$0
Mati Waiya (Director)	\$0	\$0	\$0

A look at the Center's webpage makes it clear that fundraising is a high priority. Viewers get a smorgasbord of causes for which to subscribe and support. The Center for Biological Diversity can be found here: [Center for Biological Diversity](#)

According to the website, "We want those who come after us to inherit a world where the wild is still alive. We do so through science, law and creative media, with a focus on protecting the lands, waters and climate that species need to survive."

The 31 items of action in their catalogue include: Defend the Western Arctic From Oil Drilling, Speak Up for Whale-Safe Ship Speeds, Protect Beloved Amboseli Elephants, Prevent Pandemics: Ban Trade in Birds and Mammals, Help Sharks Keep Their Fins and Put a Stop to 'Forever' Pesticides.

They go on to say the Center is the nation's leader in conserving endangered species, having secured Endangered Species Act protection for more than 760 species and over half a billion acres of critical habitat.

Some of the accomplishments they list:

- Compiling and analyzing data about species status and recovery.
- Submitting legal petitions, filing lawsuits when necessary, using the leverage of our supporters' voices, and taking multiple other actions to ensure that imperiled species are federally protected.
- Obtaining adequate amounts of critical habitat for species.
- Advocating for sound conservation policy.
- Watchdogging Congress and government agencies.
- Expanding our use of creative media to keep you informed and engaged.

- Published groundbreaking scientific articles and comprehensive reports on subjects such as species recovery and **the unparalleled success of the Endangered Species Act.**
- Defeated aggressive attempts by conservative lawmakers to gut the Endangered Species Act by supplying sound science and statistical analysis to policymakers.
- Gained first-time protection, through listing petitions and litigation, for more than 760 species under the Endangered Species Act — a greater number than all other U.S. conservation groups combined.
- Secured more than 700 million acres of critical habitat for endangered species, including 120 million acres of protected habitat for polar bears — the largest critical habitat designation in Endangered Species Act history — and millions of acres for northern spotted owls.

So, after a full load of all of that, searchers can find references to the efforts to save the Snowy Plover buried in the depths of their webpage.



A Snowy Plover

Here is their synopsis on the challenge:

### **SAVING THE WESTERN SNOWY PLOVER**

Ornamented in buff and pale feathers, the western snowy plover often goes unnoticed amongst the sand dunes it inhabits. Heedless of this shy, pocket-sized shorebird, developers have made the open sandy beaches it favors a prime target for destructive projects, and human beach activity often scares plovers away from their nests, leaving chicks and eggs vulnerable to both predators and the elements. Fortunately, since the species was protected under the Endangered Species Act, nest-site destruction and harassment has been reduced; the bird's once-decimated population has increased by more than 50 percent.

Nowhere in their voluminous reports do they acknowledge either the ongoing work towards finding a balance that is being done by the California Parks Department through scientific and biological conservation efforts, or the substantial dedicated funding committed to those efforts that come from user fees.

While taxpayers get taken advantage of and off roaders get short changed, at least we can all rest well knowing that the Snowy Plovers are well taken care of.

## **Sales Tax Details**

With the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG) half-cent sales tax, called Measure H, now formally placed on the November ballot, people are starting

to pay attention to details. It's a bit of a mystery why more people didn't engage earlier while the measure was in the formative stage. SLOCOG held a series of listening sessions around the county and made presentations to each city council.

According to SLOCOG, "The expenditure plan was shaped by extensive outreach and engagement with communities across San Luis Obispo County. Feedback was gathered through public workshops, an online survey, and focus groups to inform how funds will be used to address local needs, improve regional connectivity, and ensure accountability."

For anyone seeking details on how Measure H proposes to distribute revenues, the following link should be helpful:

[Local Roads First | SLO County | San Luis Obispo County, CA, USA](#)

It is not clear what the next steps are in terms of a campaign. SLOCOG is prohibited from undertaking any advocacy work but is available to community groups wishing to have a presentation on the details of the tax.



As we have reported, the citizen group that raised substantial funding and gathered an impressive number of valid signatures has pledged to put together an advocacy campaign.

One of the first questions most people ask is how the revenue will be distributed. Here are some details:

Revenues shall be allocated as follows:

- A. **55% Local Road Repairs and Improvements** distributed by population to each city and the County. (Reviewed every ten years based on census data<sup>1</sup>).
- B. **40% Regional Corridor Improvements** distributed by subregion population within the areas defined as shown.
- C. **4% Mobility Services** for Seniors, Veterans and Mobility Challenged
- D. **1% Administration**



<sup>1</sup> Should a new city become incorporated, the percentages would be adjusted to reflect the updated population distribution.

The next question is often about how the funds can be used:

Funds are distributed by population to the cities and the County. County funds shall be distributed equally by Supervisorial District over the life of the measure as monitored and reported by the Citizens Oversight Committee. Funds may be used for:

- A. Local road maintenance, rehabilitation, and repair.
- B. Safe Routes to School and Safe Routes to College programs.
- C. Local intersections, operational and traffic safety improvements.
- D. Bridge safety and seismic retrofits.
- E. Bicycle and pedestrian improvements (sidewalks, crosswalks, multi-use paths).
- F. Community enhancements tied to transportation (streetscape, lighting, landscaping, wayfinding).
- G. Traffic signal improvements and synchronization.
- H. Piers, walkways and other pedestrian or bike paths in and around waterfront and river areas.
- I. Transit services including local trolley services may be funded if desired by a City.

