



**COLAB SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY**



**WEEK OF MARCH 1-7, 2015**

 **COLAB** <sup>6th</sup> **ANNUAL**  
San Luis Obispo County

# **DINNER & FUNDRAISER**

## **BEN SHAPIRO**

**Keynote Speaker**

Shapiro, a provocative and biting national political commentator, is editor at large of *Breitbart News*, hosts the daily radio show *Morning Answer* and is a *New York Times* best selling author.

**Thursday, March 26th**

**Alex Madonna Expo Center**

**5:15 pm** Social Hour, No Host Cocktails

**6:15 pm** Filet Mignon Dinner including Wine

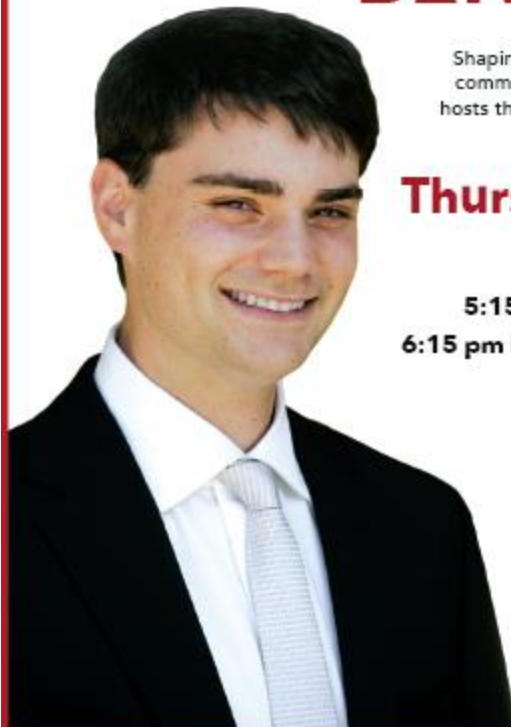
\$125 per person / \$1,100 per table of ten  
Reserved seating for Tables of Ten

**For tickets, mail your check to:**

COLAB SLO, PO Box 13601  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

For more information call: (805) 548-0340  
or email to [colabslo@gmail.com](mailto:colabslo@gmail.com)

**Cocktail Attire Optional**



**CALL 805 548-0340 –RESERVE YOUR TABLE/TICKETS**

**NO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING ON  
MARCH 3, 2015**

**-“SMART GROWTH” LOCKED IN-  
HILL, MECHAM AND GIBSON VOTE  
RESTART OF AG. WATER OFFSET  
PROGRAM WORK  
(MAKING THE MORATORIUM PERMANENT)**

**LEG. PLATFORM SLIGHTLY MODIFIED  
(PROVISION PROTECTING PROP. 13 ADDED)**

**CUESTA MAY FAVOR OUTSIDE CONTRACTORS FOR  
ITS BIG BOND PROJECT  
(SEE PAGE 6)**

**San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors Meeting of Tuesday, February 24, 2015  
(Completed)**

**Item 28 - 2015 Proposed State Legislative Platform.** For the first time in four years, there was serious discussion of the program. Supervisors Arnold and Compton challenged key provisions:

One proposal (placed in the Platform by Gibson) would place the County on record in Sacramento as supporting a law which would mandate that landlords must accept tenants who have Federal subsidized housing certificates and vouchers. Arnold, Compton and Mecham opposed the provision. Gibson engineered a sneaky compromise by accusing Arnold of not having done her homework by checking with housing advocates such as the Human Services Oversight Commission, the Community Action Program of SLO, and the County Housing Authority. The Board actually passed an insulting motion directing Arnold as an assignment to solicit the opinion of each agency and report back. Why don't they just make her County Administrative Officer?

This was a red herring move to embarrass Arnold and Compton into submitting. Obviously housing and social services advocates would support such a law.

**Hill's Cheap Shot:** Hill went right to the race card, equating opposition to mandatory acceptance of Federal Section 8 certificates and vouchers to opposing bans on housing segregation.

Unfortunately, Mecham and Compton went along with the sucker punch instead of just voting the thing down.

**Better News:** Mecham, Compton and Arnold were successful in voting to strike a provision which requested the Legislature to weaken Proposition 13 Super majority vote threshold. Gibson scolded them as being “short sighted, narrow minded, and rendering the County an isolationist island.”

Compton attempted to get Arnold and Mecham to vote to ding a provision which would have required the Legislature and Congress to increase funding for “Universal Health Care.” She pointed out that the Affordable Health Care Act (Obama Care) already expanded the number of Medi-Cal eligibles in California alone by 2.2 million. Of course Hill and Gibson objected strenuously, which resulted in a compromise with weaker wording. Why didn't Arnold, Compton, and Mecham simply vote to remove the plank?

**Background:** The annual Legislative Platform contains general principles and specific requests for legislation. These are intended to guide the County's lobbyists and State Senator and Assemblymen.

