



Weekly Update
February 9 - 16, 2026

Anti-ICE Destabilization

Despite nothing on the February 3 Board of Supervisors agenda related to immigration, a few anti-ICE protesters showed up and made statements during the public comment period of the meeting. The main theme of their remarks was that the Sheriff lied during his TRUTH Forum presentation and that while they appreciate the Board's actions on January 27, they still want more.

The contention that Sheriff Parkinson lied was based on his remarks that the US had essentially open borders during the Biden administration (and therefore very little ICE enforcement action took place in areas like SLO County). The ICE protesters were quite insistent that such a comment is not true, with one referring to the term "open borders" as a dog whistle. She wasn't clear about exactly how or why, but she was certain that it was some sort of code.

While Wikipedia is hardly a scholarly site, their definition of the term "open borders" seems reasonable; "An **open border** is a [border](#) that enables [free](#)

movement of people and often of goods between jurisdictions with no restrictions on movement and is lacking a border control.^{[1][2]} A border may be an open border due to intentional legislation allowing free movement of people across the border (*de jure*), or a border may be an open border due to a lack of legal controls, a lack of adequate enforcement or adequate supervision of the border (*de facto*).”

It’s hard to imagine anyone other than Kamala Harris trying to make the case that our southern boarder was anything but open to millions of migrants for several years.

The big demand from anti-ICE protesters is that the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors declare the county as an ICE-free zone. This demand continues even though County Council reported that the county has no authority to make such a proclamation. Perhaps the protesters realize this simple concept but want the symbolic gesture anyway.

Some confusion remains about what the Board of Supervisors actually voted for at the conclusion of the January 27 marathon meeting. In an effort to bring the meeting to a culmination, the board voted unanimously for the establishment of an ad hoc committee, consisting of Supervisors Ortiz-Legg and Paulding. It further directed them to work with staff to explore what other counties are doing, what legal options the county has to address ICE activity and to investigate what social programs might be available that might be supported by the county to assist families of deported migrants. The committee is requested to report back in 60 days.

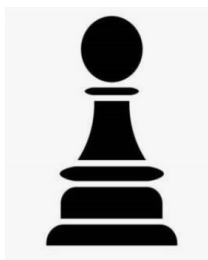
Given that many ICE protesters seem to be intelligent people and given that most with a basic knowledge of how government works realize that County Boards of Supervisors simply cannot override or subvert federal law, there must be more to the never-ending requests for ICE-free zones.

Is it possible that all the ranting and raving has very little to do with immigration, but rather the destabilizing impact on our culture?

ICE protesters are not marching in support of a change in immigration law. Rather, they are marching to make people believe that current immigration rules should be

ignored because they find it unjust or inhumane. Obviously, their arguments are registering with some because we see emotionally charged protesters in almost every state. To be clear, they are calling for federal immigration law to be rejected by all local municipalities. They are not working with Congress to change immigration law, and they are not attempting to find reasonable solutions to the problems they demonstrate against. They are simply agitating and making unreasonable demands.

Stuck in the middle of all the shouting and shoving is the immigrant community. Many were misled by the Biden administration to believe that they could freely find refuge in the US, and now they are being led to believe that immigration enforcement is lawless. The insinuation is that the good guys have their back and the bad guys are cruel racist kidnapers and hoodlums. The underlying message is not just that migrants need to fear “masked men in unmarked cars” randomly grabbing brown people off the streets, it is also an “us against them” mantra.



The media loves such fervor and fear. Reporters gleefully cover protests and secretly hope for some of the best clickbait ever – violence. Left out of their sensational stories are details about the crimes of most of those deported or the victims of those crimes. Important information about paid protesters, trained organizers or professional agitators rarely comes to light. Doxing of federal agents is not of interest to reporters, but the deportation of a violent criminal is huge, just without details about the violent part.

Average people concerned about illegal immigration and/or crime are made out to be racist. Their intolerance is not to be tolerated.



So we have growing pressure to ignore federal immigration law and reject any attempt to enforce it. “Rapid Response Teams” are using surveillance tactics to track federal officers to better obstruct their enforcement actions. Protesters somehow believe that it’s noble to impede law enforcement and to put their own lives at risk while doing so. We have an immigrant community serving as pawns, living in fear and being trained to dread and hate the people trying to enforce the law. We have mainstream media covering one side of the story in great detail while ignoring the other side. We have protests that too often turn into violent riots.

Making matters worse, some of the ICE enforcement efforts seem to be heavy handed by design. Perhaps the aggressive nature is necessary when dealing with violent criminals, or perhaps ICE is trying to make self-deportation more attractive. Either way, it fosters great collaboration between mainstream media and conspiracy theorists. Border Czar Tom Homan can’t put out all the fires on his own.

The result of so many mobs of people full of angst and misplaced energy, calling for people and municipalities to disobey the law is destabilization. But to what end?

