



**WEEKLY UPDATE
MAY 19 - 25, 2024**

**THIS WEEK
SEE PAGE 4**

SLO PENSION TRUST

GOOD NEWS – WILL NOT NEED TO LOWER THE INTEREST ASSUMPTION RATE NEXT YEAR - LESS PRESSURE ON BUDGET

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

MINOR CHANGES TO THE PROPOSED BUDGET AND REVIEW SCHEDULE

**SAN JAUN WATER DISTRICT ANNEXATION MYSTERY ITEM
(NO MATERIAL)**

SLO CLERK RECORDER: LIMIT BALLOT INFORMATION

HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION & REDUCTION STATUS

“WELCOME HOME VILLAGE” FOR THE HOMELESS NOT SO WELCOME

END OF BOB JONES TRAIL? - CONDEMNATION & DEADLINES

PLANNING COMMISSION

36 NEW UNITS IN SAN MIGUEL

**LAST WEEK
SEE PAGE 12**

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

**LEGISLATIVE BILLS WITH NASTY IMPACTS ON COUNTY
THE BOARD MAJORITY REFUSES TO PROTECT PROP 13 AGAIN**

&

OPPOSE ATTACKS ON TAX BLOCKING REFERENDA

FY 2024-25 \$851.8 ANNUAL BUDGET PROPOSED

FY 2023-24 THIRD QUARTER FINANCIAL REPORT

THERE IS NO THERE THERE

2024 ANNUAL DEBT REPORT

SLO COUNTY AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT

DUNES DUST PROGRESS UPDATE

SLO COUNTY LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION

COMMISSION

CAMBRIA AMBULANCES REVIEW

REVENUES AREN'T KEEPING UP WITH COSTS

**COLAB SEEKING EXPERIENCED EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR!**

COLAB San Luis Obispo is seeking an experienced Executive Director to lead the organization's advocacy and education efforts. This position will report directly to the Board of Directors, and will oversee administration, staffing, scheduling, and communications in addition to being COLAB's principal advocate for a stronger business environment in our region. Qualified candidates will have experience in government, public policy, advocacy, and/or law, experience managing employees, and exemplary communication skills. (This is a 1099 Misc. position.) Interested parties may submit questions, or resumes and cover letters to colabslo@gmail.com.

EMERGENT ISSUES

SEE PAGE 25

CALIFORNIA'S BAN ON DIESEL LOCOMOTIVES COULD HAVE MAJOR NATIONAL REPERCUSSIONS

No technology exists today to enable railroads to comply with the state's diktat, which villainizes a mode of transportation that is actually quite energy efficient

NEBRASKA & 16 OTHER STATES SUE CALIFORNIA OVER ZERO-EMISSIONS TRUCKING MANDATES

States hope to halt California's EV trucking regulations

ONLY UNITY CAN CHALLENGE ENVIRONMENTALISM, INC.

California has only 5.0 percent of its land housing 94.2 percent of its population

Border Getaways - Jump exponentially under current regime

COLAB IN DEPTH
SEE PAGE 33

TAKING BACK CALIFORNIA – PART THREE: FIGHTING CRIME

**CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATES IN CALIFORNIA HAVE A
CHANCE TO WIN OVER VOTERS WHO WON'T RESPOND TO A
HARSHER "LOCK THEM ALL UP" MESSAGE**

BY EDWARD RING

SPONSORS



THIS WEEK'S HIGHLIGHTS
ALL MEETINGS ARE AT 9:00 AM UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

SLO Pension Trust Meeting of Monday, May 20, 2024 (Scheduled)

Item 5 - March 2024 YTD Returns.

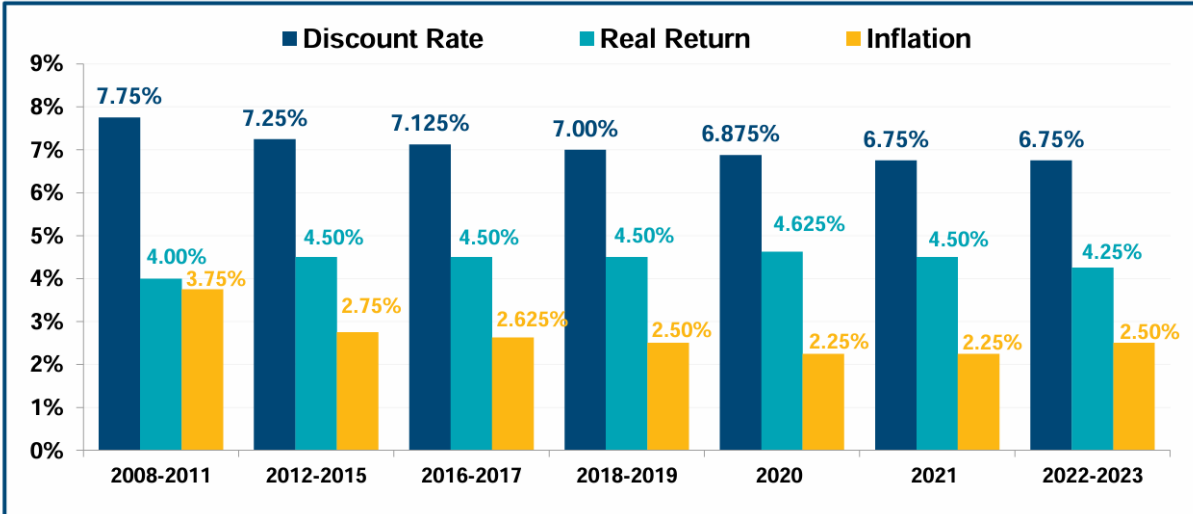
	1-month	YTD	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Total Fund (%) (Gross)	1.4	3.2	8.9	(8.0)	15.2	8.9	16.3
Policy Index (%)*	1.4	3.0	10.2	(9.7)	12.8	10	16.4

	YTD	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Market Value (millions)	\$1,737	\$1,694	\$1,614	\$1,775	\$1,552	\$1,446

Item 7 - January 1, 2024 Experience Study. The good news is that the consulting actuaries do not recommend a lowering of the overall interest assumption rate of 6.75%. This means that there will be no new pressure on the County Budget during FY 2024-25 for a large jump in the pension contribution. This is partially a result of the system meeting and/or exceeding its investment target over the past years.

There is pressure from overall salary increases, retirees living longer, and the buildup of Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) banks. The latter are a formula based benefit designed as a hedge against inflation during retirement. In those years when the Southern California inflation rate increases, retirees may be eligible for anywhere from a 1% to 3% COLA. If the inflation rates exceed their designated COLA, the overage percentage may be banked for use in years when there is a less COLA or no COLA. In recent years, the instances of these COLA bank designations have built up. The actuaries recommend that these accumulating obligations be incorporated into the liability calculations. This, in turn, along with longer lives, has resulted in the actuaries recommending that the pension contribution rate be increased an average of 2.4%.

Change in Unfunded Actuarial Liability (in thousands)	
Unfunded Actuarial Liability, January 1, 2023	\$ 942,632
Expected change in Unfunded Actuarial Liability	(12,807)
Decrease due to actuarial asset gains	(6,324)
Increase due to liability loss	29,435
Increase due to contribution experience and expenses	2,496
Total UAL change	\$ 12,800
Unfunded Actuarial Liability, January 1, 2024	\$ 955,432



Actual average returns on Market Value of Assets

5-year: 7.6%

10-year: 5.7%

For those readers who would enjoy a real understanding of how the actuarial assumptions are developed and the rates set, control click on the link below. When it opens scroll down to Item 7 , the 2024 Experience study. It is fascinating and clear. It also provides insights to the economy

January 1, 2024 Preliminary Actuarial Valuation Results and 2024 Experience Study

May 20, 2024

Anne D. Harper, FSA, EA, MAAA
Alice I. Alsberghe, ASA, EA, MAAA

[May-20,-2024-SLOCPT-Board-Meeting-Materials.pdf \(ca.gov\)](#)

Board of Supervisors Meeting of Tuesday, May 21 , 2024 (Scheduled)

Item 5 - Submittal of the FY 2024-25 Supplemental Budget to 1) publish the budget hearing schedule and 2) recommend adjustments to the FY 2024-25 Recommended Budget. These

are final adjustments to the Proposed Budget containing refinements that were developed after the book was presented. After various adjustments, the total budget increases slightly.

FY 2024-25		
	Governmental Funds	General Fund
Recommended Budget	\$851,776,290	\$741,183,885
Supplemental Budget	\$2,820,241	\$2,820,123
Amended Recommended Budget	\$854,596,531	\$744,004,008

The Hearing Schedule is included as Addendum A below, on page 36 of the Weekly Update.

Item 6 - Submittal of a notice to commence negotiations and a resolution accepting the negotiated exchange of property tax revenue and annual tax increment between the County of San Luis Obispo and the Shandon-San Juan Water District for Annexation No. 1 - Skyview. This is a mystery item, as there is no board letter or backup.

Item 17 - It is recommended that the Board elect to opt out of the provisions of the Ballot DISCLOSE Act requiring the listing of supporters and opponents for county, city, district and school measures on the county ballot and future county ballots. This one seems like a reduction in service. Why wouldn't voters desire the information?

The Ballot DISCLOSE Act enacted in 2022 requires all ballot measures statewide to include a list of supporters and opponents to be printed directly on the ballot. As no funding was appropriated to support this requirement, the Ballot DISCLOSE Act creates an unfunded state mandate for counties, which already absorb most of the costs for state and federal elections. Logistical challenges also arise as the existing election timeline does not accommodate for the increase in operational demands to comply, including time and costs associated with verification, data input, proofreading, and translation.

Clerk Recorder Elaina Canto's Opinion?

Bizarrely, the County Clerk Recorder recommends omitting it on the basis that it is too costly, too much trouble, and too political. Huh?

