



COLAB
San Luis Obispo County

The Coalition of Labor Agriculture and Business

Weekly Update
Oct. 19 - 26, 2026

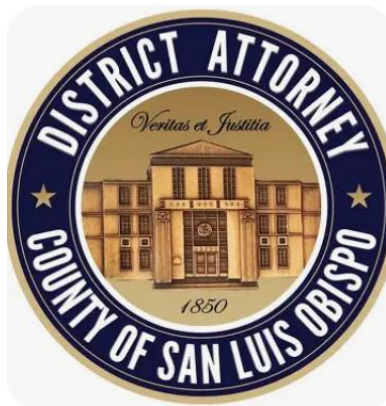
Public Safety: Yes or No?

Item 4 on the October 20 San Luis Obispo Board of Supervisors agenda is a step towards finally giving the District Attorney's office some of the staff support they have been requesting and desperately need. The agenda item reads:

Request to 1) adopt a resolution that: a) retroactively authorizes the District Attorney to apply for and accept a grant award from the Federal Bureau of Justice Assistance in the amount of \$726,882 for the period of September 1, 2026 through August 31, 2029, that will offset funding of an existing 0.50 FTE of a Deputy District Attorney IV, and b) delegates authority to the District Attorney or designee to sign any grant agreements, amendments, subcontracts, or documents related to the grant awards/agreements that do not increase the level of General Fund Support required by the District Attorney; 2) adopt a resolution amending the Position Allocation List (PAL) for Fund Center (FC) 132 – District Attorney to add a 1.00 Limited Term FTE Paralegal through August 31, 2029; and 3) approve a corresponding budget adjustment request in the amount of \$167,332 using Special Attorneys Program Grant funds within FC 132 – District Attorney in expenditure appropriation for FY 2026-27, by 4/5 vote.



This item was put on the agenda by District Attorney Dan Dow. With the dramatic increase in fraud, elderly abuse and prosecutions of crimes restored under Proposition 36, the DA's office is facing tremendous pressure to manage their case load. On top of that, the increase in managing digital data has resulted in a much heavier workload.



According to Dow, "This attorney will now be able to take some of his current local cases to Federal Court for prosecution. (Human Trafficking, drug trafficking, guns, gangs, fraud, environmental cases...) We will take the cases that we can obtain better longer sentences under Federal law."

Dow went on to say, "My DDA will be our local special assistant united states attorney who can ensure that San Luis Obispo County major crimes that qualify for federal prosecution will be able to have the best possible outcomes for public safety here in SLO County. The savings to our General Fund will free up the balance to fully fund an additional Paralegal which we badly need to address the growing volume of evidence and workload on our Paralegal team for the past 12 years without any additional paralegal staff."



Dow doesn't give up fighting for justice.

Our Board of Supervisors claims that their top priority is public safety. Yet the majority of the Board rejected Dows request early in the year for more staff positions. Now, they have an opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to public safety by supporting our District Attorney in this important effort to increase the capabilities of our District Attorney team.

We appreciate Dow's determination to bring the needed resources to this critical component of our justice system and hope that our entire Board of Supervisors recognizes the importance of this effort.

Unanswered Child Care Questions

Item 5 on the Oct, 20 agenda reads: "Submittal of a resolution endorsing the Uplift Child Care Coalition's Shared Vision Statement for childcare on California's Central Coast."

Only Mr. Scrooge would oppose quality childcare, and he is busy getting ready for Christmas. But there is a little more to this seemingly innocent and well-intentioned measure.

As we read, we see that the Uplift Child Care Coalition has developed "A Shared Vision for California's Central Coast," which states that childcare is essential to the wellbeing, prosperity, and future of the Central Coast and should be high-quality, accessible, and affordable for all families"



Well, we like the “affordable” part, but how does that work? Most educators would tell you that our regular K – 12 system is woefully underfunded. So where would subsidy funding come from to provide the childcare program that will be affordable for everyone? Will it take from other programs, or will it require an entirely new funding stream? Is this another redistribution of wealth program where higher income families pay extra to fund the lower income ones? Are we talking mandatory or voluntary childcare? Will those families choosing different forms of child care (stay at home parents, grandparents/family members, church programs, etc.) still have to pay?



Childcare is great, but not cheap.

According to the coalition’s website: “The backbone funding for the Child Care Coalition was received from Uplift Central Coast (Uplift), which is a six-county coalition working to attract investment and expand opportunities for Central Coast residents.” It goes on to say, “The mission of Uplift is “to uplift our residents as we uplift our regional economy, growing from within to create transformative opportunities for more than 2 million people across six Central Coast counties.”

Here are their graphics illustrating their efforts:



The program has the backing of First 5, which is funded by a 50 cent per pack tax on cigarettes. The tax raises about \$500 million annually, with approximately 20% going to overhead and the balance to programs.



Uplift’s website says: ‘After producing the Regional Plans, Uplift released a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the Catalyst Predevelopment phase of work. Nearly \$50 million in funding requests from more than 136 organizations were received for the \$9 million that was available for distribution. [36 organizations](#) who were committed to advancing economic resilience, environmental sustainability, and equitable growth across the Central Coast were awarded funding. These organizations, representing all six counties, span diverse industries and address critical needs in areas such as workforce development, aerospace, education and job training, childcare and community development, and climate resilience and sustainable agriculture.’”

This is a noble concept, but before the BoS throws support behind it, there should be a far more detailed explanation. We borrow Supervisor Gibson’s nuclear crutch by pointing out that there are “too many unanswered questions”.