There are many projects that may span multiple districts, such as highway improvements. Many of these are referred to as regional corridor projects and have a special funding category:

Regional project funds shall be distributed by population among subregions over the life of the measure as monitored and reported by the Citizens Oversight Committee and used for:

- A. Highway and major corridor congestion relief such as van or carpool lanes or other congestion relief measures.
- B. Safety and interchange improvements.
- C. Regional bicycle and pedestrian connectors between communities like the Bob Jones Trail.
- D. Interagency Transit Access.
- E. Mitigation impacts for proposed improvements.
- F. Other projects consistent with the adopted Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

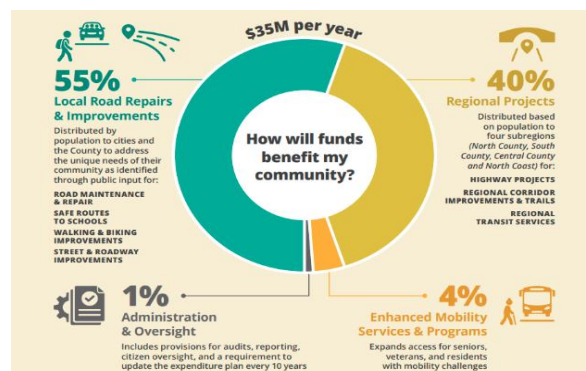
There are safeguards built into the system designed to protect against abuse:

- A. **A transportation special revenue fund** (the “Local Transportation Authority Special Revenue Fund”) shall be established to maintain all Revenues.
- B. **Accounting** Receipt, maintenance and expenditure of Net Revenues shall be distinguishable in each jurisdiction’s accounting records from other funding sources, and expenditures of Net Revenues shall be distinguishable by program or project. Interest earned on Net Revenues allocated pursuant to the Ordinance shall be expended only for those purposes for which the Net Revenues were allocated.
- C. **No Net Revenues** shall be used by a jurisdiction for other than transportation purposes authorized by the Ordinance. Any jurisdiction which violates this provision must fully reimburse the Authority for the Net Revenues misspent and shall be deemed ineligible to receive Net Revenues for a period of five (5) years.
- D. A **Citizens Oversight Committee** (“Committee”) shall be established to provide an enhanced level of accountability for expenditure of Revenues under the Ordinance. The Committee will help to ensure that all voter mandates are carried out as required. The roles and responsibilities of the Committee, the selection process for Committee members and related administrative procedures shall be carried out as described in the Section XIII below and Ordinance Section 15.
- E. A **performance assessment** shall be conducted at least once every five years to evaluate the efficiency, effectiveness, economy and program results of the Authority in satisfying the provisions and requirements of the Investment Summary

of the Plan, the Plan and the Ordinance. A copy of the performance assessment shall be provided to the Committee.

- F. **Annual status reports** regarding the regional corridor projects and improvements shall be brought before the Authority by local agencies and Authority staff at least annually in public meetings.
- G. **Annual Report** Annually the Authority shall publish a report on how all Revenues have been spent and on progress in implementing projects in the Plan and shall publicly report on the findings and posted on the agency website.

The following graphic illustrates the breakdown of the anticipated \$35 million annual revenue:



It's impossible to guess what the economy will be doing in November, but we do expect other revenue measures to be on the ballot in parts of the county. In last week's Update, we pointed out the regressive nature of sales taxes, which is a real concern for low wage earners. It should be noted that we got the decimal point wrong when calculating the extra half cent cost on a \$500 set of tires, which should be \$2.50 not \$25.00.

We will watch developments closely, and report on them as they occur. We will also provide direct links to any groups that formally engage in support or opposition so that readers can be apprised of those efforts.

## **Will Quiet Title Litigation Ever Be Quiet?**

The City of Paso Robles has dropped out of the Quiet Title litigation over water rights that has been going on since 2013. The suit originally named the city of Paso Robles, SLO County, San Miguel CSD, Templeton CSD, and the Atascadero Mutual Water Company as defendants by landowners who accused the water purveyors of encroaching on their water rights.

This legal action seeks to protect the inherent right to groundwater that came with properties when they were purchased. It only seeks rights that are already granted by California law.



At issue in the case is whose groundwater rights take precedence—the overlied or purveyor—when the shared water source is in overdraft. Overdraft is roughly defined as when overall pumping exceeds the aquifer’s safe annual yield.

It is difficult to say what impact the outcome of this case will have on the future efforts of the Paso Robles Groundwater Authority. Guessing on timing about when the litigation might conclude seems to be like picking lottery numbers. Extensions, continuations and delays are regularly used to extend the life of the suit, and likely to increase the legal fees going to lawyers working for the public entities involved.

As we have said all along, there is a severe lack of trust among property owners in the Paso basin for would be regulators and “fee” takers. This lawsuit is at the heart of that distrust. We hope for a positive conclusion on this issue and look forward to the day when recharge is more important than consultants, lawsuits and power plays.

## Fireworks Regulations Blowing Up

Anybody concerned about the use of fireworks would be wise to note that local cities and the county are all getting serious about enforcing restrictions. We have heard discussions of offering rewards for turning in illegal uses, drones patrolling and extra enforcement personnel all focused on catching and fining perpetrators.

In most cases, fines are also applicable to hosts of parties where illegal fireworks are used.

### Countywide Rules

- **Prohibited areas:** All unpermitted fireworks are banned in unincorporated SLO County, including Oceano, Cayucos, Nipomo, Avila Beach, Shandon, Creston, and Santa Margarita [County of San Luis Obispo+1](#).
- **Incorporated cities:** Some cities (e.g., Grover Beach, Arroyo Grande) allow state-certified “safe and sane” fireworks on certain days, such as July 4 between 10 a.m.–10 p.m. [Yahoo+1](#).
- **Community service districts:** San Miguel and Templeton allow state-certified fireworks on specific days [Yahoo+1](#).

- **Other areas:** Sky lanterns are banned countywide [cityrulelookup.com](http://cityrulelookup.com).

## Penalties

- **Misdemeanor:** Use, sale, or possession of fireworks is a misdemeanor with a **\$2,000 fine** [cityrulelookup.com](http://cityrulelookup.com).
- **Criminal charges:** Dangerous (non-“safe and sane”) fireworks can carry fines starting at \$2,000; possession over 500 lbs is a felony [County of San Luis Obispo](http://County of San Luis Obispo).
- **Liability:** Parents/guardians are strictly liable for minors’ violations [County of San Luis Obispo](http://County of San Luis Obispo).
- **Costs:** Violators may be billed for firefighting, law enforcement, and medical response costs [County of San Luis Obispo](http://County of San Luis Obispo).
- **Confiscation:** Illegal fireworks can be seized and disposed of at the owner’s expense [County of San Luis Obispo](http://County of San Luis Obispo).