Printing supporter/opponent lists could likely further politicize the ballot by increasing the potential for electioneering and promotion of candidates who may be on the ballot and are also signers of a measure. Including a supporter/opponent list on the ballot could also put the County Registrar of Voters in the position of accepting or denying abbreviations of supporters/opponents that may not be clear to voters due to the maximum character limit, which in turn may result in legal challenges to perceived unfair determinations or ambiguity.

Why wouldn't it be good to have the record on who is sabotaging Proposition 13 for the casual voter? Why wouldn't be important for the casual voter to understand who is proposing tax increases?

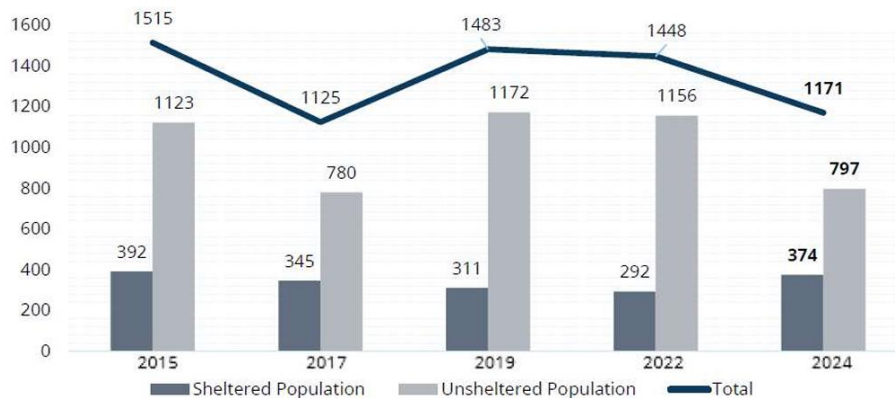
While the intention of providing more information to voters is admirable, the more complicated and lengthy ballots become, the more likely they are to confuse voters and cause frustration. Simply printing the supporters and opponents of a local measure on the ballot does not provide the entire context of what a measure is, nor does it better inform the voter of the intent of the measure. Moreover, voters are provided with voter information guides (both state and local) and online election materials, which enable them to learn about candidates and measures.

It is estimated that implementing the Ballot DISCLOSE Act requirements could substantially increase the cost to conduct elections in the County of San Luis Obispo by approximately \$121,000 per election.

The Board should reject this one.

Item 37 - Request to receive and file a report on progress of County’s Five-Year Plan to Reduce Homelessness and provide direction as outlined in the recommendation. The Board will receive an extensive report on progress towards reducing homelessness. The data show a reduction so far. The report is not clear on how much the County is expending on homelessness prevention and reduction.

PIT Count snapshot



The proposed FY 2024-25 County Budget exhibits the table below for the Homelessness Division of the Social Services Department:

Funding Source	Amount
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)	\$1,695,270
CDBG Covid Carryover	\$46,389
Encampment Resolution Carryover	\$102,670
HOME Investment Partnership (HOME)	\$1,066,054
Federal Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG)	\$149,655
State ESG	\$150,000
Continuum of Care (CoC)	\$1,328,143
Inclusionary Housing In-Lieu Fees (Title 29)	\$50,204
Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention Program (HHAP) and California Emergency Solutions and Housing (CESH)	\$411,373
Permanent Local Housing Allocation (PLHA)	\$747,989
General Fund Contribution	\$4,909,148
Total Funding	\$10,656,895

Since some of these funds leverage other programs, the total impact is not known here. Many homeless persons also receive social security payments, housing assistance, food assistance, medical care, and other benefits that are not included here.

Control click on the link, below, to see the full report. It takes a minute to open.

<https://agenda.slocounty.ca.gov/iip/sanluisobispo/file/getfile/161507>

MATTERS AFTER 1:30 PM

Item 39 - Submittal of a resolution approving the Welcome Home Village (WHV) Project, consisting of 46 permanent supportive residential housing units and 34 interim supportive housing residential units located at the corner of Johnson and Bishop Street in the city of San Luis Obispo, to reduce homelessness along the Bob Jones Trail encampment in the city of San Luis Obispo. The project would install small portable units for the homeless people on a parking lot across from the old County Hospital. There is mixed support and opposition from neighbors. The support seems to have been organized, as a number of the letters use the same structure and wording.

This is likely to be a long and contentious hearing.

Site Location



A Similar Project



DRAFT
Conceptual
Site Plan



Item 40 - Request to receive an update on the scope change application and give staff direction on options to proceed with the Bob Jones Pathway Gap Closure Project in order to meet the grant funding timeline for the Bob Jones Pathway from the Octagon Barn to Ontario Road Project in Avila Beach. The staff is dropping this one in the Board's lap. This should also be an intense hearing. Bring your meals ready to eat and cocktails.

1. The County received an \$18 State million grant to complete a 4.5 mile section of the Bob Jones Trail, which connects San Luis Obispo to Avila Beach.
2. One of the owners of right of way has refused to sell a necessary segment to the County.
3. Some Supervisors are loath to use eminent domain for recreation purposes.
4. The alternative routes are less desirable and in some cases are not eligible for project funds, as they don't meet the State program requirements.
5. The project is deadlined by the state; unless the County spends the money timely, it will lose the grant.

Supervisors Arnold and Peschong oppose the use of eminent domain generally in this case. They should surrender their opposition in exchange for:

1. Reappointment to the Paso Basin Coordinating Committee.
2. Restoration of the Ag water ordinance, which provided water for small users in the Paso Basin.
3. Full Board support for preservation of Proposition 13 (Opposition to ACA 1 and ACA 13).
4. Permanent rejection of the Housing in Lieu Tax.
5. Increased percentage of the Budget dedicated to capital improvements and roads.
6. Rezone of 4,000 acres of unincorporated county land for homes.

Item 41 - Any Supervisor may ask a question for clarification, make an announcement, or report briefly on his or her activities. In addition, Supervisors may request staff to report back to the Board at a subsequent meeting concerning any matter or may request that staff place a matter of business on a future agenda. Any request to place a matter of business for consideration on a future agenda requires the majority vote of the Board.

SLO County Planning Commission Meeting of Thursday, May 23, 2024 (Scheduled)

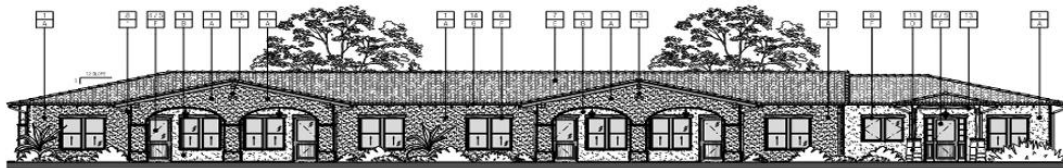
Item 4 - Hearing to consider a request by James and Debra Saunders for a Conditional Use Permit to (DRC2019 00252) to construct 36 multi-family residential units on a two-acre site



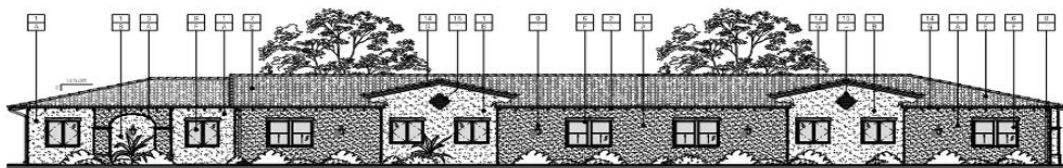
Coverage Plan

Area Legend

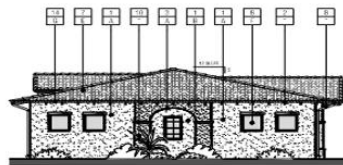
- OPEN SPACE
 - PAVING
 - LANDSCAPE
 - PLANTING
 - UTILITIES
- SCALE OF DRAWING: 1/4" = 1'-0"



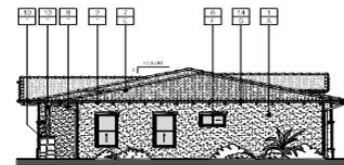
1 Proposed Building Elevation - Front (Entry)



2 Proposed Building Elevation - Back



3 Bldg Elevation - Side



4 Bldg Elevation - Side

LAST WEEK'S HIGHLIGHTS

Board of Supervisors Meeting of Tuesday, May 14, 2024 (Completed)

Item 21 - Request to receive an update on State Legislative activities by Paul Yoder of Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange (Administrative office). The lobbyists expect that significant reductions in the State Budget will occur as the Legislature finalizes it in late June. It is not yet known how severe reductions will be to revenues that support State mandates to counties.

Once again, the Board leftist majority refused to support motions protecting Proposition 13. This time on a 2/2 vote, with Gibson and Paulding dissenting, and with Ortiz-Legg absent.

Background: The update consisted of a 40-page list of bills currently pending that should impact the County of San Luis Obispo. Presumably, the Board will provide preliminary direction. The list is long and detailed. This process may take some time.