Newsom Blows it Again

By now, almost everyone has seen the news that the 9th Circuit Court has unanimously found Governor Newsom's "No Vigilantes Act," unconstitutional. The decision is a clear win for "the Constitution and for ICE, blocking Gavin Newsom's latest attempt to hamstring federal immigration enforcement. The 9th Circuit ruled that California cannot force federal officers to display identification under threat of criminal prosecution, because the Supremacy Clause bars states from directly regulating the operations of the federal government."

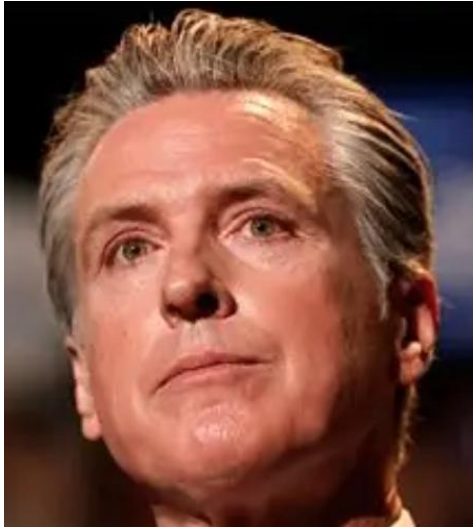


Of course, anybody that stayed awake in High School civics class and earned a C- or better already knew all of that. It's a pity that so much court time and taxpayer money went into reaching that decision.



Ninth Circuit Court unanimously rejects Newsom's lame attempt.

The upside to getting the decision is hopefully that local ICE haters will stop annoying the Board of Supervisors and other local elected officials with crazy demands that they tell ICE what it can and can't do in San Luis Obispo County.



Newsom: Not qualified to teach high school civics.

We believe that Newsom knew that his law was unconstitutional but pursued it anyway as both a symbol of his position on illegal immigration (and violent crime) as well as a tool to foment fear and agitation among his cooky supporters.

The "No Vigilantes Act," was a lame attempt to make Newsom look like he could take on President Trump and prevail. Is it true that he cares more about his hair doo than the United States Constitution? Mark this as just another in a long list of Newsom Failures.

TAAG Implodes... Explodes?

The Templeton Area Advisory Group, known as TAAG, has formally requested to be “unrecognized” by the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors. The unrecognition ceremony will take place at the regular BoS meeting on October 20. According to the measure under consideration, “unfortunately, over recent months and year, TAAG has suffered from various challenges which has resulted in a lack of a quorum of board members, inability to attract new members and overall inability to meet on a regular basis”.

We are always sorry to see problems with local advisory or community service districts, as they are a strong voice for local control.

What we wonder, whether this is an isolated situation, or are other local boards at risk of going down the same path?

Since the County is the granting authority, should the County take steps to review its many boards and service districts to ensure that they are all functioning at a healthy level. Of course, this would beg the question what if some are not fully functioning? How would the County proceed?

Local control is a critical component of democracy. There are, however, potential fiscal liabilities to districts that are not performing properly. We see a huge cost on the horizon for the San Simeon Community Service District with no clear solutions. Do any other districts have financial shortfalls that could end up as expensive problems for the whole county?



As we watch the demise of TAAG, we wonder what people think they are accomplishing when they get loud, rude and vulgar at public meetings? Does interrupting, pounding on the dais, and making specious demands help to find solutions? Do people who disrespect others really expect others to respect them? Can repeating the same monologue over and over again make misstatements somehow true? Do people using these tactics think they look good or smart by doing so? Do they realize that rather than being intimidating, they look foolish? Does anybody find a ranting and raving presenter somehow compelling?

An Appealing Solution for Bad Appeals?

Yes, yes... back on the broken record of abusive and expensive building permit appeals. Once again, the Los Osos Appeal Armada has sailed. This time they are appealing the Planning Commission's approval of a request by The Towers, LLC and Verizon Wireless for a Conditional Use Permit (N-DRC2025-00037) to allow the construction of telecommunications and public utility facility, consisting of a 70' monopine with (3) 8' antennas, (3) 4' antennas, (3) 3' antennas, (3) rru's, (1) 6' microwave, (4) ovp boxes, (1) gps antenna, required antenna cabling, hcs jumpers,

(2) ground mounted radio cabinets, (1) equipment canopy, (1) fiber box, (1) 200a ilc cabinet, (1) manual service light switch timer, (3) service lights, (1) back-up diesel generator, (2) raised concrete pads, cable ice bridge, Utility backboard and multi-meter utility service mounted on concrete pad within a 40'x40' fenced lease area.



The kind of Monopine cell tower that will allegedly harm Los Osos residents.

This, of course is better known as a cell tower. It may be that the appellants don't use cell phones, but it's a sure bet that all their neighbors do. It may not be evident to the appellants, but the system works like this: Cell Towers provide cell service. No tower, no service. Even NIMBYs who use cell phones have to allow towers somewhere in their community. Gotta wonder where they think cell towers should go if not near them?

The appellant complains that the following conditions apply and are important enough to override the permit:

- Documented Health Concerns Associated With Long-Term RF Exposure
- Heightened Risk to Vulnerable Populations
- Environmental and Ecological Impacts
- Property Value, Habitability, and Tenant Retention Impacts

The appellant concludes thusly:

“Approving infrastructure that may expose residents to long-term health and environmental risks without comprehensive review conflicts with our responsibility to safeguard community welfare.”

This appeal, like all coastal zone appeals, will cost taxpayers between \$8 – 13,000. If it is anything like the many that have preceded it, no real issues with the rules or

procedures of the planning permit process will have been found to have been broken.

These appeals are too often filed with no merit. They cost needlessly taxpayers, but they also cost the builder who has to deal with the delay, review all the plans and prepare for the meritless hearing.

Our county encourages this wasteful (and vengeful) practice by giving any No-growther a full free ride.

Supervisor Moreno has attempted to reform the process, but the majority of the BoS saw nothing wrong with the situation. We have a recommendation.