**Item 31 - Reconsideration of the Agricultural Water Offset Program.** The Board of Supervisors voted 3/2 (Arnold and Compton dissenting) to resume the staff work on creating the Agricultural Water Offset Program. This would essentially make the Paso Robles Urgency Ordinance (moratorium) permanent. The version which was adopted (as proposed by Supervisor Mecham) requires that for any use of new water, an equivalent amount must be offset somewhere else in the basin. At this point the staff is requested to limit the scope to the Paso Basin. The proposed ordinance would also contain a sunset clause by which it would terminate one year after the separately proposed Paso Robles Groundwater Management District has prepared, adopted, conducted environmental review, and has received State approval of an SB 1168 compliant basin sustainability plan. This could take years and essentially renders the ordinance permanent. Also it is a backhanded way to support the formation of the proposed district. Nothing can be approved (without offsets) until the District plan is functional. The District will have to adopt an offset plan to pass muster with the State.

**Smart Growth Victory:** Essentially Supervisor Gibson has achieved his long-term goal (which existed way before anyone thought about the water problem) of crippling growth outside of the cities and URL's in the interior north county. He camouflaged the whole issue as a water crisis: “We must bridge over the abyss, permanent damage, ruination of lives and livelihoods. There is only one thing that makes sense. We have to make a bridge to a groundwater management plan.”

**Environmental Review Consequences:** As we noted in last week's Update, once the permanent ordinance is put into place, it will require environmental review to repeal it. Chief Deputy County Counsel McNulty confirmed this, indicating that since the ordinance must be

subjected to environmental review to be adopted, it would require environmental review to terminate it. The one exception, according to McNulty, is if the ordinance contains a sunset clause. Gibson actually hedged on this theory by stating that any plan adopted by the proposed new District would itself be subject to environmental review. Thus in order to be legal (not to mention to be approved by the State) it would have to be at least as restrictive as the ordinance proposed here.

In effect, if you don't have an already approved water source or the money to pay for an offset, your property just became much less valuable --- forever.

Unfortunately, only a few opposing agriculturalists and citizen activists are engaged at this point. The larger companies, which already have their water, and the City of Paso Robles are supporting the continued moratorium. Remember, when the Board adopted the moratorium, they promised that it was only a 22-month timeout. Now they promise that it's just an additional 5-year bridge to the adoption of a Paso District water management plan.



### **PASO BASIN WELCOME SIGN**

Supervisor Arnold presented a compromise version which would have exempted properties of 50 acres and under (they don't use as much water as the large vineyards); which would exempt people who could acquire other sources of water (for example, treated effluent from the Paso Sewer system when it comes on line; which would use proximity analysis (focus on areas which have severe decline and relate the source of water to the problem); and which would restrict the program to the area closest to the City of Paso Robles, where the problem is most severe. Supervisor Gibson swiftly attacked her proposal, stating that he was astonished. He said, "Madam Chairman you are standing on a cliff with rose colored glasses."

Hill said that "we hear a lot of talk about property rights but nothing about responsibilities, we are trustees, and we are responsible to stop the bleeding".

Compton retorted: "We are only protecting (in reference to the Mecham proposal) the biggest exploiters, you are selecting a few people, which is why we need the small acreage exemption, and it is the big users..."

There was considerable debate by the Supervisors. Now that Arnold is Chair, Supervisor Hill says he is now for debate. Readers will recall that Gibson as Chairman tended to suppress debate, belittle Arnold when she tried to bring up alternatives, and forced matters through.

**There was extensive citizen comment which is paraphrased here:**

This creates a paper bound offset market.

County control – you are leasing the land with your property taxes.

Creates paper water - water has been transferred on paper, the good area stays the same, the bad area gets worse. Large vineyards ,which can afford offsets, will benefit. It will benefit large investors.

It is a cap-and-trade program to benefit large users.

Look at which users which use a large amount.

It is time to develop a better plan.

Farm Bureau Government Affairs Director, Joyce Fitzhugh: “ ... we do not support it, but if you do it, include a sunset. All these requirements do not add one drop of water, all these regulations to change a crop etc. do not help.”

Farm Bureau Board Member Paul Clark: “5-7 years to develop a plan, plus 20 to get in place is no sunset at all.”

Using a secret model to take away water is fundamentally wrong. Why doesn't the County allow residents to form mutual water companies to drill a well?

It is a cap-and-trade program to control rural residents. It violates the constitutional rights of the residents.

It causes land value decline. It is a government taking.

There is no new data to substantiate the program, the urgency ordinance is a one-shot deal, you can't adopt new interim ordinance using the same provisions.

New hotels are using lots of water.

The City of Paso should require that the developer of a new hotel be required to eliminate an existing hotel.

Paso Wine Alliance supports some sort of bridge regulation.