It would be wise to check with your own jurisdiction to verify details of the restrictions in your community. We wish everyone a fantastic Fourth and a wonderful and safe celebration of our nation’s 250<sup>th</sup> birthday.



## Last Week

### Congratulations and Appreciation

Now that we have some fairly conclusive results from the June 2 election, we all should take a few minutes to express our thanks to each of the candidates that ran for local office.

Campaigning, fundraising, generating good publicity, dealing with bad publicity, heartwarming support and discouraging opposition, financial sacrifice, balancing family, work and other obligations with trying to be everywhere all the time – these are just a few of the challenges that candidates commit to in their effort to take their point of view to office. And lest we forget, family members, friends, supporters and volunteers all work very hard to make our election system work.

We congratulate Supervisor Paulding on his reelection. We understand that he knocked on thousands of doors and worked very hard to reassure his constituents of his commitment to represent their interests on the Board of Supervisors. Congratulations are also in order to Jim Dantona. We suspect that the campaign was much more involved than he initially anticipated. Again, he won the trust of the voters in the 2<sup>nd</sup> District and promises to bring a new approach to county government.

We also wish to offer our sincere thanks to Adam Verdin who ran a very good campaign, along with Michael Woody who brought an unexpected dimension to that race. Without quality candidates, the system breaks down. Voters had great candidates from which to choose, and that should be reassuring to the electorate.



Aside from the Supervisor races, there was an important race for County Clerk/Recorder as well as State Assembly and Congressional races. Each of those candidates deserves our appreciation.

Now we move on to November. Governor, other constitutional offices, along with congress and state legislative races will be joined by a variety of important ballot measures (statewide and local) as well as a long list of critical city council seats. Every race seems to be “the most important in years”, but this one really does have a tremendous impact on how our government moves forward on many levels.

## **Sales Tax on the Way**

Is it a surprise to anybody that the half cent sales tax will formally appear on our November 3, 2026 San Luis Obispo County General Election ballot? The San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG) voted on June 16 to place the measure on the ballot. That vote was confirmed by the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors at their June 16 meeting.

The measure has been referred to as “Local Roads First”, but is now being called Measure H.



There was a brief discussion about whether the BoS had any discretion in deciding whether to proceed. Supervisor Paulding said that he understood that the Board was obligated to put the measure on the ballot following the SLOCOG vote. County Council followed with an explanation that was a bit vague but seemed to support Paulding’s understanding.

Whether the Board was obligated or not, they proceeded with a vote. Supervisor Moreno said that with SLOCOG's poll numbers indicating support in the best scenario of mid to high 50 %, and at a cost of \$580,000 just to put it on the ballot, she could not support moving forward. She voted no.



Here is a motion that SLOCOG approved regarding covering the estimated \$580,000 cost of putting the sales tax on the ballot:

**A-1 Election Costs to SLOCOG (ROLL CALL – PROVIDE AUTHORIZATION TO EXECUTE FORMAL MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING [MOU] WITH THE COUNTY TO FULLY PAY FOR TRANSPORTATION EXPENDITURE PLAN [TEP] MEASURE ELECTION COSTS, CONSISTENT WITH PRIOR BOARD DIRECTION).** James Worthley

Supervisor Gibson tried to assuage Moreno's concern by pointing out (mansplaining?) that the cost of putting the measure on the ballot would be reimbursed by SLOCOG. Gibson provided an excellent demonstration of how the liberal mind works (or doesn't). Completely disregarding the fact that the \$580,000 comes from the hard-earned salaries and savings of taxpayers, Gibson was only thinking about which government fund would be spending those taxpayer dollars – no concern whatsoever about the actual taxpayers who are expected to finance the measure.

Supervisor Peschong stated that he always opposed sales taxes because of their regressive nature and joined Moreno in a no vote. The remaining Supervisors gave the measure the three votes needed to proceed.

Several people spoke in favor of the measure. Most cited the matching funds available to "self-help" counties. They pointed out that on top of the anticipated \$38 million in revenue that the tax is estimated on an annual basis, the county could see two or three times that in grant funding.

Some of the speakers were part of the "citizen" effort to put the measure on the ballot via the petition process. Had they succeeded, the measure would only

require a simple majority vote to pass. Because the measure has been placed on the ballot by a government body, the measure will require a two-thirds vote to pass (hence Moreno's concern). The citizens' committee members pointed out that they had gathered over 12,500 valid signatures in a very short time and suggested that was an indicator of community support. Further, they said that they will run an aggressive support campaign urging a yes vote.

No one spoke against the measure at the Supervisor meeting. It is anticipated that the Central Coast Taxpayers Association will campaign against the measure, but it remains unclear about whether they will have the resources needed to have a strong voice. Ironically, none of the groups that traditionally speak out on behalf of lower income people seem to be interested in this measure. Like all sales taxes, this one is regressive – meaning that it hurts lower income consumers the most. The extra \$25 on a \$500 set of tires doesn't hurt a high-income earner nearly as much as one barely getting by. Should this tax pass, some parts of San Luis Obispo County will be among the highest sales tax communities in the state.

## Meaningless Symbolism

The ICE haters have made quite a fuss at several BoS meetings over the past year. Many demand that the BoS declare ICE to be unwelcome in our county and even demand declaring that ICE may not operate in our community.



Their focus has primarily been on the Sheriff Department and a perceived cooperation between that department and ICE in the handling of “justice-involved” immigrants. After hours of claims and reports from the Sheriff, the ICE haters have realized that their claims are not getting traction. Still, they remain emphatic about their wish to abolish ICE activities to the extent possible.

One of the suggestions offered is to prohibit ICE access to any county property. County Counsel Jon Ansolabehere reported many times that there is no legal basis for prohibiting any subset of people from a public place. ICE haters ignored this fact and persevered in their zeal to exclude ICE. Prohibiting unauthorized people from restricted county spaces is legal and has always been enforced. Now we have a resolution stating that it is so.

Will this appease the ICE haters?