Make all appeals liable for costs if it turns out that they have no basis for their filing. In other words, if the appellant can't prove that the permit was granted in violation of one or more planning rules, they are liable.



There needs to be fairness in the appeal process.

Educate all appellants about the need to be specific about what parts of the original permit process was out of compliance. Let them know that subjective claims, opinions and personal impressions are not grounds for a successful appeal.

In the case of a loss, if the appeal doesn't convince at least 2 Supervisors that the appeal is based on factual issues regarding the actual process and/or the rules and regulations of the planning process, the appellant pays (full cost? half cost?). Winning appeals pay nothing.

Would that appeal to our BoS?

Last Call!
Please Join Us on Wednesday Evening
It's Free, It's Fun and It's a Great Program



FALL FORUM



Wednesday, October 21st
5:30–7:30 PM



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

PROP 43 -
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 Prop 43, the "Save Prop 13" ballot measure, and the protections it would provide for California taxpayers.



Jon Coupal
President of HJTA



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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

A Vote for In-Person Voting

By now, you should have received your ballot in the mail. The process allows you to fill out the ballot and return it at your leisure in the comfort of your own home.

Great – except when it isn't.

In the June Primary elections just a few months ago, 3,313 voters in San Luis Obispo County had their votes cancelled because their mail in ballots didn't arrive in time or had signature issues. 93,479 ballots were disqualified statewide because they arrived too late for the June primary, and another 44,000 were disqualified statewide because the signature did not match.



See your ballot in there – somewhere?

Here in San Luis Obispo County, it seems that some mail is trucked to Goleta where it is processed and date stamped before being trucked back to our county for delivery. This process can add days to what would otherwise be local mail delivery. Some suggest that this is primarily a problem for North County mail - hmmm.

What this tells us is that if you really want or need to use the mail in ballot, be sure to post it early and make sure your signature is clear.



Mail-in ballots are handled by a whole bunch of people.

Better, if you can, take your mail-in ballot to your precinct polling place on election day and trade it in for a real polling place ballot (DO NOT allow them to talk you into simply depositing your mail-in ballot). That in person ballot goes directly to the County Clercks office at the close of the polls and is counted that very evening. No worries about your ballot travelling all over the landscape and being handled by who knows how many people.



In person voting is easy. Try it.

Again we stress, if you choose this process, do not let the poll workers try to talk you into using the mail-in ballot. Use the real precinct ballot that you are entitled to use.

Voting in person takes very little effort. You can bring your notes or preferred voter guides with you (as long as you don't flash them around) and you get that cute little sticker as well!



It's nice to have options, and we certainly suggest that you utilize one of those options because your vote is very important. Sometimes our schedules make it difficult to go to the polling place. Should you prefer to utilize the mail-in ballot, please take the precautions of mailing it at least a week before election day, and be sure your signature is clear. If you can go to the polling place, give some serious thought to doing so. It's the best way to make sure your vote will be counted.

Ballot Measure recommendations

While COLAB SLO does not recommend, we suggest the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Foundation: [2026 California Voting Guide & Endorsements | HJTA](#)

County Staff Budget Training

Last week, we mentioned extra training that county staff were undertaking to improve budgeting skills. The training is through the County Supervisors Association of California, better known as CSAC.



California specific budgeting skills will result in better fiscal management.

We asked the County Administrative Office for more details on the training program. Lisa Howe Assistant Chief Executive Officer, was kind enough to share more details:

“Our staff has partnered with the CSAC Institute for Excellence in County Government to bring its Executive Credential program directly to our organization. We have 55 participants from across the County participating in the 10-session program, which runs from October through January.

The program focuses on key areas of county leadership, including public service values, critical thinking and decision-making, project management, team dynamics, risk management, budgeting and financial planning, and change leadership. Participants who successfully complete the program will receive the CSAC Executive Credential.

We see this as a great opportunity to invest in our current and future leaders, strengthen relationships across departments, support succession planning, and build greater organizational capacity. We’re excited about the strong participation and our partnership with CSAC.”

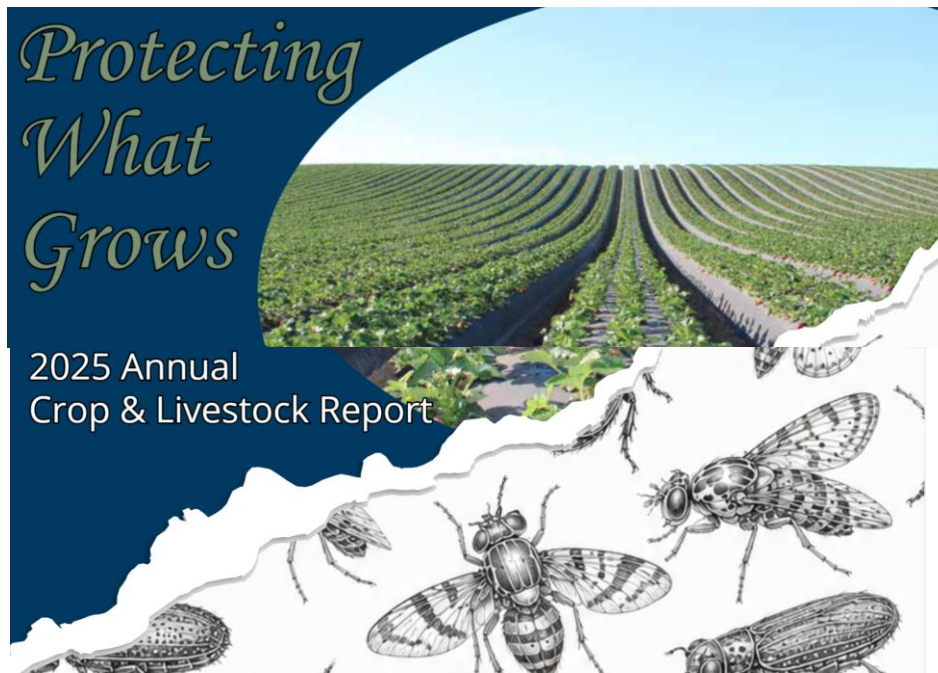


Lisa Howe Assistant Chief Executive Officer County of San Luis Obispo

As we have said previously, we like the more organized and efficient management model that the county has had in place for 2 years. We understand that a key component of the training will be greater understanding of the California State Budget and how that relates to counties. Further, the program promotes better understanding of state agency budgeting which also enhances the county’s ability to improve those interactions.