**Background:**

a. The Ag Offset Program (AOP) would require that agriculturalists seeking to develop new or expanded irrigated land would have to acquire water credits from someone who is willing to contract with the County to reduce his/her use of an equivalent amount of water.

b. The County Planning Department would function as a broker, matching sellers and buyers. It would also enforce the provisions regarding use and the provisions extinguishing equivalent use by metered inspections.

c. The effect of the program would be to make the Paso Basin Moratorium permanent.

- d. On October 28, 2014, the Board heard a detailed presentation on the program and on a 5/0 vote sent it back to staff and the consultant for more work. The Board did not specify a date for its return.
- e. On February 3, 2015 the County Administrator agendaized the item (and some related items) and requested that the Board determine if it really intended that more work be done. The Board, on a 3/2 vote (Gibson and Hill dissenting), determined to terminate work on the program.
- f. On February 10, 2015, Supervisor Mecham, in a reversal of his February 3 vote, requested that the matter be brought back. There was considerable acrimonious discussion, and in the end two votes were taken and on the second it was deemed 3/2 (Arnold and Compton dissenting) to bring it back.
- g. On February 17, and as noted in the first item in this Weekly Update, Gibson attempted to jump the gun and have the Board authorize work on the program before an actual hearing. That proposal was defeated 3/2 (Gibson and Hill dissenting).

**Cuesta College Board of Trustees Meeting of Wednesday, March 4, 2015 – 4 PM at the College (Scheduled)**

The College Trustees are considering entering into a project labor agreement (PLA) with the large construction trade unions that would require that construction firms bidding on the \$277 million job and sub- contracts would have to be union contractors. This means that they must give hiring preference to tradesmen who are union members. Only if the unions cannot provide sufficient workers, can contractors use non-union help. The effect is to exclude local labor and local contractors and import tradesmen (journeymen and apprentices) from Los Angeles and beyond. We talked to an electrician at one of the solar farms who was from New Orleans.

**Please see the SLOCAT Alert Below:**

***WRITE CUESTA BOARD OF TRUSTEES NOW!***

*The Cuesta College Board of Trustees is considering placing a Project Labor Agreement (PLA) on the \$277 million of Measure L construction work at the college. A PLA means a firm must be union to work on the Cuesta College construction projects. This will exclude about 90% of our local workforce, resulting in a huge loss of jobs in SLO County, loss of revenue to our economy, and a great windfall for underfunded union pension and benefit plans. The Board will hear from “our” side, opposing PLAs at the March 4 board meeting which starts at 4 PM at Cuesta. There will be public comment allowed as well, and it would be great to have members of the general public there to speak against the PLA. The unions are really pushing this, as there are millions of dollars at stake for them. If Cuesta adopts a PLA, it will have a domino effect on all other bond measures and eventually all public works jobs. If we can stop it now, it will discourage other schools from adopting one.*

*Most importantly, please email the Trustees now asking them NOT to go forward with this bad idea.*

*Here are the Board members and their e-mails:*

*Patrick Mullen, Chair ' [patrick\\_mullen@cuesta.edu](mailto:patrick_mullen@cuesta.edu)'*

*Barbara George ' [bgeorge@cuesta.edu](mailto:bgeorge@cuesta.edu)'*

*Dick Hitchman ' [rhitchma@msn.com](mailto:rhitchma@msn.com)'*

*Angela Mitchell ' [angela@mitchella.com](mailto:angela@mitchella.com)'*

*Pete Sysak ' [pjsysak@yahoo.com](mailto:pjsysak@yahoo.com)'*

*Student Rep Scott Chedester ' [asccpres@cuesta.edu](mailto:asccpres@cuesta.edu)'*

**AND THANK YOU!!!!**

*The following are some ideas you may want to use in your email. Feel free to change them of course, any way you want.*

- 1) I am writing you today to ask you not to impose a Project Labor Agreement on the Cuesta College Measure L bond money. A PLA eliminates the chance for nonunion contractors to work at Cuesta. Then add:*
- 2) You have a fiduciary responsibility to the taxpayers to get the best work at the lowest price. All public works projects pay union scale. PLAs are shown to drive up costs, eliminate competition, and in our county, it will result in most of the work going to out of area firms and workers. This hurts our local economy and is a slap in the face to everyone who supported this measure. Please vote No on the PLA.*
- 3) Do you really want to give control of \$277 million to the trade unions? They are looking for money to back-fill their pension obligations, pure and simple. Let union and non-union contractors bid this work — the wages are the same for both.*
- 4) Everything the PLA claims to do is already codified, including certified payroll, wages, hours, safety requirements, and so on. A PLA is a solution looking for a problem and went out of use over 50 years ago because the main goal, to prevent strikes, was accomplished. Now it is a tool to collect money for underfunded union pensions, pure and simple. Vote NO!*