Some samples of the bills are listed below:

1. Gutting of Proposition 13:

See the details in the table below:

<p>ACA 1 Aguiar-Curry D Local government financing: affordable housing and public infrastructure: voter approval.</p>	<p>Assembly Chaptered 9/20/2023-Chaptered by Secretary of State - Res. Chapter 173, Statutes of 2023.</p>	<p>The California Constitution prohibits the ad valorem tax rate on real property from exceeding 1% of the full cash value of the property, subject to certain exceptions. This measure would create an additional exception to the 1% limit that would authorize a city, county, city and county, or special district to levy an ad valorem tax to service bonded indebtedness incurred to fund the construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, or replacement of public infrastructure, affordable housing, including downpayment assistance, or permanent supportive housing, or the acquisition or lease of real property for those purposes, if the proposition proposing that tax is approved by 55% of the voters of the city, county, city and county, or special district, as applicable, and the proposition includes specified accountability requirements. The measure would prohibit a city, county, city and county, or special district from placing a proposition on the ballot pursuant to these provisions if the voters have previously approved a proposition pursuant to these provisions or the below special tax provisions until all funds from the previous proposition are committed to programs and projects listed in the specific local program or ordinance, as described. The measure, subject to certain vote thresholds, would authorize the Legislature to enact laws establishing additional accountability measures and laws for the downpayment assistance programs authorized by the measure, as specified. The measure would specify that these provisions apply to any city, county, city and county, or special district measure imposing an ad valorem tax to pay the interest and redemption charges on bonded indebtedness for these purposes that is submitted at the same election as this measure. This bill contains other related provisions and other existing laws. Last Amended: 9/5/2023</p>	
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2. Making it impossible to pass tax limitation measures:

<p>ACA 13 Ward D Voting thresholds.</p>	<p>Assembly Chaptered 11/2/2023-Chaptered by Secretary of State- Chapter 176, Statutes of 2023</p>	<p>The California Constitution provides that a proposed constitutional amendment and a statewide initiative measure each take effect only if approved by a majority of the votes cast on the amendment or measure. This measure would further provide that an initiative measure that includes one or more provisions that would amend the Constitution to increase the voter approval requirement to adopt any state or local measure would be approved by the voters only if the proportion of votes cast in favor of the initiative measure is equal to or greater than the highest voter approval requirement that the initiative measure would impose. The measure would specify that this voter approval requirement would apply to statewide initiative measures that appear on the ballot on or after January 1, 2024. This bill contains other related provisions and other existing laws. Last Amended: 9/11/2023</p>	
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3. Significantly weakening the ability of cities, counties, and other entities to manage their budgets: It essentially requires them to fill all vacant positions.

<p>AB 2561 McKinnor D</p> <p>Local public employees: vacant positions.</p>	<p>Assembly Appropriations Suspense File</p> <p>5/1/2024-In committee: Set, first hearing. Referred to suspense file.</p>	<p>Existing law, the Meyers-Miliias-Brown Act (act), authorizes local public employees, as defined, to form, join, and participate in the activities of employee organizations of their own choosing for the purpose of representation on matters of labor relations. The act prohibits a public agency from, among other things, imposing or threatening to impose reprisals on employees, discriminating or threatening to discriminate against employees, or otherwise interfering with specified employee rights guaranteed by the act. This bill would require each public agency with bargaining unit vacancy rates exceeding 10% for more than 90 days within the past 180 days to meet and confer with a representative of the recognized employee organization to produce, publish, and implement a plan consisting of specified components to fill all vacant positions within the subsequent 180 days. The bill would require the public agency to present this plan during a public hearing to the governing legislative body and to publish the plan on its internet website for public review for at least one year. By imposing new duties on local public agencies, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program. The bill would also include findings that changes proposed by this bill address a matter of statewide concern. Last Amended: 3/11/2024</p>	
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4. Weakening the counties’ ability to manage their mental health programs while imposing new rules and mandates:

<p>SB 326 Jggman D</p> <p>The Behavioral Health services Act.</p>	<p>Senate Chaptered</p> <p>10/12/2023- Governor. Chaptered by Secretary of State. Chapter 790, Statutes of 2023.</p>	<p>Existing law, the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), an initiative measure enacted by the voters as Proposition 63 at the November 2, 2004, statewide general election, funds a system of county mental health plans for the provision of mental health services. Existing law authorizes the MHSA to be amended by a 2/3 vote of the Legislature if the amendments are consistent with and further the intent of the MHSA. Existing law authorizes the Legislature to add provisions to clarify procedures and terms of the MHSA by majority vote. If approved by the voters at the March 5, 2024, statewide primary election, this bill would recast the MHSA by, among other things, renaming it the Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA), expanding it to include treatment of substance use disorders, changing the county planning process, and expanding services for which counties and the state can use funds. The bill would revise the distribution of MHSA moneys, including allocating up to \$36,000,000 to the department for behavioral health workforce funding. The bill would authorize the department to require a county to implement specific evidence-based practices. This bill would require a county, for behavioral health services eligible for reimbursement pursuant to the federal Social Security Act, to submit the claims for reimbursement to the State Department of Health Care Services (the department) under specific circumstances. The bill would require counties to pursue reimbursement through various channels and would authorize the counties to report issues with managed care plans and insurers to the Department of Managed Health Care or the Department of Insurance. This bill contains other related provisions and other existing laws. Last Amended: 9/8/2023</p>	
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5. Legal impacts on agritourism: What if the cow pisses on the visitor?

<p>AB 2635 Irwin D</p> <p>California Agritourism Liability Act: agritourism civil liability.</p>	<p>Assembly Judiciary</p> <p>4/23/2024-In committee: Set, first hearing. Hearing canceled at the request of author.</p>	<p>Existing law provides for the direct marketing of agricultural products, including through certified farmers' markets. Existing law generally provides that everyone is responsible, not only for the result of their willful acts, but also for an injury occasioned to another by that person's want of ordinary care or skill in the management of their property or person, except as specified. This bill, the California Agritourism Liability Act, would define "agritourism activity" as an activity carried out on a farm, ranch, or rural land whose primary business activity is agriculture or ranching and that allows members of the general public to view, enjoy, and participate in rural activities, as provided. The bill would require an agritourism operator to include a warning notice on signs at the agritourism location, as specified. The bill would exempt an agritourism professional from civil liability for injury, loss, damage, or death of a participant of an agritourism activity resulting exclusively from an inherent risk of agritourism activity, as defined, unless the agritourism professional commits an act or omission that is grossly negligent or constitutes willful or wanton disregard for the safety of a participant, has actual knowledge or reasonably should have known of an existing dangerous condition on the land, facilities, or equipment, or dangerous propensity of a particular animal and does not make the danger known to a participant, or knowingly permits participants to use facilities or engage in agritourism activities while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. The bill would require the agritourism professional to plead the affirmative defense of assumption of the risk of agritourism activity. This bill contains other existing laws. Last Amended: 3/21/2024</p>	
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6 More taxpayer subsidies for wind energy:



<p>AB 2537 Addis D</p> <p>Energy: Voluntary Offshore Wind and Coastal Resources Protection Program: community capacity building grants.</p>	<p>Assembly Appropriations</p> <p>4/30/2024-Re-referred to Com. on APPR.</p>	<p>Existing law establishes the Voluntary Offshore Wind and Coastal Resources Protection Program, which is administered by the State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission for the purpose of supporting state activities that complement and are in furtherance of federal laws related to the development of offshore wind facilities. Existing law creates, and continuously appropriates moneys in, the Voluntary Offshore Wind and Coastal Resources Protection Fund for purposes of the program and the Private Donations Account, which is created in the fund. Existing law authorizes the commission to accept federal and private sector moneys for purposes of the program and requires the private sector moneys to be deposited into the account and the federal moneys to be deposited into the fund. Existing law authorizes the commission to allocate moneys in the fund or account for specified purposes, including workforce development grants. This bill would additionally authorize the commission to allocate moneys in the fund or account for capacity building grants within local communities and tribal communities to engage in the process of offshore wind energy development. By expanding the purposes for which continuously appropriated moneys may be allocated, the bill would make an appropriation. This bill would create the Offshore Wind Community Capacity Building Fund Grant Account in the fund, and would continuously appropriate the moneys in this account to the commission to award capacity building grants, thereby making an appropriation, as specified. The bill would require California offshore wind leaseholders to provide financial assistance to fund those grants for the 3-year period after the leaseholder executes an offshore wind lease, as provided. The bill would require the commission to annually prepare and submit a report to the Legislature on the implementation and effectiveness of those grants. The bill would require the commission to develop guidelines for the use of those grant moneys, and would require the guidelines to be subject to review and revision every 3 years. Last Amended: 4/29/2024</p>	<p>Support</p>
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5. From the sublime to the trivial:

<p>AB 3118 Wallis R</p> <p>Solar energy: official state energy.</p>	<p>Assembly U. & E.</p> <p>3/11/2024-Referred to Com. on U. & E.</p>	<p>Existing law establishes the state flag and the state’s emblems, including, among other things, the golden poppy as the official state flower, the California redwood as the official state tree, and the California gray whale as the official state marine mammal. This bill would establish solar energy as the official state energy. The bill would also make related findings and declarations.</p>	
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Item 22 - Introduction of the County of San Luis Obispo FY 2024-25 Recommended Budget. Budget hearings will begin on Monday, June 3, 2024, at 9:00 AM. There was the usual perfunctory presentation. The Board appeared to be in some form of torpor. There were no questions or comments. The presentation and document were received.

Usually the matter is completed in less than one day. The write-up states in part:

The Recommended Budget authorizes a Governmental Funds (core government services and programs funded by specific revenue sources) spending level of \$851.8 million, which is a \$6.8 million increase (0.80%) compared to the FY 2023-24 Adopted Budget.

It was originally forecast that there would be a revenue expenditure gap of \$22.3 million. This is now estimated at \$15.6 million. Various devices, such as not budgeting as many vacant positions, deferring some programs, some actual position reductions, applying less to reserves, and others are proposed to eliminate this problem. None of these seem to be particularly draconian.

COLAB will report back prior to the June 3, 2024 hearing.

Item 25 - Submittal of the FY 2023-24 Third Quarter Financial Status Report and request to approve various financial actions as detailed in Section 4 of Attachment 1 - FY 2023-24 Third Quarter Financial Report (one or more actions require 4/5 votes) and Annual Debt Report. Here, as in the item above the Board listened to the presentation but seeded listless and had no questions or comments other than to thank the staff for all their work.

Again, as we have pointed out in the past, these reports contain a great deal of detail, but provide no estimate of the status of the finances at close of the fiscal year on June 30, 2024. They have to have made a projection or they could not have completed the Proposed Fiscal Year 2024-25 Budget (See item 22 above).