We hope that this training, combined with the higher level of accountability under the new management, will produce greater value for the taxpayer.

2025 Crop and Livestock Report



The San Luis Obispo County Department of Agriculture and Weights and Measures has produced its 2025 annual crop and livestock report. The 26-page report includes a comprehensive picture of various crop performances and the challenges facing the agriculture community in San Luis Obispo County.

The report contains financial data as well as specific data about nursery crops, vegetable crops, fruit and nut crops, wine grape varieties, field crops, and the animal industry, as well as comprehensive articles on sustainable agriculture, organic crops, pesticide enforcement programs, and especially pest detection.

Revenue \$8,243,381			Expenditures \$8,243,381		
State Funds	\$3,602,535	44%	Salaries & Benefits	\$6,902,556	84%
Federal Funds	\$868,286	10%	Services & Supplies	\$768,962	9%
County Funds	\$3,063,107	37%	Overhead	\$571,863	7%
Collected Fees	\$709,453	9%	Equipment	\$0	0%

San Luis Obispo County Ag Department revenue and expenses.

The Top Ten Crop list is a fascinating look into what our local fields produce and the volumes attached to each of those crops:

Top Ten Crops

Rank	Crop	Value	%
1	Strawberries	\$310,641,000	27.94%
2	Wine Grapes all	\$196,145,000	17.64%
3	Cattle and Calves	\$78,938,000	7.10%
4	Avocados	\$50,731,000	4.56%
5	Broccoli	\$44,984,000	4.05%
6	Cauliflower	\$33,846,000	3.04%
7	Vegetable & Ornamental Transplants	\$32,751,000	2.95%
8	Lettuce, Leaf	\$25,800,000	2.32%
9	Lettuce, Head	\$23,470,000	2.11%
10	Lemons	\$22,963,000	2.07%
Top Ten Total		\$820,269,000	73.78%

Total value over the last 10 years has been growing. Unfortunately, no graphic illustrating increased costs is accompanying the attached graph:

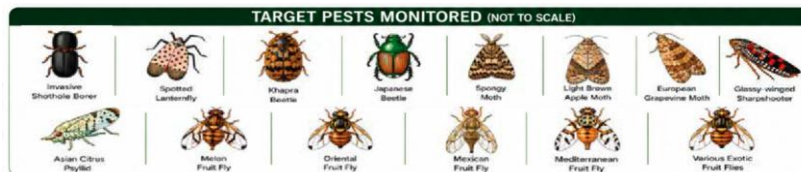
Ten Year Total Value Comparison						
Year	Fruit/Nut	Animal	Vegetable	Nursery	Field	Total
2016	\$568,129,000	\$45,350,000	\$212,734,000	\$86,933,000	\$16,784,000	\$929,930,000
2017	\$566,592,000	\$47,909,000	\$210,716,000	\$82,802,000	\$16,679,000	\$924,698,000
2018	\$656,609,000	\$48,596,000	\$230,327,000	\$81,190,000	\$18,777,000	\$1,035,499,000
2019	\$615,218,000	\$41,073,000	\$217,972,000	\$80,566,000	\$24,180,000	\$979,009,000
2020	\$603,283,000	\$46,509,000	\$232,783,000	\$75,883,000	\$20,217,000	\$978,675,000
2021	\$713,904,000	\$43,108,000	\$233,548,000	\$76,503,000	\$14,889,000	\$1,081,952,000
2022	\$624,332,000	\$48,247,000	\$293,656,000	\$88,640,000	\$20,056,000	\$1,074,931,000
2023	\$688,753,000	\$61,960,000	\$243,848,000	\$88,970,000	\$20,439,000	\$1,103,970,000
2024	\$565,892,000	\$67,741,000	\$279,575,000	\$84,776,000	\$20,137,000	\$1,018,121,000
2025	\$649,699,000	\$80,346,000	\$276,687,000	\$83,710,000	\$21,238,000	\$1,111,680,000

Pest management is a constant challenge for the industry and for the department. Recent climate change has brought new pest threats as populations of invasive

species are on the move. Below is a summary of the efforts taken to keep San Luis Obispo ag production pest free:



Below is a graphic illustrating the pests that our local Department of Agriculture monitors:



One pest of significant concern is the Glassy-winged Sharpshooter. This pest has decimated entire wine-grape producing regions. It has most recently been discovered in Napa as well as portions of the Central Valley. None were reported in 2025, but one was found in Nipomo this year. While it is believed that that single specimen arrived via a shipment of plants from a nursery, diligent monitoring has since produced no new examples:



The report contains a great deal more information than we have room for here. We thank our San Luis Obispo County Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer of Weights and Measures Martin Settevendemie and his team for the comprehensive report.



Martin Settevendemie
Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer of Weights and Measures

The 2025 Annual Crop and Livestock Report can be found here:
[Crop Report Current - County of San Luis Obispo](#)

Keep on Truckin'... er, Votevanning...