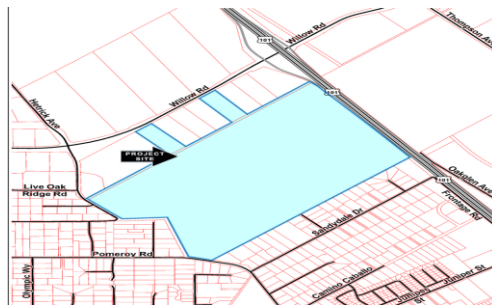
Midterm elections are months away. ICE is almost guaranteed to be a factor in hotly contested races. If the voting public believes that Republicans are violating the law and denying due process, it will be a good year to be a Democrat.

Emotions are too raw to be able to accurately gage the impact that this issue is having at this stage. Certainly, a segment of the public is glad to see ICE enforcement, but how many and how much is hard to track. Some will never admit it publicly but will vote accordingly.

We hope that ICE develops more efficient methods of deporting the violent criminals that they target. We hope the migrant community recognizes some of the hype and realizes that they are becoming nothing more than a useful tool in fomenting fear and anger against the current administration. We hope that both sides can put less effort into the optics of the issue and more effort into reasonable solutions.

Support for Housing 4-1 at the BoS

Item 5 on the Feb 3 Board of Supervisors agenda reads as follows: “Request to approve Tract Map TR 3159 Phase 1, a proposed subdivision resulting in seven (7) lots for the purposes of financing and land conveyance only, by NKT Development, LLC, a California Limited Liability Company and Shea Homes Limited Partnership, a California Limited Partnership. Dana Reserve, located in the community of Nipomo.” The measure passed on a 4-1 vote with Supervisor Paulding casting the lone “no” vote.



The Dana Reserve boundaries in Nipomo.

Thus begins the building phase of the Dana Reserve housing project after nearly eight years of community interaction, planning commission challenges, engineering expenses, design changes, architectural reviews, environmental impact

reports, mitigation efforts and sizable check writing. All with the uncertainty surrounding final approval.

The project will bring 1,242 homes to the Nipomo area. The homes will range from rentals, very low income and work force housing to “missing middle” and higher income properties. It will also include retail space, childcare facilities and a south county campus for Cuesta College.

For a county whose leadership purports to be all for housing, this project sure didn’t seem to get a lot of encouragement from some sectors. San Luis Obispo County Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) numbers illustrate a need that may never be fully met. Certainly, our population is not static, so as we make incremental progress against these numbers, it is likely that needs will grow.

Income Category and example occupations	Number of Dwelling Units			Percent Completed
	Total Need	Permitted (2019-2024)	Remaining Need	
Very Low-Income (e.g., barista, farmworker, childcare employee)	801	7	794	1%
Low-Income (e.g., family social worker, community health advocate, roofer)	505	226	279	45%
Moderate-Income (e.g., occupational health worker, construction cost estimator, electrician)	585	246	339	42%
Above Moderate-Income	1,365	1,132	233	83%
Total	3,256	1,611	1,645	49%

When Supervisors Paulding and Gibson voted against final approval of the project a few months ago, they didn’t offer up any sort of alternative that might meet our needs as well or better. They both talk a lot about the need for housing – especially in the very low and low- income categories. Yet when presented with a project that offers strong progress in all housing categories, they did not want it to succeed.

The big concern is that other builders will look at the Dana Reserve project as the example for what it takes to develop large scale projects in our community and decide that the time, hassle and uncertainty outweighs any possible return.



As we have pointed out on numerous occasions, everybody feels the pinch from the housing shortage. We have fewer doctors and medical professionals because housing is so expensive. Business is constantly challenged to find (and bear the cost of) employees that can afford to live in our community. Investors shy away from doing ventures in SLO County because the workforce can't afford to live here.

All of which contributes to our stagnant economy and aging population.

It does beg the question of how sincere SLO County is about wanting new housing. Is a "Not in My Back Yard" (NIMBY) undercurrent making it difficult to build? Are most of the projects that do move forward destined to be the 5-story stack 'em pack 'em boxes that look so out of place in our neighborhoods? How can we both achieve our housing needs while avoiding tenement style housing?

We congratulate the Dana Reserve project on their success in fighting eight years of red tape. Perhaps the project warrants a study session or two by the various housing related agencies to find ways to streamline the process.

Finally – Water Moving in the Right Direction

Did you know that when it comes to Paso Water Basin issues, the Board of Supervisors conducts a meeting within their meeting? On Paso water Basin issues, the San Luis Obispo Board of Supervisors also serves as the County Flood Control

District. As such, they are a Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) and one of the five GSAs making up the Paso Robles Groundwater Authority (PRAGA).

This information is old news to those activists that engage in water policy in the Paso Basin, but it seems a bit “inside baseball” to the general public. It’s not that anybody is trying to hide or obfuscate the proceedings, but it does make it difficult for the general public to track and understand the complicated workings of our County GSA.

With that cleared up, Item 19 on the agenda read: “Submittal of a report on the status of compliance with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) and Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) implementation status in the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin (Basin).”

The report primarily focused on the threat that basin management could be taken over by the state if the local groundwater agencies do not have a functioning groundwater sustainability plan in place by 2040.

As we reported last week, several possible groundwater recharge concepts were explored, with each presenting almost insurmountable obstacles, mostly cost-related.