It would appear that the Budget will close in the black, as the Auditor Controller forecasts a fund balance of \$44.3 million. The reader has to go to page 8 to even find the statement:

In preparation of the FY 2024-25 Recommended Budget, the Auditor-Controller-Treasurer-Tax Collector’s Office projected that the County’s General Fund would have a Fund Balance Available (FBA) of \$42.3 million at year-end, which is included as a funding source for the FY 2024-25 Recommended Budget. The FBA is the amount of money available at the end of one fiscal year for financing a portion of the budgetary requirements for the upcoming fiscal year. It is comprised of the unspent General Fund contingencies at the end of the year, plus any

remaining General Fund dollars unspent or not encumbered by the various County departments at year end. Unspent contingencies in the current year is the single largest driver of the FBA to fund the coming year's budget. **The Auditor-Controller Treasurer-Tax Collector's FBA estimate was based upon year end projections provided by individual departments.**

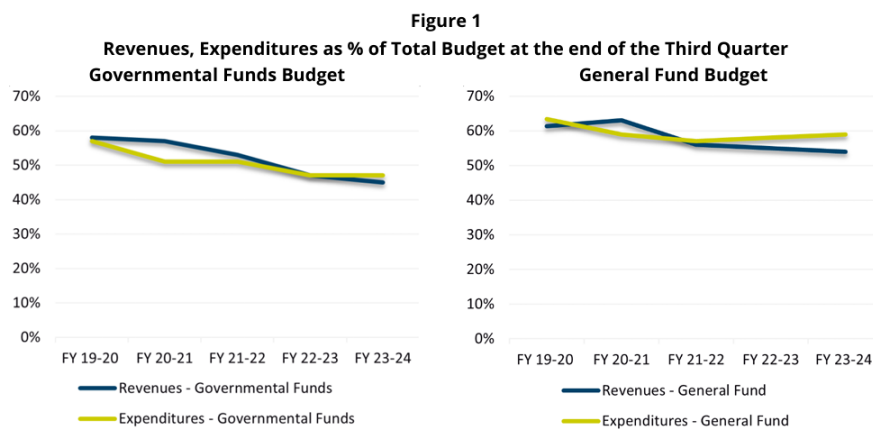
In a fuzzy closing paragraph, the Board letter states:

In the second quarter, it was estimated that there might be \$8 million net General Fund impact. Based on notable issues included in the attached report (Attachment 1), as of the end of the third quarter, it is anticipated that there might \$3.6 million net General Fund impact. Approval of the recommendations will allow for a total of \$363,164 in cash and gift card donations to be accepted on behalf of FC 132 – District Attorney, FC 137 – Health Agency – Animal Services, FC 139 – Probation, FC 180 – Social Services, FC 222 – Parks and Recreation – Community Parks, FC 305 – Parks and Recreation – Regional Parks, and FC 377 – Library. The Board is asked to relieve accountability for uncollectable debt in the amount of \$56,007 for FC 180 - Social Services. The Board is also asked to declare surplus and authorize disposal through public auction of six Central Services-Fleet vehicles for FC 407 – Fleet. Finally, the Board is asked to approve other miscellaneous budget adjustments totaling \$5,367,015. These miscellaneous adjustments include, among other transfers, \$1,760,904 from General Fund contingencies.

On the Boing 787 heading towards the High Sierra, you need to know your position, altitude, air speed, attitude, and when you will reach the Sierra. The County knows one thing at a time and is obsessed with the process. The Board letter contains lower level details about minor donations, position swaps, position reclassifications, and other minutia. The question of how we are doing is never comprehensively approached

The report always leads with a year over year table that compares the percentage of revenues and expenses for the current subject quarter with the same time during the prior year. See table below.

Figure 1 below shows the percentage of budgeted expense and revenue trends over the last five fiscal years for both the Governmental Funds Budget and the General Fund Budget.



It is likely that this is a device to show that things are running along normally. Differences in revenue are always explained as “timing issues,” and it is indicated that everything will be ok in the end.

This report should provide a June 30th revenue and expenditure estimate for:

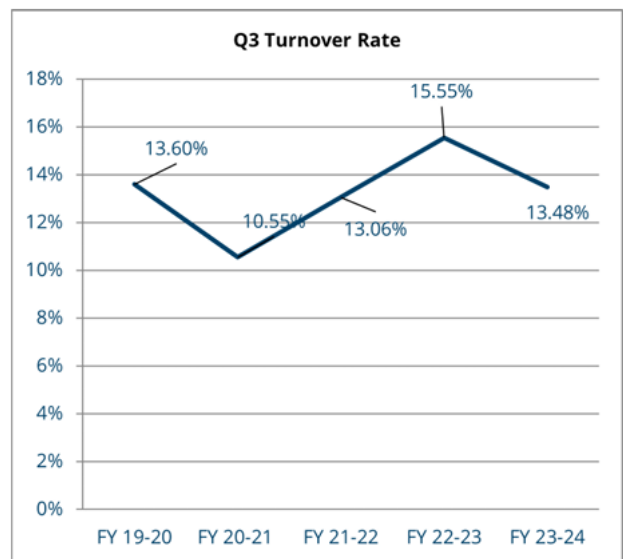
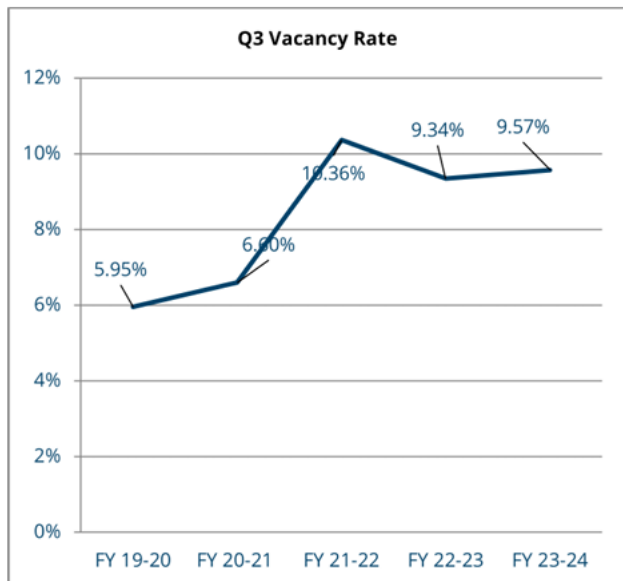
- The General Fund total.
- The Government Funds total.
- The All Funds total.

The County has edged closer to 3,000 employees.

SUMMARY OF POSITION ALLOCATION CHANGES

FY 2023-24	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Quarter Start	2,958.50	2,961.50	2,973.50	
FTE Additions	35.75*	88.00	30.50	
FTE Deletions	32.75	76.00	9.00	
Quarter End	2,961.50	2,973.50	2,995.00	
Net Change	3.00	12.00	21.50	
% Change	0.10%	0.41%	0.72%	

Staffing vacancy rates are still high.



The employee turnover rate also remains high. This seems strange, given the great pay, benefits, and hours. Anyone who attends regularly and studies can receive promotions over their career. During every Board meeting we are treated to a retirement ceremony during which the retiring employees gush over their careers with the County. Their colleagues express admiration and affection. Mentoring is often cited.

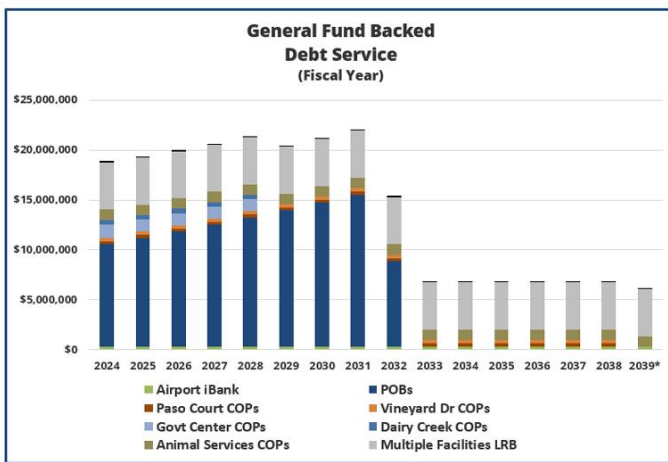
Annual Debt Report

The 3rd Quarter Report also contains a subsection presentation on the County’s overall debt status, which is useful information. This was an effective report by the Auditor Controller, which indicated that the County has low tax-backed debt but significant rate payer enterprise fund debt for water and sewer utility projects. Again, the Board listened to the report but did not interact or ask questions.

Attachment 6

Annual Debt Review

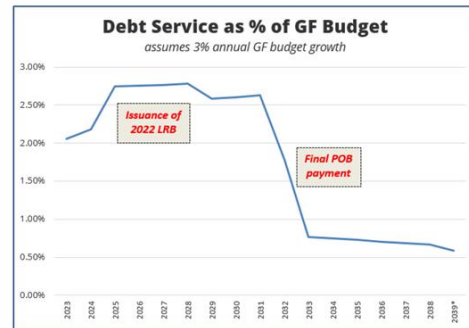
Debt Status - General Fund Backed



* After 2039 remaining debt is Airport Terminal (2046), Animal Services Facility (2045), 2022 Facilities (2048) and Oceano Drainage (2061)

~65% of outstanding debt matures in next 9 years

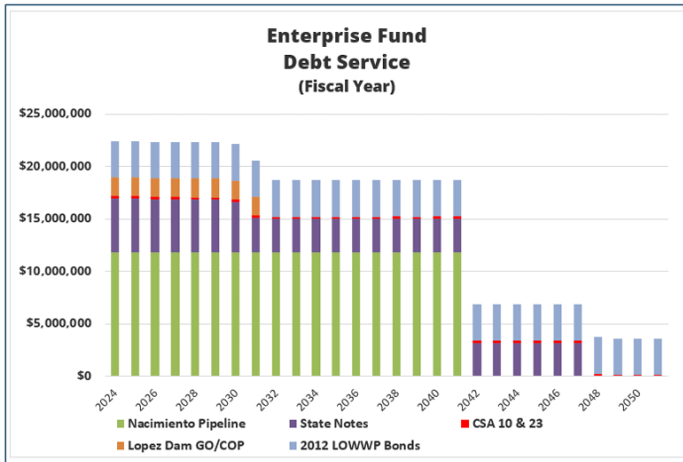
The utility debt is higher .