Item 4 on the October 6 BoS agenda read as follows: Request to approve a budget adjustment in the amount of \$150,000 using state election funding allocated specifically for voter outreach and ballot counting during the November 3, 2026, General Election, by 4/5 vote; and amend the fixed asset list for FC 110.

There were no details posted in the staff report. Nothing indicating where the money was coming from exactly (we all know it originated from taxpayers), why it is being offered or what use a \$150,000 van is to the Clerk Recorder office.

Supervisors Moreno and Peschong were both inquisitive about those details, pointing out the ongoing expense of storing and maintaining a van, and inquiring if it wouldn't be more cost effective to just rent vans on a short-term basis if they are needed. Clerk Recorder Elaina Cano addressed the Board about this odd request.



Clerk Recorder Elaina Cano spending taxpayer money creatively.

She explained that the one-time grant was offered by the state (still unclear about which division offered the limited availability grant and why), and that the vehicle, called the Votemobile, would be outfitted with a secure ballot drop box along with voter support functions. Apparently, its initial use will be in low voter turnout areas of the county. Long-term plans include service as a mobile Clerk Recorder office and ultimately as a mobile polling place for situations where polling places may need to close unexpectedly. She went on to say that her team felt the Votemobile would be the highest and best use of the funds.



Both Peschong and Moreno expressed concern that better ballot counting machines or temporary staff to speed up the counting process might be a better investment than a depreciating asset.



Is a custom van a good way to get out the vote?

It's sad to see this type of government stereotype showing up in this way. The State has a gob of taxpayer money apparently sitting around, so they send out a hair on fire grant – use it or loose it! The grant is too late to really impact the intended election, so staff dreams up a creative way to spend the other people's money – in a not very convincing way.

Good Gap or Bad Gap?

We rarely have good things to say about Supervisor Gibson (and we suspect he likes it that way) but we are frequently impressed with his attention to detail. Item 6 on October 6 BoS agenda read: Request to approve the Board of Supervisors Meeting Calendar for 2027.

In the staff report, the 2027 proposed calendar was presented with a fairly consistent every other Tuesday meeting schedule. That is, as Gibson pointed out, until a six-week gap between June 15 and July 27.

Gibson was quick to acknowledge that he would be retired from his Board service by that time and didn't wish to presume anything about the business of the new Board. He simply pointed out the gap in case others had not yet noticed it.



One could, in a most philosophical way, opine that Gibson is a man of governmental action, and a six-week gap of inaction stands out as missed opportunity if nothing else.

We see it as a six-week break from all those opportunities that might have otherwise been exercised.

It is worth noting that Gibson has but 5 more San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisor meetings left before his retirement. We have no news about his next venture.

Fall Forum Less Than 2 Weeks Away

Have you made your reservation for our October 21 Fall Forum yet? If not, please call the COLAB office at 805 548-0340 or email us at COLABSLO@gmail.com. And don't forget to invite guests. Everyone is welcome.

This promises to be a fun and informative evening, complete with great hors d'oeuvres, refreshments, a fantastic setting and lots of good discussion. As part of the community education aspect of COLAB, the evening is completely free of charge.

Jon Coupal is one of the leading tax fighters in our nation. He is regularly featured in media from nationally syndicated radio and television to news and op-ed pieces in newspapers and posts. He is the chief proponent of Proposition 43 and presents the best chance taxpayers have to preserve the protections of Proposition 13.

Please join COLAB in giving Jon a warm San Luis Obispo welcome.

Fall Forum October 21

Bring a friend.

Enjoy a fun evening.

Meet community leaders.

Learn something important.

Meet Jon Coupal – taxpayer Hero.

Leave your wallet and checkbook at home: It's Free!



FALL FORUM



Wednesday, October 21st
5:30–7:30 PM



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

PROP 43 - 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 Prop 43, the "Save Prop 13" ballot measure, and the protections it would provide for California taxpayers.



Jon Coupal
President of HJTA



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‘Time is Up for California’ – DOJ Sues to Block California Ballot-Counting As State Officials Refuse to Sequester Noncitizen Ballots

California Voters Deserve Elections They Can Trust, and Verify

THE TRUTH ABOUT PROP. 43: DON’T FALL FOR THE FEARMONGERING

Reminder: The last page of this newsletter has a membership application. Please join COLAB.

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‘Time is Up for California’ – DOJ Sues to Block California Ballot-Counting As State Officials Refuse to Sequester Noncitizen Ballots

20,000+ Noncitizen Voters Mailed Live Ballots

By Katy Grimes, October 15, 2026

The United States Department of Justice filed a federal lawsuit against California Thursday October 15, 2026, seeking an order to sequester, and not tabulate, vote-by-mail ballots from roughly 20,000 people the federal government identifies as “likely noncitizens.

This follows Oct. 13 letters, to California Secretary of State Shirley Weber and Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder Dean Logan, by acting Deputy Attorney General Trent McCotter, who provided officials in Los Angeles County with a “password-protected thumb drive” with the names of people the federal government “believes are likely noncitizens” and were sent mail-in ballots from California. “For individuals whom you cannot independently confirm citizenship status, we request that you immediately instruct the appropriate elections official to segregate — not cancel — those individuals’ vote-by-mail ballots until their citizenship status can be determined,” McCotter wrote.

Earlier this year, the Department of Homeland Security raised broad concerns alleging more than 190,000 noncitizens on California rolls. In a July 16, 2026 letter from DHS Secretary Markwayne Mullin to California Secretary of State Shirley Weber (and similar letters to officials in New Jersey, Nevada, and Pennsylvania), DHS stated that a review of publicly available voter registration data indicated “there may be as many as 190,832 non-citizens registered to vote in California.” It gave an example of 81,336 registrants matching name, date of birth, address, and Social Security number to non-citizens in DHS files. The combined figures cited for the four states were roughly: California 190,832; New Jersey 35,152; Nevada 15,903; Pennsylvania 14,576, totaling over 250,000.

California, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Nevada opted not to use a new federal citizenship database, a Homeland Security review found more than a quarter million noncitizens registered to vote, Just the News reported.

25 states ran more than 68 million records through an expanded version of the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) database and reported more than 28,000 potential noncitizen matches plus hundreds of thousands of deceased registrants.

In July, in a speech about election integrity, President Donald Trump shared intelligence findings that the People's Republic of China "compromised" more than 200 million voter records across at least 18 U.S. states.

California officials did not comply with the 48-hour deadline this week, as the [Globe reported](#) Wednesday:

At 5:21 pm Wednesday evening (Oct 14), California Secretary of State Shirley Weber issued a statement about the U.S. Department of Justice's demand that she and LA County Registrar-Recorder Dean Logan review and assess the list of noncitizens who received ballots for the upcoming November election.



F.A. United States Attorney Bill Essayli

@USAttyEssayli · [Follow](#)



Time is up for California

We gave California 48 hours to review and flag more than 20,000 noncitizen voters recently mailed live ballots.

California refused.

This morning we filed a federal court action seeking an emergency order requiring California to sequester ballots [Show more](#)

 U.S. Department of Justice

950 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
(202) 514-2000
Washington, DC 20530

October 13, 2026

Shirley N. Weber, Ph.D.
California Secretary of State
1500 11th Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
Via legalsupport@sos.ca.gov

Re: Noncitizen Voting in the 2026 Federal Election

Dear Secretary Weber:

As you are aware, federal law prohibits noncitizens from voting in federal elections. See 18 U.S.C. § 611. The Supreme Court has also recognized that States "may not induce, encourage or promote private persons to accomplish what it is constitutionally forbidden to accomplish." *Norwood v. Harrison*, 413 U.S. 455, 465 (1973) (citation omitted). I write to seek your help to protect the integrity of the ongoing federal election.

On July 16, Secretary Mullin made you aware that there are likely numerous noncitizens registered to vote in the federal election in California. He then asked for your cooperation to ensure the accuracy of those findings and to prevent noncitizens from diluting citizen votes. Your response the following week did not refute that noncitizens are registered to vote in California. Nor did it contest that noncitizens receive ballots through California's vote-by-mail regime, which automatically sends voting materials to "every registered voter." 2021 Cal. Stat. ch. 312 (codified at Cal. Elec. Code § 3000.5). Instead, you asked for more information. I am now providing you additional details.

Earlier today, we provided the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder / County Clerk with a password-protected thumb drive with a list of names of people the Federal Government believes are likely noncitizens who were sent a vote-by-mail ballot to participate in the November 2026 federal election. We can also provide you a digital copy of the list if you send us a secure email address.

We request that you review the list within 48 hours to determine whether any citizens are listed. For individuals whom you cannot independently confirm citizenship status, we request that you immediately instruct the appropriate elections official to segregate—not cancel—those individuals' vote-by-mail ballots until their citizenship status can be determined. If individuals on the list have not yet been sent a

verify the signature and/or tabulate the ballot until citizenship can be determined. This process will protect American citizens' votes while preventing noncitizens from participating in the federal election in violation of federal law.

The United States hopes that you share our commitment to ensure that only American citizens participate in our federal elections. Allowing noncitizens to vote cancels citizen votes. States are responsible for voter registration, and the Federal Government is responsible for maintaining immigration records to enable verification of citizenship. Working together, we can more effectively protect against voter dilution and promote election integrity.

Please ensure that the process described above to prevent noncitizens from voting in the federal election is implemented by contacting elections@doj.dhs.gov by October 15 at noon EST. If you cannot implement this process by then, given the ongoing federal election, the United States will have no choice but to seek emergency relief.

We look forward to our collaboration as we work together to ensure free, fair and accurate elections.

Sincerely,

R. Mark McCortner
Acting Deputy Attorney General
United States Department of Justice

cc: Bilal A. Essayli
First Assistant U.S. Attorney
Central District of California

Here is SOS Weber's letter – she's upset that the US DOJ gave her 48 hours to accomplish this, after more than 9 months to provide verified list maintenance, identified potential noncitizens or other ineligible registrants:

“Logan's office cited data-security concerns with the thumb drive and protocols,” Fox News **reports**. “Weber's office pushed back on the lack of evidence/methodology, the compressed timeline during active voting, potential errors affecting citizens, and the absence of clear legal authority for the demand. California maintains it complies with federal requirements (e.g., NVRA/HAVA citizenship attestations under penalty of perjury) and that noncitizen voting is rare.” Governor Gavin Newsom said the DOJ action is unsubstantiated, politically motivated interference close to the election, and a threat to eligible voters' rights. “This is a sad, desperate attempt by Trump to use his politicized Justice Department to try to suppress California voters just three weeks before Election Day,” Newsom said. “Courts have made clear the federal government has no role in running state elections. We will defend free and fair elections in the Golden State and call out every authoritarian attempt to undermine our democracy.”

Au contraire, mon frère.

California Secretary of State Shirley Weber said in a **statement**:

“In July of this year, President Trump and DHS Secretary Markwayne Mullin made (still) unsubstantiated claims that California had 190,000 noncitizens on its voter rolls. Given the many high-profile examples of states purging U.S. citizens from their voter rolls based on DHS/SAVE data, SOS immediately requested written information about their methodology and data sources to back up their claims. They refused and provided California with nothing,”

F.A. United States Attorney Bill Essayli had this to say:

Time is up for California.