The one viable action that is expected to reduce groundwater pumping is the creation of a fallowed Land Registry. Item 20 read: “Hearing to consider a resolution establishing the fallowed land registry (Registry) for the Paso Robles Area Groundwater Subbasin Multi-Benefit Irrigated Land Repurposing (MILR) Program and adoption of a related ordinance amending the Inland Land Use Ordinance and resolution amending the Williamson Act Rules of Procedure (exempt from CEQA) (County File Number: LRP2026-00002). (Groundwater Sustainability).”



Apparently, a lot of thought has gone into establishing a plan that would allow growers to fallow their crop land without risking their Williamson Act status. The concept is especially timely due to the recent downturn in the wine grape business.

It was assuring to hear that the plan was vetted with a large number of ag specialists. Hopefully the result will be a plan that is practical as well as trust building between the growers and the water agencies. The following is a list of the ag partners that were engaged in developing the plan:

- Extensive outreach with agricultural growers in the Basin
- MILR Steering Committee
- Agricultural Preserve Review Committee
- Agricultural Liaison Advisory Board
- Planning Commission

The plan was crafted specifically with benefits to growers in an effort to create a win-win. Those benefits are:

- Exemption from the Agricultural Offset Ordinance “5-year lookback”
- Exemption from Williamson Act contract irrigation requirements
- Access to farming unit-specific satellite-based ET data
- Self-certification of neutral water use per farming unit instead of applying for Agricultural Offset Clearance from the Department of Planning & Building when replanting

Insuring compliance with the Williamson Act will require some minor adjustments to the procedures. The following chart illustrates the standards:

To ensure compliance with the Williamson Act and the Rules of Procedure, staff recommends a minor amendment to the Rules of Procedure to recognize that participation in the MILR Program and Fallowed Land Registry Platform shall not disqualify a property currently under contract. Staff recommends adding Footnote 11 to apply to irrigated land under contract.

TABLE 1 MINIMUM OWNERSHIP SIZES FOR QUALIFICATION AND MINIMUM PARCEL SIZES FOR CONVEYANCE OF LAND & NEW LAND DIVISIONS		
Minimum Acreage¹		
Natural Resources Conservation Service Land Capability Classification	To Qualify²	To Convey Existing Parcels³ or Create New Parcels
20 or 40-Acre Minimum Preserve Size^{4, 11}		
Class 1 ⁵	10	20
Class 2 ⁵	10	40
Irrigated Classes 3, 4, 6, 7 with Orchards or Vineyards ⁶	20	40
All Other Irrigated Classes 3 & 4	40	40
Mixed Irrigated & Non-irrigated Use ⁷	10/20/40	80/160
160 or 320-Acre Minimum Preserve Size		
Non-Irrigated Classes 3 & 4	160	160
Classes 6 & 7	320 ⁸	320
Class 8	NA ⁹	320

In order to put the policy into effect, the Director of Groundwater Sustainability requested the following:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Adopt the recommended resolution establishing the Registry and implementing administrative procedures;;
2. Adopt the recommended ordinance amending the Inland Land Use Ordinance to update the agricultural offset regulations relating to the Registry; and
3. Adopt the recommended resolution amending the Williamson Act Rules of Procedure to update regulations relating to the Registry.

The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

Next Week

The next San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors meeting will take place on Tuesday, February 10. The normal schedule of every other Tuesday was interrupted in January and February due to holidays, resulting in three meetings in a row. The concentration of those meetings results in a four-week gap, with the following next meeting occurring on March 10.

The February 10 agenda consists of mostly administrative items. There is one curious item that reads: “Submittal of a resolution to rescind the approval of the application of Austen Connella, SLO BF, Inc. for a Minor Use Permit (DRC2018-00228) and the Mitigated Negative Declaration associated therewith (Environmental Determination No. ED19-238).” It has to do with a cannabis permit, but details are sparse.

Another agenda item involves “a proposed subdivision resulting in eighty (80) lots, by Monarch Dunes, LLC, Delaware limited liability company; 2) approve the Open Space Agreement Granting Open-Space Easement to the County of San Luis Obispo; and 3) adopt the attached resolution accepting the Open Space Easement on Kingston Drive in the community of Woodlands.” No mention is made about low-income housing.

Still another curious item involves a homeowner on the coast of the Cayucos area wanting to build a seawall and offering to make a donation (\$250,000) towards the restoration of a nearby beach access stairway as mitigation. There is no clear mention of where the remaining \$1 million would come from to complete the project.

As always, we will keep you apprised of these, and any other key issues that arise within the workings of our county.

Last Week

Lots of Anger – Little Resolution

The January 27 Truth Forum may hold the record for one of the longest Board of Supervisors meetings in recent history. The Supervisors' chamber was full, as were two overflow rooms, each seating about 150 people, and the hallways and lobby area were just as full.

Emotions ran deep. Accusations ran wild. And it was clear that this is a big deal in our community. Whatever your feelings on the issue, having this kind of turnout on a Tuesday afternoon is significant.



The Truth Forum began at 1:30 in the afternoon as part of the Board of Supervisors meeting and finished at about 8:40 in the evening. The Sheriff's portion of the presentation ran almost two hours. Sheriff Parkinson and various staff members went into great detail about how the department conforms to state law and how he manages his interactions with ICE.