Issuance	Balance 6/30/23
2003 POBs	\$79,516,000
2007 Paso Courthouse COPs	\$3,205,000
2020B Vineyard Drive COPs	\$3,710,000
2022A (refunding) New Govt Center COPs	\$4,278,000
2022A (refunding) Dairy Creek COPs	\$1,582,000
2016 Airport Terminal - State iBank	\$5,233,000
2020A Animal Services Facility	\$15,060,000
2022A Co-Located Dispatch, Probation	\$62,220,000
2022B Cayucous Vets Hall	\$3,535,000
Total	\$178,339,000

Annual Debt Review

Debt Status – Enterprise Funds



Issue	Balance 6/30/23
2004 Lopez Rec Area – State DWR	\$20,000
2006 Lopez Water Treatment – State DWR	\$10,469,000
2007 Nacimiento – Rev Bonds	\$145,595,000
2009 CSA23 Water- COPS	\$1,344,000
2011 Lopez Dam – COPS	\$6,120,000
2011 Lopez Dam – GO Bonds	\$5,490,000
2012 Los Osos Wastewater – State DWR	\$70,212,000
2021 USDA Cayucous Water Tank	\$2,644,000
2021 Oceano Drainage USDA Loan	\$2,740,000
2012 Los Osos Wastewater - AB	\$69,437,000
2013 CSA10A Water - COPS	\$1,363,000
TOTAL	\$315,434,000

Enterprise debt service is provided by charges to users, contracting Cities and Special Districts

In FY 2022-23 \$38.5 million was paid off.

Annual Debt Review

Recent Debt Activities

➤ \$38.5M scheduled debt service paid (FY2022-23)

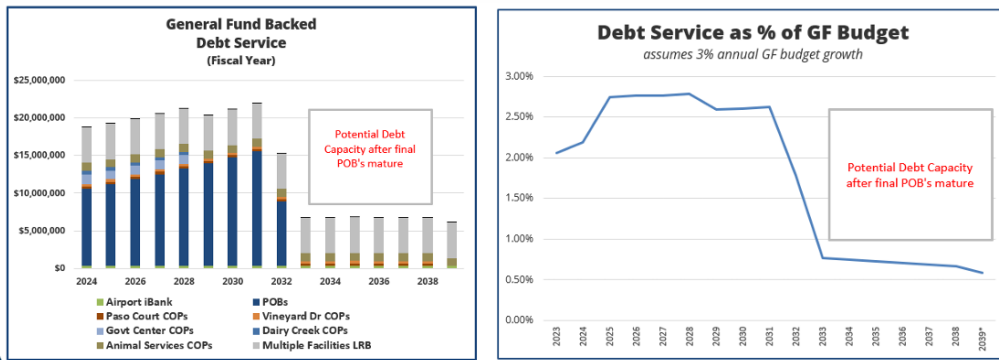
Debt Issue	FY 2022-23 Principal & Interest Paid
Governmental COPS /LRBs Paso Courthouse, Vineyard Drive, New Govt Center, Airport Terminal, Animal Services Facility, Co-Located Dispatch/Probation/Cayucos Vets Rehab	\$5.0M
Pension Obligation Bonds	\$10.2M
State Notes California Energy Commission energy conservation projects	\$176k
Enterprise COPS CSA23 water system, Lopez Dam remediation, Dairy Creek Golf Course , CSA10A water system	\$1.7M
Enterprise State Notes Cayucos water treatment, Lopez water systems, Los Osos Wastewater	\$5.3M
Enterprise Revenue Bonds Nacimiento pipeline	\$11.8M
Enterprise GO and Assessment Bonds Lopez Dam remediation, Los Osos wastewater	\$4.3M
TOTAL	\$38.5M

In 2035, the Pension Bonds will be paid off, offering the opportunity for the County to invest in capital improvements.

Annual Debt Review Debt Outlook - Looking ahead

Debt Advisory Committee
 DAC proposal will be prepared jointly with PW, Admin, and ACTTC

Financing Plan might explore concept of aligning debt issuance timing around future "debt capacity"



The County enjoys high debt ratings from the independent rating agencies.

Annual Debt Review Recent Debt Activities

➤ 5 rating reviews conducted since last update

Rating Agency	Issue	Current Rating	Rating type
FitchRatings	SLO County Default Rating	AAA	Annual review (2023)
	SLO County POBs	AA+	Annual review (2023)
	2007B, 2015A, 2018A Nacimiento Revenue Bonds	A+	Annual review (2023)
S&P Global Ratings	2022A and B Capital Projects LRBs	AA+	Rated with issuance
	SLO County LRBs and COPs	AA+	Reaffirmed during 2022LRB rating
	SLO County POBs	AAA	
	2011A Lopez Dam Refunding Revenue Bonds	A	Annual review (2023)
	2018A Nacimiento Revenue Bonds	A+	Annual review (2024)

The report did not address the long term unfunded pension obligations, as these were already presented to the Board earlier in the year. Some County officials do not count these as real debt, since they are amortized over long periods. On the other hand, during financial downturns, the payments by the County could savage the budget. Accordingly, they should be presented here as context.

In the long term, the current system of California State and local government is not sustainable, as current and long range obligations grow exponentially faster than the economy that supports them. Thus, we see the constant clamor by officials for more taxes, fees, assessments, and Federal largess.

SLO Air Pollution Control District (APCD) Meeting of Wednesday, May 15, 2024 (Completed)

Item B.2 - Joint Scientific Advisory Group and APCD update on Oceano Dunes mitigation efforts under Stipulated Order of Abatement #17-01. The detailed report demonstrated significant progress that the APCD and the State Parks Department have achieved in reducing PM10 and PM2 particles in blowing sand. The last report, in 2023, also demonstrated significant reductions in the generation of the dunes dust.

The goal for dust reduction has now been set to be equal to or lower than that which was occurring in 1938. Positively, this has been achieved, per the table below:

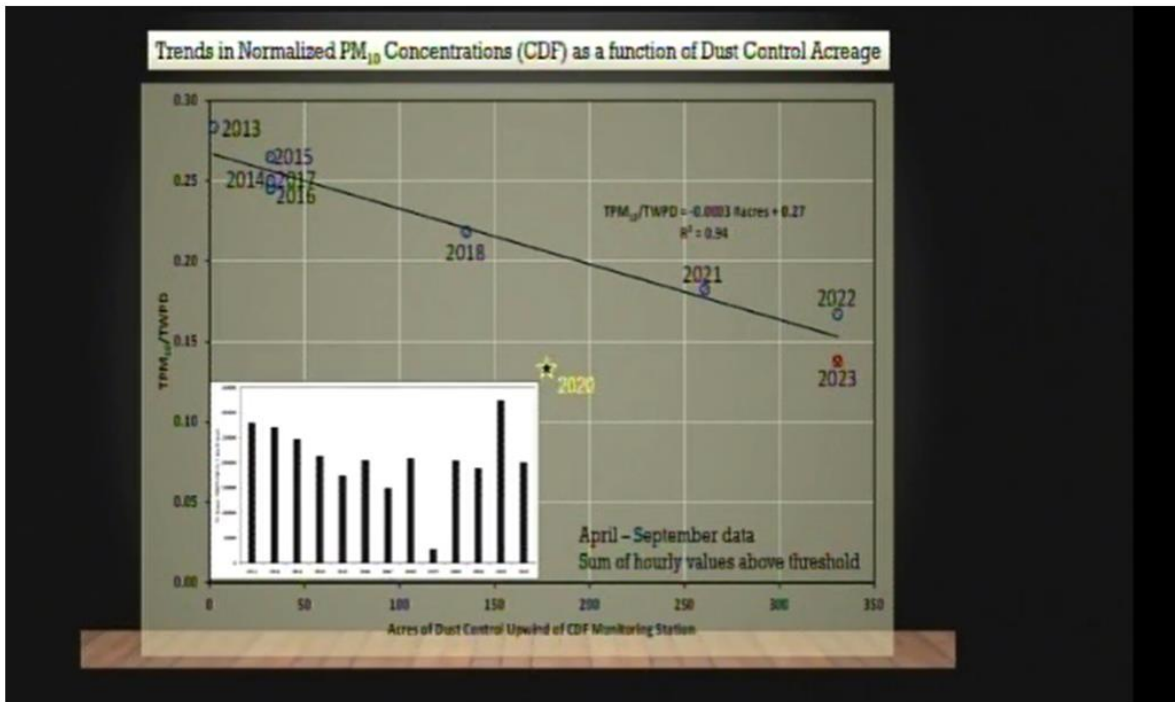
Zone	Total Emissions metric tons/day (10 Highest Emissivity Days May 2013)
1939	
Non Riding Area Central	127
Non Riding Area North	20
Non Riding Area South	24
Total	166
Current	
Foredune Restoration Area	1
Non Riding Area Central	18
Non Riding Area North	16
Non Riding Area South	16
Flower Enclosure	4
Riding Area Central-North	30
Riding Area Central-South	63
Seasonal Enclosure	1
Vegetation Islands	0
Revegetation	0
Total	148

As noted in the table to the left, the 1939 level was 166 mtc/day. The current level is 148 mtc/per day.

The Coastal Commission still wants to close the dunes to off road riding and free style camping. Last year the Commission began issuing the closure order. This was stopped in the Court in a legal suit by the Friends of the Dunes. In turn, the Coastal Commission has appealed the decision, which is now being processed through the Court of Appeals.