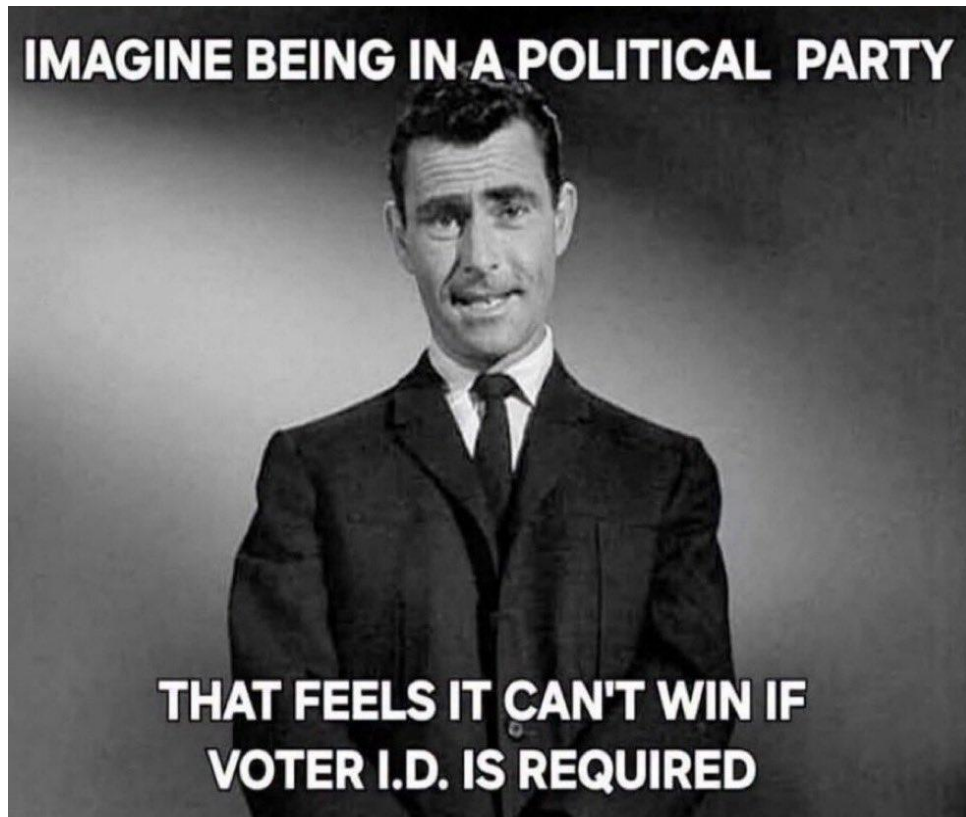
We gave California 48 hours to review and flag more than 20,000 noncitizen voters recently mailed live ballots. California refused. This morning we filed a federal court action seeking an emergency order requiring California to sequester ballots returned by suspected noncitizens. This is not political or controversial. 18 U.S.C. § 611 makes it a federal offense for noncitizens to vote in a federal election. We will not allow California to dilute the votes of American citizens.

I'm throwing in with US Attorney Bill Essayli. He's a stickler when it comes to upholding the law. And we already know how Gov. Newsom feels about the law – he bends it to his own will.

How will the governor react if California's midterm elections are called into question or invalidated?

US Attorney Bill Essayli doubles down on the law:

We produced a list of 20,000 noncitizens on your voter rolls, and your response is “it’s too late” because you already mailed the ballots. Not good enough. It’s a violation of the U.S. Constitution and federal law for California to dilute the votes of American citizens. One illegal ballot is too many. We will see you in court.



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.

California Voters Deserve Elections They Can Trust, and Verify

Election officials telling us that ballots were accurately counted is not enough

By Mike Garcia, October 16, 2026

Californians deserve to be confident in the results of their local, county, and state elections. Voter identification and citizenship verification requirements are the only way to ensure we can believe the results of our elections, short of livestreaming ballot counts or putting AirTags in the envelopes we mail in. Government-issued identification for in-person voting and additional identity verification for ballots cast by mail is good policy, although some disagree.

There will be plenty of debate in the months ahead, but the basic question is simple: Should voters verify who they are before their vote is counted?

Verification is a reasonable principle for any institution that depends on public trust. I learned that during more than a decade serving in the U.S. Navy, including more than 30 combat missions as a fighter pilot. You trust the aircraft. You trust the intelligence. You trust the mission. But, you verify.

You run the checklist, confirm the coordinates, and check the systems. These checks are not completed because you assume something is wrong, but because what you're doing matters too much to simply assume everything is right. Trust is strongest when it is backed by verification.

Processes and safeguards help—they don't hurt. This is not a claim that every election is riddled with fraud, because voter ID and citizenship checks aren't currently required in our state. But, we also shouldn't treat every proposal for additional verification as an attack on voting rights. We should be able to have a serious discussion about what safeguards make sense.

We are asked to verify who we are all the time in everyday life. We show our ID to start a new job, rent a car, and sometimes even just to pick up a package. The purpose isn't to exclude qualified people from participating; it's to establish that the

person participating is, in fact, the person entitled to do so. Voting should be accessible, but verification should be accessible too.

A well-designed voter identification policy should account for eligible citizens who don't currently possess the necessary identification. States can provide free identification, accept multiple forms of ID, establish procedures for voters whose identification is lost or unavailable, and provide a meaningful process for resolving discrepancies.

And then there's public confidence. Election officials telling us that ballots were accurately counted is not enough. American citizens need confidence in the security of the election process that produced the result, regardless of which party wins the election.

If a Republican wins, Democrats should be able to trust the result. If a Democrat wins, Republicans should be able to do the same. Every voter should be able to understand the safeguards that establish that the people participating in an election are legally entitled to participate. That's not partisan. It's institutional.

California shouldn't have to choose between an election system that makes voting easy for eligible citizens versus clear, transparent safeguards around who participates. We should be able to have both. And only when we have both will Californians feel confident in the elections that lie ahead.