Below is the text listing all the details that are already in place, but now are redundantly memorialized:

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF  
SAN LUIS OBISPO LIMITING THE USE OF COUNTY PROPERTY FOR  
NON-COUNTY PURPOSES

The following resolution is hereby offered and read: WHEREAS, San Luis Obispo County (“County”) is home to a diverse and vibrant community of people representing many races, ethnicities, and national origins, and the County affirms its commitment to ensuring dignity and respect for all residents, regardless of their immigration status; and

WHEREAS, over the last year, the County has observed across the country and within the State of California the use of public agency facilities for immigration enforcement; and

WHEREAS, while the County recognizes that immigration enforcement is exclusively within the purview of the federal government, the unauthorized use of County property to facilitate civil immigration enforcement activities ignores the intended purposes of and interferes with the County’s authority over, and the use of, its own property; and

WHEREAS, the County has a strong interest in ensuring that its policies concerning the use of County-owned and County-controlled property are clear and unambiguous, including to prevent uses of such property for federal civil immigration and enforcement activity or for any other purpose not expressly authorized by the County and consistent with the County’s use of its limited resources to focus on County purposes.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AND ORDERED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Luis Obispo, State of California, as follows: 1. The above recitals are true and correct and incorporated herein by this reference. 2. That the Board of Supervisors hereby adopts the following policies limiting the use

of County owned or controlled property for County purposes: a. To the fullest extent permitted by law, no County owned or controlled property shall be used for any purpose not expressly authorized by the County, including, for example, as a staging area, processing location, or operations base for federal immigration enforcement activities. b. No non-public areas of any County facility may be used for immigration enforcement without a valid warrant signed by a federal or state judicial officer, or other signed writ or order from a federal or state judicial officer authorizing such access. No County department, officer, or employee shall give consent for federal officials to access or use non-public areas of any County facility for purposes of immigration enforcement without a valid warrant signed by a federal or state judicial officer, or other signed writ or order from a federal or state judicial officer authorizing such access, and no such purported consent by a County department, agency, officer, or employee shall be deemed consent by the County for any such use. The foregoing policy shall not apply to any action by any department, officer, or employee expressly allowed by the California Values Act, SB 54, codified in Government Code Sections 7284 et seq. as may be amended from time to time. c. For purposes of this policy, the phrase “immigration enforcement” shall have the same meaning as set forth in Government Code Section 7284.4(f). d. The County Executive Office shall ensure implementation of this policy.

## **Gay Pride Month**

June is Gay Pride month in San Luis Obispo County. It is so because the BoS voted to declare it.



The following resolution is hereby offered and read:

WHEREAS, the County of San Luis Obispo (County) supports the rights of all citizens to experience equality and freedom from discrimination; and

WHEREAS, the County honors the history of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Queer (LGBTQ+) liberation movement and recognizes that LGBTQ+ individuals have had immeasurable impact to the cultural, civic, and economic successes of our county and nation; and

WHEREAS, this nation was founded on the principle that every individual has equal dignity, worth, and status, and the County of San Luis Obispo Board of Supervisors calls upon community members to embrace this principle and work to eliminate prejudice everywhere it exists; and

WHEREAS, Pride Month began as a protest against the profiling and violence of LGBTQ+ people, who continue to face these intense struggles to this day; and

WHEREAS, human beings deserve, not only the tools for survival, but also access to the pursuit of equitable health, liberation, and joy; and

WHEREAS, LGBTQ+ people have historically struggled to find others like themselves in media, community, and commerce, so Pride Month serves as a crucial time of visibility and community; and

WHEREAS, recognition from one's government is crucial for feeling safe and seen in one's community, and the County of San Luis Obispo is intent on ensuring that everyone in the County feels welcome, safe, and a sense of belonging; and

WHEREAS, LGBTQ+ people continue to be targeted in legislation across the country; and

WHEREAS, recognizing and celebrating Pride Month can influence awareness and provides opportunities to engage in dialogues that strengthen alliances, build acceptance, and advance equal rights for all; and WHEREAS, Pride Month is a cornerstone of American culture that allows us to lift up our successes while working toward a better, more inclusive, and equitable future.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AND ORDERED that the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Luis Obispo, State of California, does hereby proclaim the month of June 2026 as Pride Month in the County of San Luis Obispo in support of the LGBTQ+ community.

## **Immigrant Month**

The following resolution is hereby offered and read:

WHEREAS, June is nationally recognized as Immigrant Heritage Month, honoring the contributions, cultures, and resilience of immigrant communities throughout the United States; and

WHEREAS, immigrants have long contributed to the economic, cultural, educational, agricultural, and civic life of San Luis Obispo County through their work, leadership, entrepreneurship, traditions, languages, and lived experiences;  
and

WHEREAS, The Fabric of SLO County: Understanding the Diversity and Contributions of Our Immigrant Community, a report funded by Diversity Coalition, the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors, and additional community partners and funders, highlights the rich diversity of the county's immigrant population, with residents tracing roots to Latin America, Asia, the Middle East, Europe, Africa, Oceania, and other regions of the world; and

WHEREAS, the report demonstrates that immigrant residents are deeply rooted members of the community, with many having lived in the United States for decades and contributing to communities across San Luis Obispo County; and

WHEREAS, immigrant communities contribute to the county's cultural and linguistic richness, with many households speaking languages including Spanish, Mixteco, Tagalog, Mandarin, Arabic, and numerous other languages reflective of the county's global diversity; and

WHEREAS, immigrant workers, including farmworkers and indigenous Mexican families, continue to play an essential role in sustaining San Luis Obispo County's agricultural economy and broader regional prosperity, while contributing significantly across industries including hospitality, construction, food service, education, and healthcare; and

WHEREAS, community organizations, educators, advocates, workers, faith leaders, and residents across San Luis Obispo County continue to foster inclusion, connection, and opportunity for immigrant communities through education, cultural celebration, advocacy, and community support.



Imagine the staff time that went into drafting up the above resolutions. First, someone's staff aide probably took the first attempt. Then, it was probably reviewed by a few interested parties. Then it went to County Council for a legal review. Then it went to the Board Clerk who included it in the agenda, then it went

to the fancy print office to get the gold seal print job. Then the BoS went through the lengthy presentations of each.

## **Cambria Water Project**

The town of Cambria is haunted by a limited water supply. New construction is almost impossible. Drought years are hugely challenging.