The sheriff's presentation was comprehensive and left very few questions remaining. However, most of the ICE protesters in the crowd apparently didn't listen or didn't really care about what the Sheriff stated or the facts that he presented.

The two points that did bring questions were related. The first involved an incident where ICE personnel picked up a migrant at the jail. The ICE agents were in the lobby of the jail as the prisoner was being released. When the prisoner was released, they go through what's called a sally port. This involves two doors. They go through the first door, and it closes behind them. Then, they go through the second door into the lobby.

The issue was that the federal agents somehow nabbed the prisoner in between the two doors. The Sheriff's explanation was that the federal agents were expecting the prisoner to exit the second door, but when that prisoner started to exit the second door, they retreated back into the middle of the sally port. The agents then apprehended the prisoner in between the two doors. ICE protesters believed that this somehow showed cooperation between the County Sheriff and ICE agents.

The second issue was that the Sheriff used bodycam footage from one of the

ICE agents to illustrate what happened. Apparently, ICE footage should never be seen.

Most of the ICE protesters suggested that the sheriff was lying or that he couldn't be trusted but offered no evidence. Almost all of them called for some sort of ICE-free zone or letting ICE know that they were not welcome in San Luis Obispo County.

This is despite the earlier information provided by County Council that the county really doesn't have any legal ability or authority to create ICE-free zones. The only thing the county could do is restrict ICE access to non-public county-operated areas and to prohibit ICE from commandeering county properties for uses other than what they were designed for.

The names of the two anti-ICE agitators that recently tragically died while protesting were invoked many times during the meeting. But murder, assault, and rape victims from illegal criminal immigrants were never acknowledged.

In December, ICE protesters made a big fuss before the Board of Supervisors about the Sheriff needing to have a Truth Forum. When they learned that one was already scheduled, they continued to complain that it should have been held earlier. When the Sheriff pointed out that he had to wait till after the end of the year before holding a review of all actions during the year, they had nothing to say.

Ironically, after the Sheriff's detailed January 27 presentation at the BoS meeting, they acted as if they didn't hear a thing he said. Many attempted to completely contradict the facts that the Sheriff detailed. Aside from asking that ICE be prohibited from coming to San Luis Obispo County or creating ICE-free zones, the next most prevalent theme was that there is a lack of trust of the Sheriff Department in the community.

It's easy to understand how that lack of trust might have come to be. With so much drama, political theater, and hyperbole being spread around through the misinformation that many of these protesters whined about, anyone would naturally be fearful. Those protesters making a big fuss about trust seem to have forgotten that trust is a two-way street. If you trust someone, you don't spread

vicious lies about them. Certainly, if you're trying to solve problems, you work with facts and avoid distortions or misrepresentations. But really, most protesters didn't seem to be interested in addressing the real issue - rather just making a fuss.

National news is starting to cover the fact that many of the anti-ICE protests around the country are being led by paid organizers and agitators. We have no evidence that this was the case at the board meeting. However, it was obvious that many of the protesters at the board meeting were organized. They had similar signs with similar slogans. Their comments were scripted and all along the same lines. Most of them wore black or orange clothing.

It was not clear exactly who did the organizing, but one of the groups that protesters often cited was 805Undocufund. This organization was founded in Ventura and Santa Barbara counties during the wildfires. Later, it came to San Luis Obispo County as well, to provide assistance to undocumented workers impacted by natural disasters.

According to their websites, they were established through an alliance with “Mixteco/Indigena Community Organizing Project (MICOP), Central Coastal Alliance United for A Sustainable Economy (CAUSE) and Future Leaders of America. Together, these organizations, alongside philanthropy partners like the McCune Foundation and the Ventura County Community Foundation, raised, case-managed, and distributed millions of dollars in direct aid to victims of the Thomas, Hill, and Woolsey wildfires; Montecito mudslides; numerous smaller wildfires that afflict the region each year; and now, the prolonged impact of COVID-19.”



From such a benign beginning, the organization has evolved into a network for protesting. In their words, “The **805 Rapid Response Network** is a community-

led initiative that provides support and resources to undocumented individuals and families facing immigration enforcement actions across San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura Counties. Our trained volunteers respond to reports of ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) activity, offering legal observation, know-your-rights education, and immediate assistance to affected individuals.”

The Know Your Rights category is covered in the card illustrated below, provided by the Rapid Response volunteers to undocumented people that might be facing ICE interaction.

I do not wish to speak with you, answer your questions, or sign or hand you any documents based on my 5th Amendment rights under the United States Constitution.

I do not give you permission to enter my home based on my 4th Amendment rights under the United States Constitution unless you have a warrant to enter, signed by a judge or magistrate with my name on it that you slide under the door.

I do not give you permission to search any of my belongings based on my 4th Amendment rights.

I choose to exercise my constitutional rights.

These cards are available to citizens and noncitizens alike.

It's downright cruel to let immigrants think that by reading these naive statements they'll somehow be protected.