Supervisor Gibson still seems to want to have the area closed in spite of the progress. He keeps referring to the original APCD Rule 1001, which required greater reductions than the current version.

All this is peculiar. Why doesn't everyone just declare victory and move on? No one on the APCD Board asked this basic question.



Conclusions

- Multiple metrics all show continued improvement in air quality downwind of ODSVRA
- CDF more so than Mesa2
- Even as mitigation footprint remains constant
- 2024 looking good so far



Meanwhile and separately, the State Parks Department Division of Off Road Vehicle Riding had a separate hearing in Arroyo Grande, which hosted the same presentation that had been received by the APCD. Park using riders pointed out that the reductions have been achieved by severely limiting the amount of area available for riding and camping. This, in turn, has required State Parks to turn people away.

Background: There is no written report in advance. Accordingly, as expected, a verbal report took place with handouts and PowerPoint slides. The progress that the APCD and the State Parks Department have achieved in reducing PM10 and PM2 particles in blowing sand has been demonstrated. The last report in 2023 demonstrated significant reductions in the generation of the dunes dust.

Hopefully, the Coastal Commission will allow the process to go forward and will refrain from attempting to close the Park to off road riding and free style camping.

	Treated Area (acres)	Emissions (metric tons per day)	Percent of 2013 baseline
2013 Baseline Emissions	0	182.8	-
SOA 2 c Goal	TBD	91.4	50%
As of July 31, 2021	322.2	142.0	78%
As of July 31, 2022	705.6	108.2	59%

**Local Agency Formation Commission Meeting of Thursday, May 16, 2024
(Completed)**

Item B - 1 Municipal Service Review And Sphere Of Influence Study For Cambria Community Healthcare District. State law requires that LAFCO periodically review each county, city, community service district, and special district. They cover legal compliance, service quality, and finances. Essentially, the Cambria Health Care District provides ambulance service and some health education. The report indicates that it is performing well in all categories; however, its expenses have begun to outstrip its revenues in most fiscal years. This situation could ultimately result in a request to dissolve the district in the future and request for the Count to take over its functions in the future. This is a growing trend, as salaries, pensions, fuel, utilities, and other costs grow relentlessly faster than the underlying economy.

LAFCO determines that out of the three financial indicators used to determine the District's health, CCHD scored well on two of the three. CCHD's operating ratio and liquidity ratio exceeded the minimum of 1.0 for the latest FY 2022-2023. B-1-14 Exhibit B | Resolution No. 2024 - **Regarding the District's net position, the CCHD operated with a net deficit over the last five-year audited period; primarily related to pension liability and OPEB liability.** However, as noted, the District pays their annual contributions to Pension and OPEB liabilities to the State. The District is encouraged to continue its efforts towards pursuing a plan to offset the District's liabilities such as a Trust Fund.

EMERGENT ISSUES

Item 1 - California's Ban on Diesel Locomotives Could Have Major National Repercussions

No technology exists today to enable railroads to comply with the state's diktat, which villainizes a mode of transportation that is actually quite energy efficient.

VERONIQUE DE RUGY | 5.2.2024

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(DPST/Newscom)

American federalism is struggling. Federal rules are an overwhelming presence in every state government, and some states, due to their size or other leverage, can impose their own policies on much or all of the country. The problem has been made clearer by an under-the-radar plan to phase out diesel locomotives in California. If the federal government provides the state with a helping hand, it would bring nationwide repercussions for a vital, overlooked industry.

Various industry and advocacy groups are lining up against California's costly measure, calling on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to deny a waiver needed to fully implement it. In the past month, more than 30 leading conservative organizations and individuals, hundreds of state and local chambers of commerce, and the U.S. agricultural sector have pleaded with the EPA to help stop this piece of extremism from escaping one coastal state.

Railroads may not be something most Americans, whose attention is on their own cars and roads, think about often. But rail is the most basic infrastructure of interstate commerce, accounting for around 40 percent of long-distance ton-miles. It's also fairly clean, accounting for less than 1 percent of total U.S. emissions. Private companies, like Union Pacific in the West or CSX in the East, pay for their infrastructure and equipment. These facts haven't stopped the regulatory power grab.

Most importantly, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) regulation would have all freight trains operate in zero-emission configuration by 2035. At the end of the decade, the state is mandating the retirement of diesel locomotives 23 years or older, despite typically useful lives of over 40 years. Starting in 2030, new passenger locomotives must operate with zero emissions, with new engines for long-haul freight trains following by 2035. It limits locomotive idling and increases reporting requirements.

Given the interstate nature of railway operations, California needs the EPA to grant a waiver. If the agency agrees, the policy will inevitably affect the entire continental United States.

The kicker is that no technology exists today to enable railroads to comply with California's diktat, rendering the whole exercise fanciful at best.

The Wall Street Journal's editorial board explained last November that while Wabtec Corp. has introduced a pioneering advance in rail technology with the launch of the world's first battery-powered locomotive, the dream of a freight train fully powered by batteries remains elusive. The challenges of substituting diesel with batteries—primarily due to batteries' substantial weight and volume—make it an impractical solution for long-haul trains. Additionally, the risk of battery overheating and potential explosions, which can emit harmful gases, is a significant safety concern. As the editorial noted, "Even if the technology for zero-emission locomotives eventually arrives, railroads will have to test them over many years to guarantee their safety."

The cost-benefit analysis is woefully unfavorable to the forced displacement of diesel locomotives. To "help" the transition, beginning in 2026, CARB will force all railroads operating in California to deposit dollars into an escrow account managed by the state and frozen for the explicit pursuit of the green agenda. For large railroads, this figure will be a staggering \$1.6 billion per year, whereas some smaller railroads will pay up to \$5 million.

Many of these smaller companies have signaled that they will simply go out of business. For the large railroads, the requirement will lock up about 20 percent of annual spending, money typically used for maintenance and safety improvements.

Transportation is the largest source of U.S. emissions, yet railroads' contribution amounts to not much more than a rounding error. The industry cites its efficiency improvements over time, allowing railroads today to move a ton of freight more than 500 miles on a single gallon of diesel. Its expensive machines, which last between 30 to 50 years and are retrofitted throughout their life cycles, are about 75 percent more efficient than long-haul trucks that carry a comparative amount of freight.

As Patricia Patnode of the Competitive Enterprise Institute, which signed the aforementioned letter to the EPA, recently remarked, "Rather than abolish diesel trains, CARB should stand in awe of these marvels of energy-efficient transportation."

President Joe Biden talks a lot about trains, but his actions since taking office have consistently punished the private companies we should value far more than state-supported Amtrak. In this case, EPA Administrator Michael Regan and the White House need not think too hard. They should wait for reality to catch up before imposing on the rest of us one state's demands and ambitions.

Reason, May 2, 2024 VERONIQUE DE RUGY is a contributing editor at Reason. She is a senior research fellow at the Mercatus Center at George Mason University.

Item 2 - Nebraska & 16 Other States Sue California Over Zero-Emissions Trucking Mandates



Truck on highway in Bakersfield, CA. (Photo: Clari Massimiliano, Shutterstock)

Nebraska & 16 Other States Sue California Over Zero-Emissions Trucking Mandates - *States hope to halt California's EV trucking regulations*

By Evan Symon, May 14, 2024

In a lawsuit filed on Monday, Nebraska and 16 other states sued the State of California over their "Advanced Clean Fleet" electric vehicle (EV) truck mandates, including laws where only new

zero-emissions trucks would be sold in California beginning in 2035 and where only zero emissions trucks would be on California roads by the 2040s.

The lawsuit dates back to last year, when the California Air Resources Board (CARB) began enacting clean fleet regulations. In 2023 CARB announced that the sale of all new diesel big rig trucks and buses will be banned in the state of California starting in 2036, similar to the state's new gas-powered car sale ban that is currently set for 2035. In addition to the 2036 sales ban on new diesel trucks and buses, CARB also announced that all trucks in California must be zero-emissions by 2042. Under these new regulations, also known as the Advanced Clean Fleets rule, CARB aimed to achieve a total zero-emissions truck and bus fleet by 2045, as well as have at least 1.6 million zero-emission medium- and heavy-duty trucks operating in the state by 2048.

These new rules were met with heavy opposition. In October, the California Trucking Association (CTA) sued the state over the Advanced Clean Fleet rules. However, the suit did little to halt the advancing laws. That's when other states began to grow upset. As some of the deadlines, including the 2027 deadline where all medium- and heavy-duty vehicles acquired by state and local governments must be emissions free, come into view, states found that California could have more power over national usage. As 30% of all U.S. vehicle imports come through California ports, California's electric trucking mandates essentially mean that they are for the entire country as well.

This led to the Nebraska led lawsuit announcement Monday, with 16 other states backing Nebraska up. The suit, filed in the Eastern District of California, charges both CARB Executive Officer Dr. Steven Cliff and California Attorney General Rob Bonta that the Advanced Clean Fleet regulations would go over federal law, disrupt supply chains across the country, not be able to handle higher payload capacities, and would harm all states that didn't have such mandates since so many trucking routes were California based.

In addition to the California suit, Nebraska and 23 other states also sued the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) over a new rule passed in March which directs that 30% of heavy duty trucks in the U.S. have to be electric by 2032.

“If the electric vehicle trucking mandates aren't stopped, Nebraskans will pay the price,” said Nebraska Attorney General Mike Hilgers on Monday. “About 30% of U.S. imports arrive in California. This rule will be far too costly for consumers. These things don't have the same kind of range; they can't take the same kind of payload capacity. We know that those costs would flow through to customers. It would have a devastating impact on Nebraska businesses and Nebraska customers.

“California and an unaccountable EPA are trying to transform our national trucking industry and supply chain infrastructure. This effort—coming at a time of heightened inflation and with an already-strained electrical grid—will devastate the trucking and logistics industry, raise prices for customers, and impact untold number of jobs across Nebraska and the country. Neither

California nor the EPA has the constitutional power to dictate these nationwide rules to Americans.”