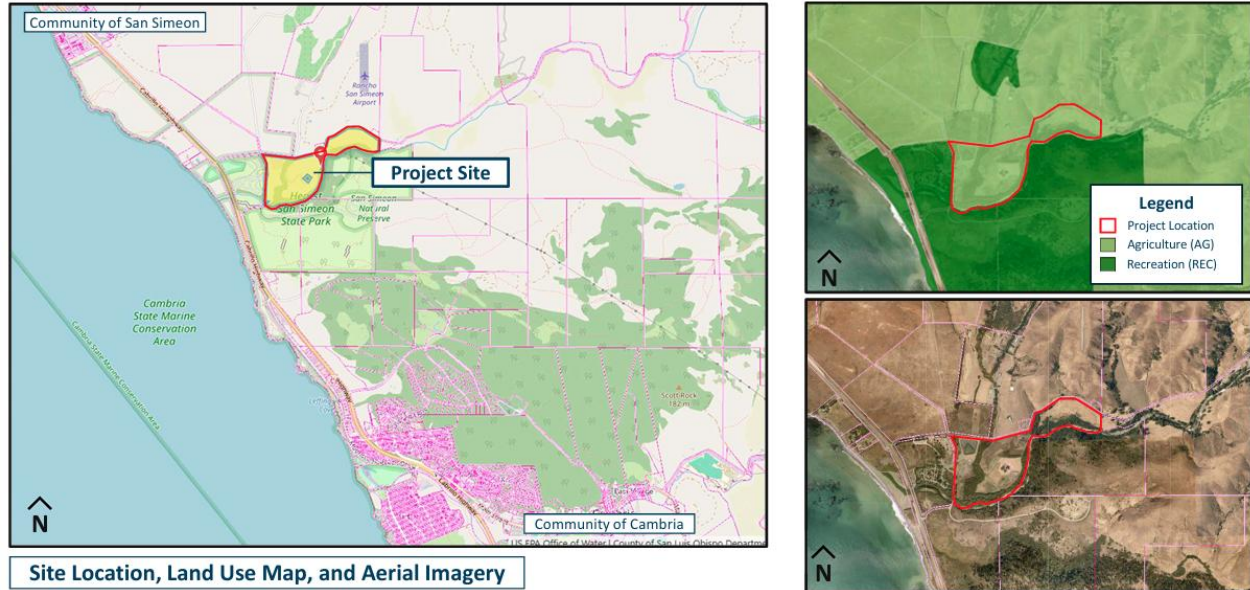
In an attempt to alleviate some of the problem, the Cambria Community Services District (CCSD) is endeavoring to allow for the continued operation of the CCSD Water Reclamation Facility (WRF) previously approved to operate on an emergency basis. This requires a Development Plan and a Coastal Development Permit.

The project includes the emergency permit components, including: the Advanced Water Treatment Plant, pipelines, a discharge to San Simeon Creek, four monitoring wells, recharge injection wells, conversion of the Van Gordon Reservoir to a brine evaporation pond, utilities, and access roads. Additionally, the project proposes new improvements to the access road, return of evaporation pond back to a reservoir, extension of discharge line to San Simeon Creek, and a Zero Liquid Discharge facility. The WRF would operate up to 24 hours per day, 5 days per week, for 7 months per year, depending on precipitation.



The project was approved by the County Planning and Building Department months ago, but a small group of Cambria residents appealed the permit. Among

their claims was that the project was in a designated Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) and that the increased water supply would be “growth inducing”.



As it turns out, the project is not and never was in an ESA. Further, the project is not tied to any new building permits. The many other claims made by the appellants were all discredited.

One notable point is that a cornerstone of current liberal policy is housing. Yet, here is a bunch of no-growthers trying to ensure that no growth can occur in their quaint village. They have theirs, and no one else should. If you have to build housing, do it somewhere else.

In the end, it appeared that the residents and the CSD leaders had a communication issue. The appeal was denied and the two sides seemed to better understand that their goals were very similar. Once again, county taxpayers are out \$6,000 – \$11,000 to debate claims some of which are factually inaccurate.

## **Diablo Coalition Despite Gibson**

Supervisor Gibson was in full liberal battle mode at the June 17 BoS meeting. Along with suggesting the \$580,000 cost of putting the sales tax measure on the ballot was negligible because it would be coming from some different batch of

Other People's Money, he also attempted to dissuade his colleagues from agreeing to have the County join the Diablo Canyon 2045 Coalition.



His reasoning was that he felt there were too many “unresolved questions” about the plant. This, after a thorough investigation by the California Coastal Commission, the State Regional Water Quality Board and a very deep dive by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission - each of which have given the plant a green light to move forward until 2045.

Apparently, Gibson feels that he and his friends at Mothers for Peace need more time to invent a legitimate reason why the plant should be shut down. State Senator John Laird and Assemblymember Dawn Addis also joined Gibson and MfP in suggesting that the process slow down (stall) for the foreseeable future. It would seem that they all feel more qualified than the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to determine the safety of the Diablo Plant.



Odd, since when Gibson, Laird and Addis didn't seem to encourage stalling when they weighed in (quite heavily) at Coastal Commission hearings last November and December. They pushed (very hard) to require that PG&E forfeit huge acreage in exchange for getting the necessary permits. What Gibson knows all too well is that the plant can't just be switched on for extra service. PG&E is obligated to continue with its decommissioning process until the 2045 plan has achieved all the permits and enabling legislation needed for ongoing operations. At some point in the next 18 months or so, the point of no return could be reached.

The next step in achieving the 2045 plan is legislation from the state. So far, no bill has been introduced. The 2026 legislative session ends this fall.

The four other Supervisors were happy to support joining the coalition. The motion to join passed.

Details about the coalition can be found at:

<https://diablocanyon2045.com/whoweare>

## **Board Break**

The Board of Supervisors is taking its annual “Board Break” from June 16 to July 7. Then, rather than repeat the usual every other Tuesday pattern, they will skip until July 28. This is good news for anybody concerned that trouble is just around the corner when the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors is in session.



We hope that the Supervisors and their staff get some quality rest and relaxation. Given the financial condition of our state government, they may need all the energy, patience and problem solving they can muster this fall.