Those legal scholars that are truly concerned about due process need to debate the issue on its merits. But Trump haters just looking to cause trouble for the administration are using immigrants as pawns. The Trump Derangement Syndrome sufferers are having a lot of fun right now. But the more that people learn about what's going on and the criminal actions of the immigrants that are being picked up, the less popular the protesters will be with the general public.

The issue still seems to be gathering momentum. And it's unlikely it will slow down soon. But faced with truth and reality, the protesters are going to reach a point where their credibility completely falls apart.

So, after seven hours of venting from protesters, the Board of Supervisors, needing to bring the meeting to some sort of conclusion, attempted to appear to pass a resounding solution that seemed like a vigorous responsive solution kind of – sort of. They ended the session with a motion to direct staff to explore what can be done to restrict ICE activity on county properties, explore what steps other counties are undertaking and explore social and health related programs supporting migrants that the county could help. They also seemed to call for a reporting cycle to the Board every 90 days. Supervisor Moreno wisely pointed out that such a report should not be turned into a Truth Forum every 3 months.

COLAB's comments at the Board of Supervisors hearing were simple but important. “We thank the Sheriff and his department for their professional approach to protecting public safety. They put their lives on the line every day for all people in this county. They deal with an awful lot - and lately, it seems a lot of awful. We're lucky to have them and thank them for their service.” Many other speakers at the hearing made similar comments. We wish there were more, but they were all heartfelt.

One Step Closer to a Tax Measure

In morning business, SLOCOG presented the draft of their half-cent transportation sales tax measure, Local Roads First, to the Board of Supervisors. The Board wasn't slated to make any votes on the tax but rather make recommendations to the SLOCOG board about how the final draft should look.

In the end, the only formal recommendation the BoS made was to have a portion of sales tax revenues split 5 ways evenly between each supervisorial district. Supervisors Peschong and Moreno voiced serious reservations about the tax measure (Peschong stated flat out that he is opposed to the measure), but they supported the basic concept of splitting revenues evenly between the supervisorial districts if the measure were to pass.



Supervisor Gibson tried to engineer the recommendation in such a way that each supervisorial district would get equal amounts over the 30-year period, but not necessarily on an annual basis. However, the “I’ll gladly pay you Tuesday for a hamburger today” scheme didn’t get past Supervisor Moreno who caught the brinksmanship and made sure that each district would receive equal revenues on an annual basis. The recommendation for the district split passed unanimously.

The SLOCOG board will meet on February 4 to finalize language for the measure. After that, they will do one more round with each city council and the Board of Supervisors before requesting that the board put the measure on the ballot. If SLOCOG makes that final request of the board, that will probably happen in late April or May.



In the meantime, the Citizens Initiative that we mentioned last week is moving forward. A committee has been formed, and fundraising is underway. The group of business leaders that is pursuing the Citizens Initiative will be making announcements in the coming week about their plans. We do know that it involves extremely short deadlines for signature gathering and therefore a very expensive budget.

It's not clear whether the Citizens Initiative will have a direct impact on SLOCOG's effort. The Citizens Initiative will use almost the exact language as SLOCOG. The key difference is that the Citizens Initiative needs to gather over 12,400 valid signatures and will only require a simple majority vote. The SLOCOG measure

gets put on the ballot by referral from the County Board of Supervisors (by a 4/5 vote of the Board) and requires a two-thirds vote from the electorate. It appears that both efforts will continue to move forward for the next couple of months.

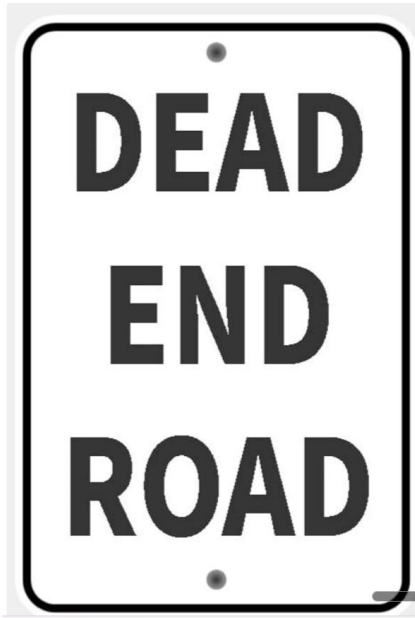
We expect to have more details on the Citizens Initiative in the coming weeks and will follow this issue carefully.

Burning Property Rights

As we reported last week, there was an action item on the agenda that read: Request to: 1) approve the re-establishment and update of the Fire Code Board of Appeals, and 2) direct the County Clerk to notice any existing vacancies on the Fire Code Board of Appeals in accordance with standard County procedures.

Fortunately, the item was pulled at the last minute by county staff. One of the most serious implications from this item was the impact on properties located on dead-end streets. Apparently, Cal Fire is getting very aggressive about suggesting that new building can't occur on these kinds of streets.

This, of course, would be devastating to people who have made investments and have plans to build on such lots. The way the agenda item was structured it would create a board that would make arbitrary decisions and offer no remediation or appeal to landowners.