“We feed the world, we save the planet,” Nebraska Governor Jim Pillen said. “The ports up and down California — you’re going to tell us we can’t get our product to the ports? It’s beyond comprehension.”

17 states challenge California

The 17 states in the suit, State of Nebraska v. Cliff, also zeroed in on the Advanced Clean Fleets regulations in the suit, pointing out that the regulations “Masquerade as a rule for in-state conduct. But by leveraging California’s large population and access to international ports on the West Coast, Advanced Clean Fleets exports its in-state ban nationwide, creating harms which are certain to reach Plaintiffs’ States.”

“The regulations will force trucks to retire their internal combustion-powered engines because California will not allow them on the state’s roads. With California’s international ports being a hub for much of the nation’s imports, they could disrupt the supply chain, slow transport of goods, and raise prices. While California can regulate emissions, they cannot regulate the emissions of vehicles moving from state-to-state without the approval of Congress under the Congressional Commerce Clause.”

To stop the Californian policies from influencing nationwide regulations and commerce, the 17 states want the implementation of California’s Advanced Clean Fleets regulations to be halted. In addition, they also want an injunction so that California cannot have any of the regulations enforceable during the trial.

As of Tuesday, neither Bonta or Cliff have yet to comment on the Nebraska suit. However, trucking and legal experts have said that the Nebraska suit will likely have a real chance of moving forward, which is currently leaving many Californian lawmakers and environmental advocates on edge.

“The Nebraska lawsuit makes a lot of excellent points,” explained Simon Bernard, a trucking advocate who works with many trucking and shipping companies on logistics and fleet issues, to the Globe on Tuesday. “A lot of similar lawsuits in the past didn’t tie in commerce so much or what the effects of having so many vehicles come through California really are.”

“This, as well as the EPA lawsuit, also shows just how not ready most states are when it comes to electric vehicles and how unsatisfied many are with the current limits of large electric trucks. They hold a lot less, the range is greatly reduced, and the battery charging times are much higher. Short haul, especially with small trucks, it could work. But, as the suit points out, this is connected to something mass scale and the readiness is not even close.” “And this could backfire now too, with California’s regulations now being on the line. It will be interesting to hear what CARB and Bonta will say, because, until Monday, they only ever had some state groups challenge this, not a coalition of states taking on them and the EPA.”

Attorney General Bonta and the California Air Resources Board are expected to make statements on the lawsuit soon.

Evan V. Symon is the Senior Editor for the California Globe. Prior to the Globe, he reported for the Pasadena Independent, the Cleveland Plain Dealer, and was head of the Personal Experiences section at Cracked. He can be reached at evan@californiaglobe.com. Spread the news:Cal Globe , May 14, 2024.

Item 3 - Ringside: Only Unity Can Challenge Environmentalism, Inc.

California has only 5.0 percent of its land housing 94.2 percent of its population,

By Edward Ring, May 16, 2024

The California Environmental Quality Act was passed by the state legislature in 1971. At that time, it was the first legislation of its kind in the nation, if not the world. Its original intent was to “inform government decision makers and the public about the potential environmental effects of proposed activities and to prevent significant, avoidable environmental damage.”

Over the past half-century, however, CEQA has acquired layers of legislative updates and precedent setting court rulings, warping it into a beast that denies clarity to developers and derails projects. When projects do make it through the CEQA gauntlet, the price of passage adds punitive costs in time and money. Knowing this will happen deters countless investors and developers from even trying to complete a project in the state.

On May 8 the Little Hoover Commission, an independent state oversight agency, submitted to the governor its recommendations for how CEQA might be revised. Because the Little Hoover Commission is taken seriously by state policymakers, the recommendations are more incremental than might be advisable if policymakers took seriously their obligation to make California’s economy work for everyone, but in most respects what they’re recommending are steps in the right direction.

Good ideas from the commission included a provision to limit delaying tactics, since delaying a project often is enough to kill a project, as well as stricter standards for who has so-called standing to file a CEQA lawsuit. Anyone who has gone through a CEQA process appreciates the value of these two reforms. The commission also recommended the legislature add clarity to CEQA language to take some of the burden of interpretation away from the courts and litigants, and they recommended the state “establish clear parameters for significance thresholds and for analysis and mitigation of impacts.” Easier said than done, fraught with potential to just make matters worse, but we have to try. So far, so good.

Where the commission made a grave error was in carving out an exemption for “infill housing.” If CEQA must exist, there shouldn’t be any exemptions. Every special interest needs to jump through the same hoops. That might actually stimulate unity across California’s productive economic sectors as to what CEQA should and shouldn’t do. As it was, in the four lengthy public hearings held last spring, the only industry that showed up in force were the home builders. For

the most part, these hearings were dominated by the usual suspects, professional and semi-professional activists representing environmentalist and social justice causes.

One may also wonder why “infill,” whereby every spare scrap of empty land “within existing development patterns” has to be turned into high density housing, is the optimal use of that land or a desirable housing strategy. The imposition of growth boundaries around California’s cities is perhaps the single biggest cause of a housing shortage and high prices, and its justification contradicts obvious facts. California is the most urbanized state in America, with only 5.0 percent of its land housing 94.2 percent of its population.

To share a fact that can’t be repeated often enough, you could move 10 million people into homes on quarter-acre lots, four per household, with an equal amount of land allocated for roads, parks, schools, and retail, commercial and industrial zoning, and you would only increase California’s urban footprint from 7,779 square miles to 9,702 square miles. That is, in this vast state which encompasses 155,779 square miles, you could move 10 million people into so-called sprawling suburbs and you would only increase the urban footprint of the state from 5.0 percent to 6.2 percent. The claim that we need to protect open space from suburban sprawl, heard incessantly from environmentalists, is completely unfounded.

But this is the restrictive mentality that dominates Sacramento’s politicians and the state bureaucracy. Adherence requires imposing scarcity on everything that might make California a more affordable, productive and welcoming state. To enforce scarcity, CEQA is just one of the bigger tools among many. Whether it’s the California Air Resources Board, CalGEM, Cal EPA, the Dept. of Water Resources, the Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, the Coastal Commission, or the Public Utilities Commission, their intent is unambiguous and implacable. Scarcity in all things: energy, water, transportation, housing.

CEQA reform is past-due. But incremental changes that will just accelerate Sacramento’s plan to move millions of people into low-rise apartments built on demolished single family homes is not a pleasant future, irrespective of the pretty renderings presented at planning department meetings by subsidy-guzzling developers armed with calculations of how much carbon they’ll save by cramming people into smaller and smaller spaces.

One proposal to overhaul CEQA was filed by Stephen Hilton last year and cleared for signature gathering. Among other things, it would have restricted CEQA lawsuits to county district attorneys and capped impact fees. That could have been settled law by January 2024 if voters had a chance to vote on it in November, but the deadline for signature gathering just expired on 5/13. Prospective donors knew what support for this initiative would have meant: nuclear war against Environmentalism, Inc.

But these non-incremental proposals are what is needed to save California for working families.

Why do we have CEQA at all, when there are so many other state and federal laws designed to protect the environment? More generally, what is it going to take to mount a serious challenge to

the environmental movement in California that has captured our institutions to impose a misanthropic and extreme version of environmentalism on the population?

What is missing today is unity between industrial interests and wealthy individuals who recognize what is happening in California and are prepared to fight, dollar for dollar, for as many decades as it takes, against a political machine that has forgotten that people come first. To do that, they have to stop playing defense, and come together to identify common threats and combine resources to fight for solutions that work for everyone.

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).

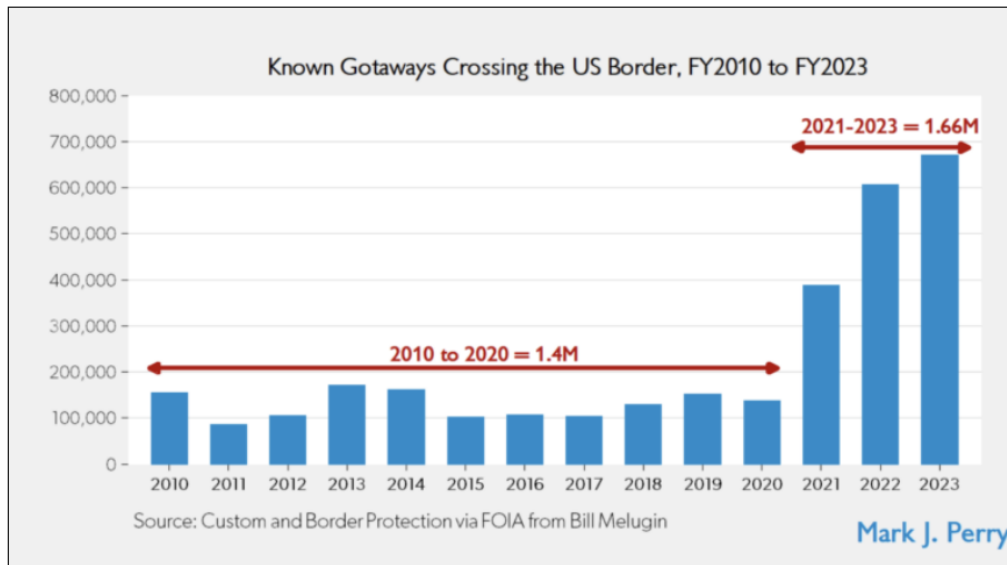
Item 4 – Border Getaways – Jump under current regime.

POSTED ON MAY 16, 2024 BY [STEVEN HAYWARD](#) IN [THE DAILY CHART](#)

THE DAILY CHART: BORDER GETAWAYS

With some Democratic Senators up for re-election running ads attacking President Biden over our open border (both John Tester of Montana and Sherrod Brown of Ohio say they “have fought President Biden over the border” in TV spots), there are rumors that Biden is [considering an executive order](#) that would shut the southern border every day after 4,000 people have crossed. What a tough guy! It’s amazing how Democratic presidents suddenly discover new executive power they didn’t know existed when they get in political trouble. It certainly sets up some easy ripostes from Trump when and if the debates actually happen.