**Emergent  
Trends Page 29**

**California Budget's \$26 Million Thumb in the Eye to Trump on Trans 'Healthcare' Measures Appearing on the November 2026 Statewide Ballot**

**COLAB in Depth  
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**Highway Robbery: California's Gas Tax Jumps another 2.2 Cents July 1st**

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# California Budget's \$26 Million Thumb in the Eye to Trump on Trans 'Healthcare'

*Trans-identifying individuals make up a tiny fraction of California's residents—well under 1 percent of adults*

By J. Mitchell Sances, June 27, 2026

The California Legislature's proposed budget includes a one-time \$26 million General Fund allocation for a Transgender Health Care Fund. Coalition advocates, led by groups like Equality California, describe it as a modest, strategic investment to stabilize "medically necessary" care for transgender, gender-expansive, and intersex (TGI) Californians. They claim it will create a state-only Medi-Cal pathway and support providers in case federal funding faces restrictions.

A closer look shows this line item for what it is: a calculated political provocation. It serves as Sacramento's open defiance of the Trump administration's efforts to curb federal support for experimental interventions on minors and to protect children from irreversible medical alterations. At the same time, it diverts substantial resources to an extremely small slice of the population while shortchanging the broader LGBT community and California taxpayers who never signed up for medical tourism subsidies. This \$26 million does not stand alone. California's Medi-Cal program already covers gender-affirming procedures, including hormones and surgeries, for qualifying residents. The new fund layers on top of that existing coverage, creating a dedicated state backstop explicitly designed to neutralize any federal pushback. In practice, it guarantees that California taxpayers continue bankrolling these interventions regardless of national policy shifts.

The scale of the spending stands in stark contrast to the size of the population it targets. Trans-identifying individuals make up a tiny fraction of California's residents—well under 1 percent of adults by most estimates. Youth identification rates have risen sharply in recent years, but even these remain a small minority, often driven by social influences and accompanied by high rates of comorbidities. Pouring millions into specialized funding for this narrow group represents a disproportionate priority in a state facing real fiscal pressures on housing, infrastructure, education, and public safety.

Within the broader LGBT funding landscape, the imbalance grows more glaring. A large share of dedicated resources already flows specifically to the “T,” even as gay and lesbian Californians formed the historical core of the movement and continue to represent the majority within the acronym. Transgender individuals also draw from general LGBT center funding and programs. With this extra \$26 million allocation, the result is a clear skew: the T receives outsized, targeted support on top of shared resources, leaving gay and lesbian priorities comparatively sidelined. This is not equitable treatment within the coalition; it is dominance dressed up as inclusion.

Compounding the unfairness is California’s role as a magnet for out-of-state families. The state’s expansive laws and shield policies have made it a destination for parents from jurisdictions that have restricted these interventions on minors. Families travel to California seeking hormones, blockers, and surgeries for their children, often accessing Medi-Cal or provider networks sustained by state dollars. These families contribute nothing to California’s tax base yet benefit directly from policies funded by local residents. It amounts to subsidized medical tourism for controversial procedures that other states have chosen to limit or ban. The Trump administration has signaled a clear intent to restrict federal involvement in these practices, particularly for minors. The rationale centers on the experimental nature of the interventions, questions about long-term evidence, high desistance rates in many cases, and the permanent physical consequences—sterility risks, bone health impacts, and lifelong medical needs. These are not minor or fully reversible adjustments. They involve the deliberate alteration of healthy developing bodies. Sacramento’s response is to double down with dedicated state funding, framing resistance as compassion while ignoring the growing body of concern from European countries that have scaled back youth access after systematic reviews. This budget choice reveals priorities that favor ideological signaling over fiscal responsibility or child safeguarding. California already struggles with high costs of living, homelessness, and education outcomes. Allocating \$26 million to create a firewall for one narrow set of procedures, while gay and lesbian Californians see their slice of the pie shrink relatively and while out-of-state families tap into the system, does not reflect prudent governance. It reflects a legislature more invested in activist demands than in protecting the vulnerable or treating all citizens fairly.

The \$26 million is not modest. It is a statement. And like so many recent Sacramento moves on these issues, it places political posturing ahead of evidence, equity within communities, and the basic duty to safeguard children from hasty, life-altering decisions they cannot fully consent to.

Californians footing the bill deserve a budget that reflects reality rather than activist fantasy.



## **J. Mitchell Sances**

J. Mitchell Sances, PhD is a linguist, writer, and a researcher. He is a contributing columnist and assistant editor for Outspoken. As a Louisiana native with strong conservative and Christian roots, he seeks to preserve American values and freedoms for future generations.

# Measures Appearing on the November 2026 Statewide Ballot

*These measures include those placed on the ballot by the Legislature as well as by voter initiative*

By Chris Micheli, June 26, 2026

The following measures will be placed before the voters of the State of California on the November 3, 2026 statewide ballot, according to the Secretary of State's website. These measures include those placed on the ballot by the Legislature as well as by voter initiative. In addition, I listed the measures that almost made the ballot, either by the Legislature or by citizen initiative:

### **Placed on the Ballot by the Legislature (5):**

- SCA 1 (Newman) Elections: recall of state officers. (Res. Ch. 204, 2024)
- SB 42 (Umberg) Political Reform Act of 1974: public campaign financing: California Fair Elections Act of 2026. (Ch. 245, 2025)
- ACA 20 (Gabriel) Save for California's Future Act. (Res. Ch. 130, 2026)
- ACA 22 (Wicks) Local taxes: limitation. (Res. Ch. 132, 2026)
- SB 417 (Limón) The Veterans and Affordable Housing Bond Act of 2026 (Ch. 16, 2026)

### **Placed on the Ballot by Voters (9):**

2001. (25-0024A1) Imposes One-Time Tax on Certain Individuals and Trusts. Initiative Constitutional Amendment and Statute.

1984. (25-0007A1) Establishes Additional Voter Identification and Citizenship Verification Requirements. Initiative Constitutional Amendment.

1986. (25-0008A1) Requires Community Health Clinics Spend 90% of Revenue on Program Services. Initiative Statute.