We hope that county staff realize the unfair nature of this proposal and have gone back to the drawing board. In the meantime, it would be wise for anyone concerned about property rights and the impact of bureaucracy on the value of private property to express their concerns to each member of the Board of Supervisors. As always, there is a contact list at the end of this newsletter with addresses and phone numbers of each of the county Supervisors.

DA Dan Dow Does Damage

To the fraud industry, that is. On January 29, the District Attorney's office held a seminar on fraud prevention at the County Board of Supervisors chambers in San Luis Obispo.

The seminar was divided into three sections. The first was preventing fraud aimed at the general public. The second was real estate fraud. The last was fraud perpetrated against businesses.

The first session was held to a full house. Topics included AI-generated fraud efforts, as well as a number of online scams that are perpetuated daily in San Luis Obispo County. The second and third presentations were also well attended.



The forum drew a big crowd and offered valuable insights.



District Attorney Dow with his Chief Investigator providing info on fraud prevention.

It was good to see a proactive presentation on prevention rather than hearing about victims that don't know what to do to protect themselves. We encourage the District Attorney's office to continue with these kinds of programs. They are a tremendous public service, and anything we can do to cut down on crime is much appreciated.

Ticket sales are underway for the COLAB March 26 fundraising dinner with Katy Grimes

SLO County's most fun crowd, open bar, delicious filet mignon dinner, an inspirational speaker and a fantastic auction all await you for an evening you won't forget – and much appreciated support for COLAB. We hope you will join us.



17TH ANNUAL DINNER & FUNDRAISER

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MADONNA INN EXPO CENTER

COME HEAR THE REST OF THE STORY

Mainstream coverage of California Issues is pathetically thin with the legacy media avoiding the tough questions that define life in the Golden State. Katy Grimes, Editor-in-Chief of The California Globe, is known for fact-filled, hard hitting investigative reporting that exposes the real consequences of Sacramento's policy-making.



Katy Grimes, Editor in Chief of
The California Globe

Join us to hear firsthand from Katy about California's essentially one-party system of governance and the realities most media outlets routinely ignore - along with some good news, too.

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Is There a Funding Requirement for Prop. 36?

The answer to this question is a matter of statutory construction

By Chris Micheli, February 7, 2026

It is certainly understandable that the proponents of Proposition 36, the Homelessness, Drug Addiction, and Theft Reduction Act, expect the Governor and Legislature to fund the costs of its implementation.

Prop. 36 was approved by California voters in November 2024 and took effect on December 18, 2024. This measure partially reverses Proposition 47 (2014) by allowing felony charges for certain drug and theft crimes and increasing penalties for repeat offenders.

While the proponents of Prop. 36 have been critical about the level of funding received, a legal question has been raised whether the People's enactment of Prop. 36 requires funding?

In my mind, the courts of this state can either decide either (1) there is no funding attached and therefore there is not a requirement on the legislative and executive branches to fund it (as opposed to measures like Prop. 98 which explicitly sets forth funding guarantees) or (2) they can imply the voters intended a funding requirement and impose such a requirement.

From my perspective, the answer to this question is a matter of statutory construction and, rather than walk through such a legal analysis, I think the correct answer is the courts would not impose a funding requirement. Why?

While the proponents make the claim that denied or inadequate funding would thwart the will of voters, California courts have generally viewed the Legislature as having the authority to appropriate state funds through the annual budget process, which obviously also involves the Governor. Because that authority rests with the legislative and executive branches of state government, I do not envision the courts to read into the language of Prop. 36 a funding requirement.

As a practical matter, how would the courts address it? Would that requirement be placed upon the state government, or local governments? And how would the courts determine what the appropriate level of funding should be?

If a ballot measure enacted by the People would require spending in order to implement its provisions, then the ballot measure should specify a revenue source or appropriate a specified amount of funding for that purpose. It should not rely upon the courts to infer or imply a funding requirement. As such, the funding for Prop. 36 will likely remain in the hands of the goodwill of the Legislature and Governor.



Chris Micheli

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Gov. Gavin Newsom: How to Destroy California in Two Terms

The one thing Newsom is good at is destroying the Golden State

By Katy Grimes, February 4, 2026

If I was the leftist governor of the largest state in the U.S. and my unspoken goal and unholy plan was to destabilize and destroy my state, there are certain policies I would impose, and executive orders I'd make, while insulating myself from my own policies:

Cut water off to rural areas in the state; remove dams and hydroelectric plants.

Limit water deliveries to farmers and ranchers, forcing farmers and ranchers to shut down.

Create a housing shortage.

Raise the minimum wage so high, restaurant owners are forced to lay off employees.

Pass policies killing manufacturing.

Pass policies bolstering a service economy.

Vilify first, then destroy the petroleum industry.

Limit energy production to solar and wind renewable energy only.

Force people out of their traditional internal combustion engine cars into electric vehicles, and on to public transportation.

Order all internal combustion cars banned by 2035.

Mandate an all-electric state, including autos and trucks.

Keep hiking gas taxes.

Impose a mileage tax.

