

# **COLAB SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY**

**WEEK OF JUNE 9-15, 2013**

**COUNTY BUDGET ADOPTION WEEK - KEY MEETING  
9AM MONDAY JUNE 10<sup>TH</sup> - REPLACES TUESDAY BOARD  
MEETING. SEE SEPARATE SPECIAL WEEKLY UPDATE  
(SENT JUNE 5<sup>TH</sup>)**

**SLOCOG ABANDONS ITS PROPOSED  
LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM**

**HILL HINTS AT REPEAL OF PROPOSITION 13**

**“DISPIRITED” GIBSON ATTACKS APCD COLLEAGUES,  
TEA PARTY, AND COLAB IN ONE BREATH**

**SLO TRIBUNE AND GIBSON ON SAME PAGE IN  
DISPARAGING CRITICS**

**Board of Supervisors Meeting of Tuesday, June 4, 2013 (Completed)**

**Item 19 - Morro Shoulderband Snail Monitoring to Cost Los Osos Project \$333,549.**  
The Board approved additional biological monitoring costs for the Los Osos project due to the larger than anticipated range of an endangered snail. Several Los Osos residents pointed out that the snails are all over the place hiding in construction debris, cardboard, etc.

**No Board of Supervisors Meeting Tuesday, June 11, 2012 (Not Scheduled)**

**Special Board of Supervisors Budget Hearing Meetings Monday, June 10<sup>th</sup> and  
Wednesday, June 12<sup>th</sup> (Scheduled)**

**Budget Adoption Week.** Instead of conducting a regular Board meeting on Tuesday, the Board will have a special Budget hearing meeting on Monday, June 10<sup>th</sup>. That meeting carries over to Wednesday, June 12<sup>th</sup>. A separate COLAB SLO Special Weekly Update covering the Budget sessions has been issued as well as posted on our website on June 5<sup>th</sup>.

<p><b>SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5, 2013, 8:30 AM, COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER (Completed)</b></p>
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**Item A-7: State Legislative Program.** After considerable debate and several tweaking attempts, the SLOCOG Board voted to abandon its proposed 2013 State Legislative Program. County Supervisor Hill, who had expressed disgust with the process and disdain for those who disagreed with portions of the program, inadvertently created the opportunity. For whatever reason, an irritated Hill said something to the effect that, “we ought to just cancel the whole thing.” An alert Board member said “second.” County Supervisor Mecham, who was chairing the meeting, quickly called the question. The SLOCOG Board voted to not approve a 2013 legislative program. COLAB had suggested this alternative back in January.

**Hill Seeks to Open Proposition 13 Reconsideration:** During the deliberations on the Legislative Program Hill expressed frustration with the level and tone of the discussion. He suggested that agency discussions of legislative programs in general were missing a larger strategic point. Specifically, he feels that Proposition 13 is the cause of local governments’ inability to fund their operations and maintain their capital infrastructure. His most pointed criticisms were that Proposition 13 super majority vote requirements for tax increases are inherently undemocratic and erode local control. He requested that the APCD Board schedule a workshop or hearing on this subject in the future. COLAB will closely monitor any further developments.

**Gibson Criticizes Colleagues:** Supervisor Gibson was also irritated during the discussions and seemed to question the reasoning ability of some of his SLOCOG Board member colleagues, saying that they “couldn’t muster the **analysis** or political will” to ignore the critics of some portions of the Legislative Program (COLAB, Tea Party members concerned citizens). It was pretty evident that he meant to say something more derogatory than “analysis” because he started and then hesitated as if he caught himself.

**Background:** This item was back for the 4<sup>th</sup> time in 6 months. The provision to reduce the two-thirds super vote majority for tax and debt measures was still proposed to be eliminated. (Good news.) The staff continued to recommend that SLOCOG endorse the use of Cap and Trade revenue (an environmental tax on businesses) for local transportation projects. This is a tacit acceptance/endorsement of CAP and Trade. (Bad news.) There was also recommended support for a weak bill to give “smart growth” projects and high-speed rail an easier time under CEQA.

## Gibson and the SLO Tribune Intolerant of Public Questioning Government Hype

**Further Comment by Gibson on his Colleagues and Others:** This past Wednesday, the San Luis Obispo Tribune Newspaper ran an editorial critical of the APCD Board for not approving a Childrens' Bill of Rights Resolution. Please see last week's Update for the background drama surrounding this issue. "Coincidentally" on the same day, the Tribune simultaneously published an Op Ed piece by Supervisor Gibson in which he disparaged six of his APCD colleagues for not approving the Childrens' "Bill of Rights," accusing them of not being able to 'muster the courage to stand against aggressive ideologues...' and being guilty of "absurd rationalizing..."