1990. (25-0013A1) Creates Loan Program for Middle-Income Buyers of Qualified New homes. Initiative Statute.

1993. (25-0016) Provides Permanent Funding for Schools and Healthcare by Extending Existing Tax on High Incomes. Initiative Constitutional Amendment.

2000. (25-0023A1) Modifies Environmental Review for Certain Projects. Initiative Statute.

2006. (25-0026A1) Authorizes Bonds for Immunology Research. Initiative Statute.

2017. (25-0040A1) Requires Audits of Programs Funded by New State Special Taxes. Prohibits New State Taxes That Are Excluded from Existing Voter-Approved State Spending Limit. Initiative Constitutional Amendment.

2018. (25-0041A1) Prohibits New State Personal Property Taxes and Certain Retroactive State Taxes. Initiative Constitutional Amendment.

**Withdrawn by the Proponent After Qualification (5):**

1999. (25-0022A1) Limits Automobile Accident Victims' Recovery of Medical Expenses and Fees Their Attorneys May Receive. Initiative Constitutional Amendment. – off ballot due to SB 623

2005. (25-0029A1) Expands Liability and Imposes Duties on Rideshare Companies Regarding Sexual Misconduct. Initiative Statute. – off ballot due to SB 623

1998. (25-0021A1) Restricts Political Spending by Health Care Unions. Initiative Statute.

1985. (25-0009A1) Limits Compensation for Health Care Executives, Managers, and Administrators. Initiative Statute.

1983. (25-0006A1) Limits Ability of Voters to Raise Revenues for Local Government Services. Initiative Constitutional Amendment.



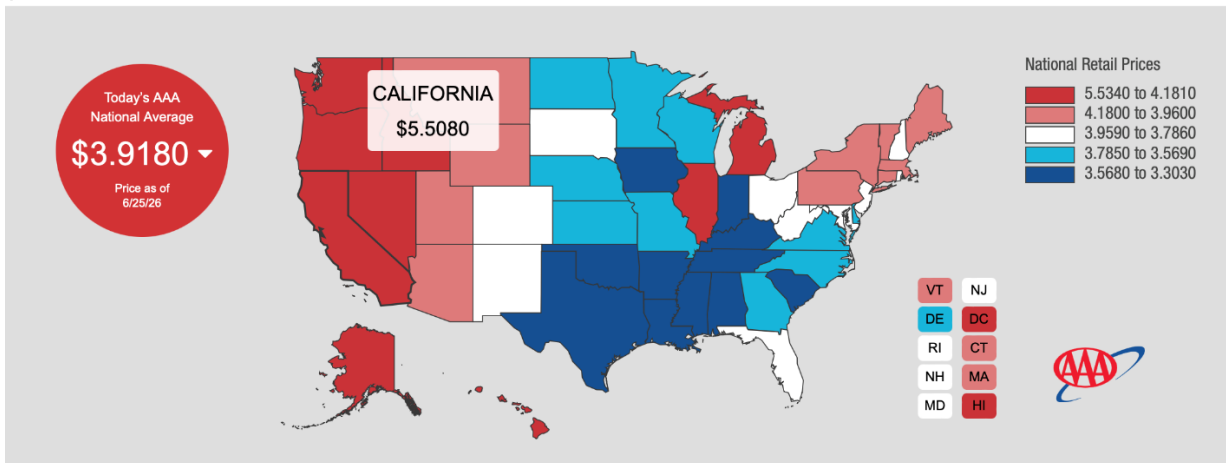
## Chris Micheli

Chris Micheli is an attorney and lobbyist with Snodgrass & Micheli, LLC, as well as an Adjunct Professor at McGeorge School of Law.

# Highway Robbery: California's Gas Tax Jumps another 2.2 Cents July 1st

*'Like clockwork, we're facing another tax increase on Californians'*

By Katy Grimes, June 25, 2026 7:00 am



AAA gas prices. (Photo: AAA, June 25, 2026)

Gird your loins: While gas prices are going down throughout the country, California is increasing its gas tax. July 1, 2026, California's state excise tax on gasoline increases to 63.4 cents per gallon, up from 61.2 cents, affirming the state's highest-in-the nation gas taxes.

More is never enough.

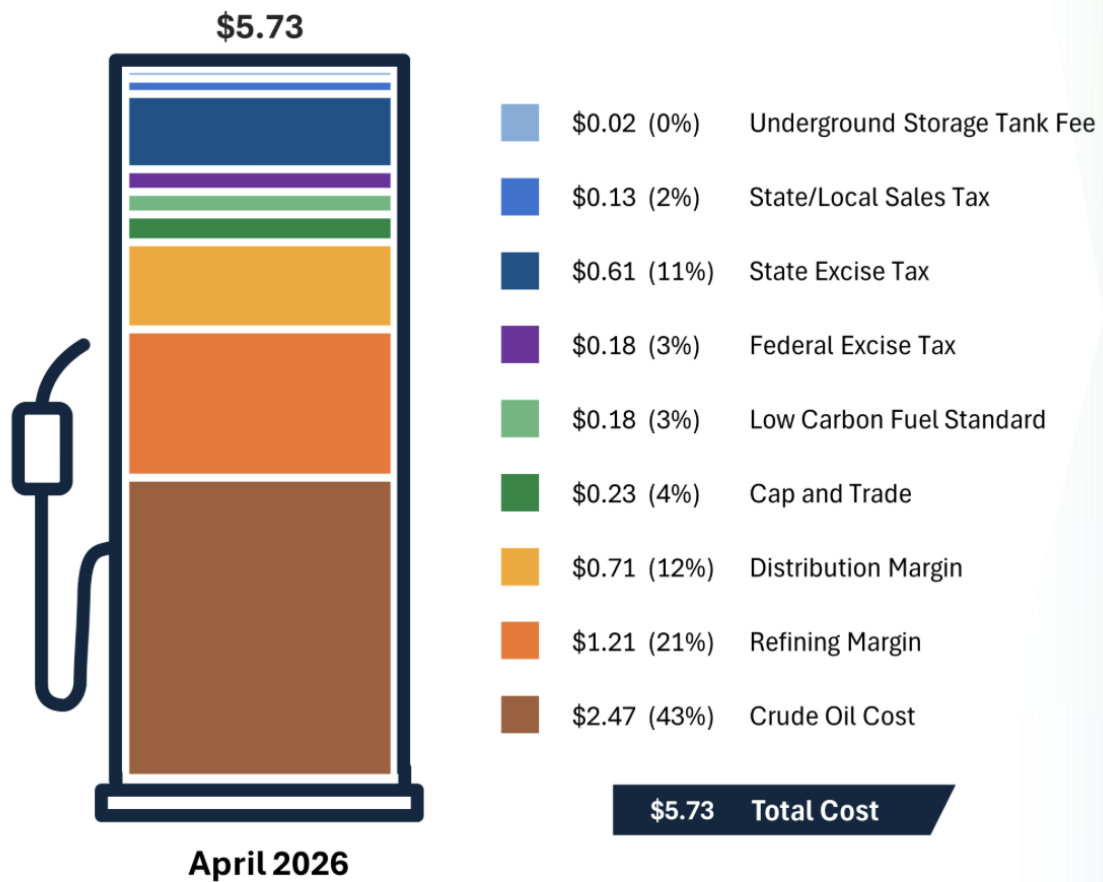
On top of the excise tax, Californians pay roughly 13 cents in state and local sales taxes, about 24 cents for cap-and-trade, roughly 20 cents for the Low Carbon Fuel Standard and another 2 cents for the underground storage tank fee.