Allow the California High Speed Rail scheme to continue bilking taxpayers, with no tracks or trains yet, but has ballooned in cost to well over \$100 billion. And approve another \$20 billion in funding, fall 2025. It's a public employee union jobs program and political consultant scam expected to grow to \$350 billion if ever completed. Install thousands of floating offshore wind turbines at a cost of \$150 billion.

Legalize drugs.

Legalize sex with minors.

Legalize abortion up to baby's birth.

Authorize more tribal gambling casinos.

Destroy the public education system by watering down actual disciplines of math and English, while sending your own children to private schools.

Outlaw School Choice Scholarships

Promote affirmative action, racial preferences, DEI over merit.

Create fake crises that waste billion\$ like climate change and reparations.

Infringe on the people's right to keep and bear arms by passing laws which nibble around the edges of the 2nd Amendment, creating defacto gun control.

Stop prosecuting crime.

Decriminalize certain crimes, resulting in emptying out state prisons.

Lose \$37 billion in homeless funding/spending to shady non-profits and NGOs.
Lose \$31 billion to unemployment fraud.

Allow massive hospice and home-health fraud in Los Angeles.

Allow the California Department of Insurance to devastate the insurance market and drive the state to the edge of collapse.

Create and pass a mid-decade redistricting scheme ahead of the 2026 midterm elections to secure more Democrat seats in Congress by redrawing district maps, or “gerrymandering” numerous California Republicans out of their congressional districts.

Raise corporate taxes to discourage businesses from expanding.

Raise taxes and fees on public services and energy.

Raise income taxes on all income brackets.

Make it easier for local governments to raise taxes.

Impose a wealth tax.

Impose a death tax.

Impose a 5% billionaire’s tax on their assets.

Force doctors to comply with state medical directives; punish those who refuse to comply.

Allow hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrants into the state.

Provide free welfare, medical benefits, free housing and food, free education, and even home loans to illegal immigrants.

Provide state-issued ID to illegal immigrants.

Allow illegal immigrants to vote in local elections.

Greatly expand the size of government by hiring hundreds of thousands of state workers.

Increase your own Governor’s staff from 200 to nearly 400 employees.

Create more labor unions jobs by expanding state government.

Encourage public schools to convince kids they are another gender; provide secret counseling to those kids; shelter kids from parents.

Limit media access in Capitol; reward compliant media.

Accept a gift of \$3.7 million, 12,000 square foot mansion on 8 acres along the American River in Sacramento, then make \$2.7 million tax-free for obtaining a cash-out refinance, and don't report the gift on any financial disclosure forms.

Acquire a \$9.1 million home in Marin County through a shady LLC created two days before the sale closed.

Buy into a dubious pandemic, lock down the entire state's residents, force businesses, schools churches, beaches and parks to close.

Order the no-bid purchase of \$1.4 Billion of masks from electric bus manufacturer and Chinese company BYD at outset of the dubious COVID pandemic using taxpayers funds, when there are U.S. mask manufactures available.

Take a trip to China, meet with China General Secretary Xi Jinping claiming the trip was a "climate-focused tour," ignoring that China produces more global emissions than any other country on earth.

Gavin has bulldozed his way through the above list of what issues that are destroying California. And it's not as though the destruction has been mitigated or balanced out with positive, constructive, good governance that helped Californians in any way. Navigating daily life has become increasingly difficult, burdensome and horrifically expensive because of Gov. Newsom. There is not one positive proposal or legislative action Gov. Gavin Newsom has supported.

Newsom's policies have expedited the destruction of the most beautiful state; accelerated the declining population through outbound migration resulting in the loss of a congressional seat. He has irreparably harmed California's businesses and once thriving economy starting with his 3 years of Covid lockdowns, which hurt mostly small business owners the most. Newsom more than quadrupled the drug-addicted homeless vagrants living on California streets making cities unlivable. He bolstered labor unions while crushing independent contractors and gig workers. Gavin Newsom increased poverty in California while growing state government.

It's as if Gov. Newsom was very carefully and specifically trained on what it would take to destroy California – the one thing in which he actually excels – that, and feathering his own nest with ill-gotten gains.



Katy Grimes

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

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

Ringside: Can California's Oil Industry Survive?

Why should oil companies stay in California, where a hostile state legislature and hostile attorney general are doing everything in their power to destroy them?

By Edward Ring, February 5, 2026



Even confirmed skeptics should be impressed at the rapid improvement in the price and performance of EVs. A new 2026 Nissan Leaf sells for just under \$30,000, and can charge in 30 minutes. That's still not competitive with affordable gasoline powered vehicles, but the gap is closing fast.

But while we may be sanguine about the technology catching up, there is the so-called installed base that isn't going anywhere soon. Of the 35 million registered vehicles in California, only 2.5 million are EVs, and virtually all of the state's more than 100,000 heavy commercial trucks are diesel powered.

Meanwhile, the dismantling of California's oil industry proceeds at a pace far exceeding the capacity of an EV infrastructure to match. Last year on December 15,

the San Pablo pipeline shut down. It was the only pipeline connecting the inland oil fields in central and southern California to refineries in the San Francisco Bay Area.