The Gibson Op Ed is reprinted below:

### *Dispiriting vote on Children's Bill of Rights*

*By Bruce Gibson*

*Our county's [Air Pollution Control District](#) governing board last week refused to endorse the Children's Bill of Rights, a benign document developed by a diverse group of stakeholders under the sponsorship of the county's [First 5 Commission](#).*

*The 6-5 vote came after one of the most strange and disappointing days I've experienced in my time in elected office.*

*For most boards, commissions or councils, this would qualify as a "no-brainer" — a heartfelt, if ceremonial, expression of commitment to care and advocate for the children of this county.*

*Amazingly, a majority of APCD board members could not muster the courage to stand against aggressive ideologues who showed up to decry this effort as a ploy to regulate — perhaps even a Trojan horse of Soviet-style social engineering. The split vote against our county's children came after an hour of the most absurd rationalizing I've heard in some years.*

*That says a lot about what's going on with a number of APCD board members. The APCD board is made up of all five county supervisors and a representative from each of the county's seven cities.*

*First 5 (officially, the SLO County Children and Families Commission) has promoted the Children's Bill of Rights as a means of articulating our aspirations and commitment to the interests of our children. The Children's Bill of Rights was developed through meetings with nearly 200 adults and 60 youth. The final version is inspired by similar documents adopted by our county's Board of Supervisors and elected bodies throughout California.*

*First 5, which has served SLO County since 1998, was established to distribute tobacco tax funds for the benefit of children from birth to 5 years old. The First 5 Board is non-partisan and committed to supporting the health and education of the youngest members of our community.*

*I'm proud to be the Board of Supervisors' representative to the nine-member commission, following the long and distinguished service of my former colleague, current state Assemblyman Katcho Achadjian.*

*The ginned-up controversy about the Children's Bill of Rights started when the acting APCD meeting chairwoman (and Atascadero City Council member) Roberta Fonzi unsuccessfully tried to pull the item from the agenda — because she found it “unnecessary,” and that it could lead to resolutions to “save the whales, (or) help the fuzzy bunnies and warm kittens.”*

*Public comments that followed reached even greater heights of hyperbole, illogic and absurdity:*

- *The completely symbolic Children's Bill of Rights would pre-empt the Bill of Rights.*
- *The Children's Bill of Rights would remove parental authority and constitute a “taking” — the latter concept a favorite canard of the Tea Party.*
- *Endorsement of the Children's Bill of Rights might be used in Sacramento and Washington for “lobbying on behalf of children” — yes, that was voiced as a criticism.*

*Most ominously, several people asserted that the Children's Bill of Rights was the first step toward our children being made “wards of the state.” One person even suggested that meant the APCD would assume parental duties (I'm not kidding), and others claimed the United Nations would usurp the role of parents.*

*These deliberately provocative, outrageous assertions came from many of the same folks who have taken to the public comment periods of various local elected bodies in recent months to sound the alarm of an impending U.N. takeover under the auspices of Agenda 21. They are inspired and abetted by our local Tea Party and COLAB — who rail indiscriminately against regulation in general and seek to tear down local government to the benefit of a few special interests.*

*The sad result last week was that six of the 11 APCD Board members present would not stand up to this nonsense, so they cast their “no” votes against the Children's Bill of Rights in fealty to the extremists.*

*A common excuse for their political frailty was that such action was not within the APCD's purview. Some expressed concerns that the Children's Bill of Rights might be a “prelude to regulation.” What especially disappoints me is that Supervisors Arnold and Mecham voted “no,” while they had endorsed the Children's Bill of Rights at the Board of Supervisors.*

*Consider, however, that the APCD exists specifically to protect the public's health by reducing and eliminating air pollution. Study after study has shown that our children's respiratory health is especially vulnerable to unhealthy air.*

*In fact, the district has a special program in a few schools now (and hopefully more soon) that teaches students about health and air quality. The district also sends health alerts to schools on the Nipomo Mesa when airborne particulate matter reaches levels that suggest students' outdoor activities should be modified or eliminated.*

*With this emphasis on the health of our young people, how can we not support the Children's Bill of Rights?*

*But so it goes. It's dispiriting to see elected officials unable to exercise their responsibility to advocate for vulnerable members of our community. It's even more disappointing that fear of those with extreme and rigid ideologies lead those elected to deny a basic expression of hope for our children's future.*

*Bruce Gibson represents District 2 on the county Board of Supervisors.<sup>1</sup>*



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1922 Soviet Poster

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<sup>1</sup> The Gibson Op Ed was first published in the San Obispo Tribune of Wednesday June 5, 2013.