California Energy Commission lists the other taxes:

- State and local sales taxes: Roughly 13 cents per gallon (based on an average ~2.25% state sales tax plus local add-ons applied to the fuel price; the exact amount varies by location).
- Cap-and-Trade (Cap-and-Invest): About 24–25 cents per gallon (this fluctuates with allowance prices; recent estimates put it in the 24–27 cent range).
- Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS): Roughly 17–20 cents per gallon (varies with compliance costs and credit prices; estimates have ranged from ~14–20+ cents recently).
- Underground Storage Tank (UST) fee: 2 cents per gallon (a fixed fee for cleaning up leaking tanks)

These add up to roughly 56–60+ cents per gallon in additional state-level costs beyond the base excise tax, according to the Tax Foundation. Combined with the federal excise tax of 18.4 cents/gallon, California’s total tax and regulatory burdens are the highest in the U.S. about 80–90+ cents per gallon total when including everything.

Drivers just know that all of this hurts.



**Data Last Updated:** June 15, 2026

The gas tax increase is automatic under Senate Bill 1, the 2017 law that raises the tax every year without a vote of the Legislature, Assembly Republicans note.

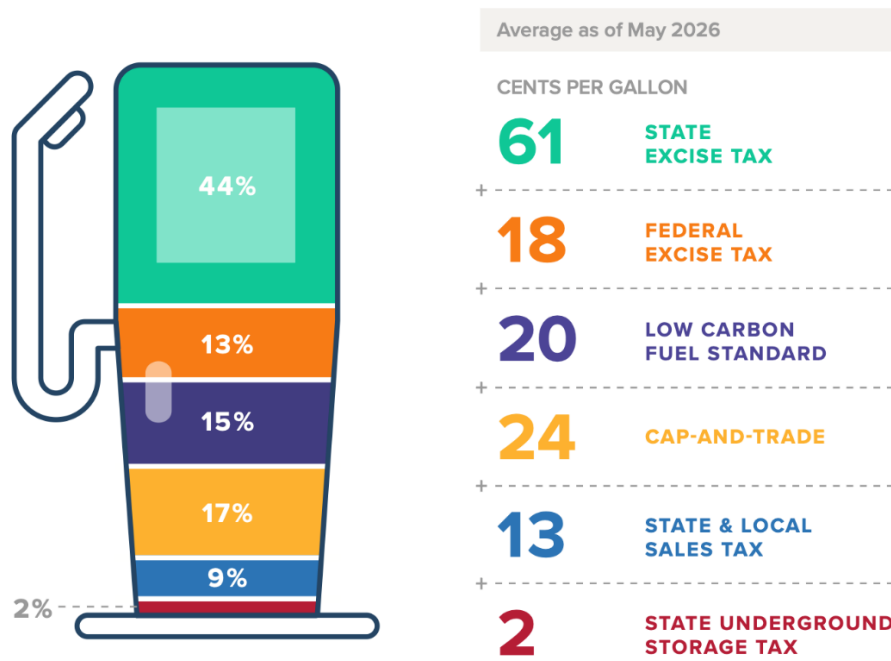
“When SB 1 passed, California’s gas tax was 27.8 cents per gallon. In less than a decade, it has more than doubled and will continue increasing automatically every July.”

“Like clockwork, we’re facing another tax increase on Californians,” said Assembly Republican Leader Heath Flora (R-Lodi). “Families are already paying some of the highest gas prices in the country. Instead of raising taxes, we should be trying to make gas more affordable.”

Altogether, state taxes, fees and mandates add about \$1.38 to every gallon of gas sold in California, costing the average driver hundreds of dollars each year. That’s before accounting for global supply and demand or state policies that have contributed to refinery closures and reduced in-state fuel production.

The Western States Petroleum Association has its own listing of California’s Estimated Impact of California Taxes, Fees & Costs of Climate Programs, which will go up July 1st:

### Estimated Impact of California Taxes, Fees & Costs of Climate Programs



**Source:** U.S. Energy Information Administration; California Department of Tax and Fee Administration; Low Carbon Fuel Standard based on OPIS methodology; Cap-and-Trade based on most recent Auction Settlement Price for California Carbon Allowances. All information accessed in June 2026.

**Disclaimer:** This infographic is based on average historical gas prices and is not a forecast of future gas pricing. The basic rules of supply and demand have an impact on the price of gasoline. Additionally, local taxes and fees also account for the cost of gasoline to consumers. This figure assumes all businesses pass on the entire cap-and-trade costs; however, WSPA does not have

“California’s energy affordability crisis is a choice. Assembly Republicans have repeatedly fought to suspend the gas tax and provide relief to working families,” Assembly Republicans report.

“Sacramento Democrats chose higher taxes. On July 1, Californians will pay the bill.”



### **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.



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