The problems for San Pablo began as soon as California's oil production began to fall. In 1986, California's in-state production of crude oil reached its peak at 402 million barrels against demand of 676 million barrels. By 2024, production had fallen by 70 percent to 119 million barrels. Demand also fell, but only by 24 percent to 511 million barrels.

As production fell in California, the state's refineries made up the difference with imports from the Middle East, South America, and Alaska. And as California now imports nearly 400 million barrels a year, fewer barrels move through pipelines from oilfields in Kern County to refineries on the coast.

Estimated utilization of the San Pablo Pipeline was down to 15,000 barrels per day prior to shutdown, barely a quarter of what it needs to operate cost-effectively. And then Valero announced it was shutting down its refinery in Benicia, leaving only one refinery left in Northern California still refining crude oil.

These moves invite many questions. At 15,000 BBL/day, the San Pablo Pipeline was moving 5.4 million BBL/year into Northern California. Valero was refining 53 million BBL/year, and PBF Martinez will still be refining 57 million BBL/year. Could PBF have picked up the oil Valero would no longer process, cutting their imports accordingly?

That's a big if, since it might require renegotiating purchasing agreements with importers, but the bigger challenge remains the fact that even at 15,000 BBL/day, the San Pablo Pipeline was losing \$2 million a month. They needed to raise rates by about \$4.00 per barrel just to break even. The pipeline requires ongoing investments in maintenance that can only be justified if the owners expect to be operating for another 10-20 years or more. Nobody in the oil industry in California at this time has that sort of confidence.

The consensus across most of California's oil industry is that the dominoes are falling. CalGEM, the regulator that approves drilling permits, has pretty much froze permitting for going on five years. There are plenty of oil reserves left in California, but rates of production for most wells are maximized in the first 5-10 years then taper down to become uneconomical usually within 20-25 years. Without a continuous program of new drilling, even existing fields with most of their oil still in the ground can become unproductive.

And then there are the refinery owners. In response to escalating regulations, Valero's Benicia refinery is not the only dropout. Also giving up on California is the

Phillips 66 refinery in Long Beach. These two refineries together processed 104 million barrels of crude oil per year, and shutting them down drops refinery capacity by 18 percent. California's consumption of crude oil in 2024 was 511 million barrels, and with these two shutdowns, total refinery capacity drops to 488 million barrels. It will take years for EV growth to cover this gap.

And so, with refinery capacity in California now dropping below demand, the Valero refinery is repurposing its facilities to import gasoline. Not just any blend, but gasoline formulated to California's unique specifications. All of these factors mean Californians pay more: The unique gasoline blending requirements, the much higher gasoline taxes, the mandatory purchases by refineries of emissions credits from CARB, the cost to truck crude oil (at a paltry 200 BBLs per 18 wheeler) instead of using a pipeline, the cost to ship refined gasoline from remote states and nations instead of refining it here.

The California State Legislature is belatedly realizing that they need the globalized oil industry more than the globalized oil industry needs them. Large oil companies can go anywhere. Why should they stay in California, where a hostile state legislature and hostile attorney general are doing everything in their power to destroy them? Why invest here, when there are welcoming states and nations where the return will be greater and the risk will be less?

In recognition of the fact that EVs will not dominate the market overnight, nor will they swiftly replace the diesels powering big rigs, the state is backpedaling. But it's not enough. They've resumed issuing drilling permits, but only in Kern County, ignoring fields with huge potential in Los Angeles and Santa Barbara counties and elsewhere. And everywhere in California, including in Kern County, SB 1137 requires drilling rigs to be at least 3,200 feet from any inhabited structure. The practical effect of this law is to exclude large portions of the state from new drilling and to force the shutdown of existing wells within these "health protection zones." To ensure affordable gasoline and diesel fuel in California, state politicians, and the voters who hold them accountable, need to rearrange fundamental premises:

First, even if California's energy transition remains prioritized at great expense to the consumer, it is going to take several decades, if ever, before petroleum-based fuel can be completely replaced in the state.

Second, since California has the among strictest environmental standards and labor laws in the world, why shouldn't we use our own reserves of oil instead of

importing oil? Instead of losing thousands of highly skilled and well-paid oil industry workers, we would increase their employment.

Third, not so obvious but perhaps most important of all, the only way to put a permanent end to leakage of methane and volatile organic compounds from capped wells and natural seeps is to deplete the underlying reserves of oil. Every other technique, no matter how costly and comprehensive, is doomed to fail thanks to California's active faults that perpetually open natural vents in the earth's surface. Every year, the allure of an EV for light commutes attracts more consumers. But while that is a harbinger of an electric future, the timeline is decades, not years.



Edward Ring

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

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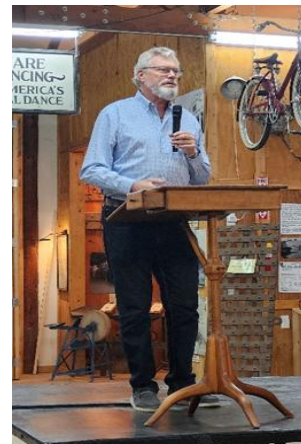
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**Senator Alex Padilla
202-224-3553 DC**

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

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202-224-3841 DC**

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

**Representative Salud Carbal
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