Trust and verification are not opposites. Verification is what makes trust possible.



Mike Garcia

Mike Garcia is a first-generation American, decorated Navy combat veteran, and former Congressman who represented California's 27th District. A former F/A-18 Super Hornet pilot and defense industry executive, he now serves as Chair of AFPI's California Chapter.

THE TRUTH ABOUT PROP. 43: DON'T FALL FOR THE FEARMONGERING

OCTOBER 12, 2026

As voting begins in this election season, it is a good time to start considering some of the more egregious lies being foisted on voters in campaign ads, editorials and op-eds.

Let's start with what is being represented about Proposition 43, the effort to close a court-created loophole in Proposition 13. Prop. 43 protects taxpayers by restoring Prop. 13's two-thirds vote requirement to pass local special taxes, including sales taxes and parcel taxes. Courts have allowed special interests to pass earmarked tax increases with fewer votes. Prop. 43 closes this loophole, protecting taxpayers, homeowners and renters.

Note what Prop. 43 does not do. It does not cut any local taxes. It does not retroactively invalidate any existing tax. It does not limit any local governments from going to the voters for general tax increases, which pass with a simple majority vote. All that it does is restore the two-thirds vote for local special taxes – taxes imposed for a specific purpose.

Despite the negligible impact Prop. 43 would have on existing local government revenues, according to critics, Prop. 43 will result in the end of civilization. In an op-ed in the San Jose Mercury News, the president of California Professional Firefighters, Darrell Roberts, claims that Prop. 43 “would place a nearly insurmountable roadblock from placing any measure on the ballot” to impose a special tax. What Mr. Roberts forgets is that the two-thirds vote for local special taxes was a provision of the California Constitution from 1978 until 2017 when the California courts began crafting an exception. During that time, rather than being an “insurmountable” barrier, special taxes were routinely enacted with the requisite two-thirds vote, including sales taxes and parcel taxes.

The argument that supermajority vote requirements are somehow “undemocratic” collapses when one considers the long history of America's constitutional framework. There are no fewer than twelve instances in the U.S. Constitution requiring a two-thirds vote. These include impeachment; expelling a Member of Congress; overriding a veto; amending the Constitution (Congressional approval of a Joint Resolution proposing an amendment to the U.S. Constitution requires a 2/3 majority); calling a Constitutional Convention; and ratifying a treaty.

Here in California, the two-thirds vote requirement on matters related to taxation dates back to 1879. That was when the higher threshold was placed in the state

constitution for local general obligation bonds as a protection against excessive debt at the local level, repaid by property owners. Recently, in the November 2024 election, California voters overwhelmingly rejected an effort to lower the two-thirds vote requirement for most local bonds to 55%. Prop. 5 lost by ten points.

What is revealing about the opposition to Prop. 43 is that most is coming from public sector labor organizations – the very interests who want to remove all barriers to higher taxes.

Hyperbolic support for tax increases is prevalent throughout the local level of government as well. Although not a statewide measure, a proposal to raise the sales taxes in five Bay Area counties to generate billions for failed transit systems has driven proponents of the tax to near madness in describing the parade of horrors if the tax fails in November. But this “Regional Transit Measure” has weak support notwithstanding a well-funded campaign to promote it. Voters are suspicious because the transit districts in question, especially BART, have done nothing to correct their failures and inefficiencies. Not surprisingly, Bay Area residents want at least some proof that the new revenue won’t be as misspent as existing revenue.

Despite the track record of waste and fraud, major Bay Area media outlets are fully in support of increasing sales taxes, which everyone admits are very regressive. The San Francisco Chronicle warns that, “without an immediate infusion of funds, Muni could be forced to cut service by at least 30%, cancel at least 20 bus routes, end regular evening service, eliminate cable car service and reduce fare discounts for vulnerable populations. BART could close 15 stations and reduce service by 70%. Caltrain could reduce service to one train per hour and stop service on weekends.”

The organization Fixes Before Funding disputes these dire predictions, noting, “Transit costs and subsidies have exploded while service shrank; when ridership and fare revenue collapsed, the agencies did not restructure; spending per rider has gone off the chart; ridership never recovered, and never grew the way planners promised; and, the signature projects ran over budget and under-delivered.”

A great deal of overstatement can be expected in any political contest, but when it comes to the predictions of disaster if more taxes are not forthcoming, voters would be well advised to ignore the hype.

Jon Coupal is president of the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association

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Elected Officials Representing San Luis Obispo County

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916-445-2841 Sacramento

<https://www.govca.gov/contact/>

Senator Alex Padilla

202-224-3553 DC

<https://www.padilla.senate.gov/contact/>

Senator Adam Schiff

202-224-3841 DC

<https://www.schiff.senate.gov/contact/>

Representative Salud Carbajal

202-225-3601 DC

805-546-6348 District

carbajal.house.gov/contact

• •

Representative Jimmy Panetta

202-225-2861 DC

831-424-2229 District

panetta.house.gov/contact

• •

State Senator John Laird

916-651-4017 Sacramento

805-549-3784 District

senator.laird@senate.ca.gov

State Assembly Member Dawn Addis

916-319-2030 Sacramento

805-549-3001 District

assemblymember.addis@assembly.ca.gov

SLO County Supervisor Bruce Gibson

805-781-4338 District

bgibson@co.slo.ca.us

SLO County Supervisor Heather Moreno

805-781-4339 District

hmoreno@co.slo.ca.us

SLO County Supervisor Dawn Ortiz-Legg

805-781-5450 District

dortizlegg@co.slo.ca.us

SLO County Supervisor Jimmy Paulding

805-781-4337 District

district4@co.slo.ca.us

SLO County Supervisor John Peschong

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jpeschong@co.slo.ca.us

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