Apparently this is the [first time](#) the data on “gotaways” has been broken out and compiled. Our pal Mark Perry put it in graphic form so dramatize just how uncontrolled the border has become under Biden.



COLAB IN DEPTH

IN FIGHTING THE TROUBLESOME LOCAL DAY-TO-DAY ASSAULTS ON OUR FREEDOM AND PROPERTY, IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT TO KEEP IN MIND THE LARGER UNDERLYING IDEOLOGICAL, POLITICAL, AND ECONOMIC CAUSES

TAKING BACK CALIFORNIA – PART THREE: FIGHTING CRIME

CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATES IN CALIFORNIA HAVE A CHANCE TO WIN OVER VOTERS WHO WON'T RESPOND TO A HARSHER "LOCK THEM ALL UP" MESSAGE

BY EDWARD RING

In recent years, California's become a target for conservatives around the rest of the country who claim it is the prime example of a deep blue state where crime is out of control. This isn't entirely deserved, since blue cities across the U.S. cope with similar, if not worse, levels of violent crime and property crime. The issue of rising crime is nonetheless one of the biggest ones of concern to California's voters and for good reason.

As crime rates rise in California, law enforcement is hindered by laws that tie their hands and budget cuts that deplete their resources. Crime statistics, alarming enough as officially released, are probably understated as victims no longer bother to report them. Smash-and-grab robberies by organized gangs routinely make headline news. Retail theft, afflicting businesses already coping with online competition, has forced the closure of countless stores and threatens to push California's downtowns into an economic doom loop. The problem of homeless encampments is more visible and more problematic than ever.

The reasons Californians confront a multifaceted onslaught of lawlessness and chaos can't be traced to any single cause. Background conditions play a major role. The state has become one of the most difficult places to earn a living wage, thanks to a legislatively engineered epidemic of scarcity and high prices for every essential, including food, fuel, and housing. At the same time, the state has become one of the easiest places to be homeless—which is not to say being homeless is easy—thanks to the mildest weather in the U.S., a legislatively engineered lack of laws to control vagrancy, drug use, and petty theft, along with a massive Homeless Industrial Complex that won't collect billions of dollars per year anymore if the problem is ever solved.

But the direct and explicit causes of California's crime and homelessness epidemics are known, as are the solutions. At the top of this list is the need to repeal the notorious Prop. 47, sold to voters in 2014 as a compassionate way to give nonviolent offenders a second chance by downgrading drug and property crimes. Proposition 47 has led to what police derisively refer to

as “catch and release,” because suspects are only issued citations with a court date and let go. With respect to the homeless, passage of this initiative has made it a waste of time for police to arrest anyone for openly using illegal drugs or for petty theft (defined as stealing items worth less than \$950 per day). Only very serious crimes are still investigated.

Reducing crime and homelessness in California also requires judicial changes. A ruling by the 9th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals in the case Martin v. Boise held that cities cannot enforce anti-camping ordinances if they do not have enough homeless shelter beds. This case and similar ones (ref. Jones v City of Los Angeles) have made it almost impossible to get the homeless off the streets. The situation is made much worse because the definition of “shelter” has been opportunistically conflated into insanely expensive “permanent supportive housing” that California’s taxpayers are now spending over \$500,000 per unit to construct, to the delight of participating politically connected developers and nonprofits.

Finally, a primary cause of California’s crime wave are district attorneys, who consistently favor criminals over victims. There are several of these district attorneys active in California counties, the most notorious among them being Chesa Boudin in San Francisco and George Gascon in Los Angeles. But here is where hope begins. Boudin was recalled by voters in San Francisco in 2022, and Gascon is in a tight race for reelection this November in Los Angeles. Voter sentiment in California is changing. Maybe they’ve finally had enough.

A big test of just how much voter sentiment is changing will come if a proposition to repeal Prop. 47 qualifies for the state ballot, which is likely. Another reason for hope is the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision to reconsider Martin v. Boise, with a ruling expected later this year. A trifecta, then, might see Californians entering 2025 with Prop. 47 repealed, the criminal-friendly George Gascon no longer serving as district attorney in a county of 9.7 million people, and a new U.S. Supreme Court decision that makes it easier to get homeless people off the street and into shelters.

Regardless of what happens in this year’s election and at the U.S. Supreme Court, most Californian voters still need to be convinced that law and order is achievable without violating the dignity and human rights of all concerned. Only with a cultural shift can current and future reforms be sustained. There are three things that conservatives should keep in mind as they consider what message and tone to share with voters on the issues of crime and homelessness.

First, if a conservative candidate or incumbent is unwavering in their commitment to a realistic agenda to reduce crime, there is no harm in acknowledging that criminals themselves are victims. Nobody chooses their parents, their genes, or the society they’re born into. Early childhood trauma can damage a developing brain for life. There is no harm in expressing this fact, and doing so is a better way to attract undecided voters than taking on a punitive tone. One of the reasons crime-friendly district attorneys have been able to attract major donations and win elections is because they have seized the rhetorical high ground of compassion. It’s helpful to expose the hideous results of progressive “compassion,” but that job is much easier when the perpetrators of these failed policies cannot hide behind the shield of compassion. Conservatives

must emphasize that they also have compassion, but that compassion comes with obligations. Sometimes genuine compassion seems cruel, but results matter.

Which brings up a second point that conservative candidates should emphasize: deterrence matters. This fact comes with a crucial nuance. It turns out that criminals are not deterred by the severity of punishment nearly as much as they are deterred by the certainty of punishment. In California today, criminals have almost no fear of punishment. The laws aren't in place to make it likely they'll ever be held accountable, and either there aren't enough police to arrest them anyway or police who operate on limited resources are unwilling to spend time on yet another "catch and release" case. If California's laws and prosecutors were reoriented to a high probability of convictions with sentencing, crime rates would drop overnight.

Finally, the entire concept of incarceration needs to be revisited. I recall a retired sheriff once telling me about an encounter he had with an ex-con who had recently been released. The ex-con confronted the sheriff, who had made the original arrest that sent him to prison. But then something unexpected happened. He explained that while in prison, he earned a high school diploma, learned a vocation that accounted for his current employment, and had been cured of his drug addiction. Prison was the best thing that ever happened to this young man.

A related story came from someone who spent most of his career helping homeless people. He operated a private shelter that put conditions on entry, unlike government-funded shelters. To get admitted, the homeless person had to commit to sobriety, counseling, and job training. The program is successful and could be expanded if government funding were available. More to the point, this man and every other professional homeless advocate operating privately funded shelters have shared the same conclusion—homeless people are almost all substance abusers or mentally ill, or both. Whether that's the cause or the effect of their homeless status is irrelevant. They need to be compelled into shelters where they can get treatment and recover their dignity.

If Californians begin to reform their laws, recall their crime-friendly DAs, and get some help from the U.S. Supreme Court this year, then the overwhelming question going forward is how to come up with innovative new forms of incarceration. The number of incarcerated individuals may not go up as much as statistics currently indicate. Crime is deterred by the certainty of punishment, not by the severity of the sentence. California's homeless population includes a high percentage of individuals who would find housing with family or friends if they knew they were going to have to go to a shelter and stay sober.

By expressing these three concepts—compassion, deterrence, and rehabilitative modes of incarceration—conservative candidates in California have a chance to win over voters who won't respond to a harsher "lock them all up" message. Adding this nuance costs nothing and, in fact, can pave the way for a productive discussion over the cost/benefit of differing modes of incarceration.

For example, if inmates are sequestered to Cal Fire to work the fire lines, why can't they do other tasks throughout the rural regions of California? Why not use inmates to improve rural

access roads, remove dead trees from our overgrown forests, or even work in agriculture? Why can't homeless people also have these opportunities?

As for the possible need to expand California's capacity to absorb minimum security inmates and recovering substance abusers, why not equip new facilities with the latest robotic and surveillance technologies, not to eliminate them but at least to reduce the need for guards and fences? The amount of money that is currently spent to allegedly help the homeless in California could easily pay for shelters—voluntary and involuntary—established in less expensive parts of the state, with plenty of money left over for counseling, job training, and treatment.

Californians can reduce crime without having to invest hundreds of billions of dollars. It can be done by redirecting money that is currently wasted and by political and judicial reforms that change the rules and create deterrence. It can be done with compassion for everyone concerned and deliver results everyone wants. This is the message conservatives can carry in California all the way to victory in upcoming elections now and in the future.

Edward Ring is a senior fellow of the Center for American Greatness. He is also the director of water and energy policy for the California Policy Center, which he co-founded in 2013 and served as its first president. Ring is the author of Fixing California: Abundance, Pragmatism, Optimism (2021) and The Abundance Choice: Our Fight for More Water in California (2022). American Greatness, May 15, 2024.

ADDENDUM A
SEE NEXT PAGE

Monday, June 3, 2024

9:00 a.m.

County Administrative Officer's Overview of the
FY 2024-25 Recommended Budget Hearing Schedule

Public Comment for Items not related to the Budget Hearing

Overall Budget

Presentation on the overall Budget

Public Comment on Overall Budget

Land Based Budgets

Fund Center	Department	Budget Book Page Number	Supplemental Budget Page Number
141	Agricultural Commissioner	127	
142	Planning and Building	135	18
405	Public Works	143	
430	Public Works - Los Osos Wastewater System	155	
248	Public Works - Road Impact Fees	160	
245	Public Works - Roads	163	25
201	Public Works - Public Works Special Services	173	
205	Groundwater Sustainability	179	
	Special Districts	Special Districts Budget	

Public Comment on Land Based Budgets

Public Protection Budgets

Fund Center	Department	Budget Book Page Number	Supplemental Budget Page Number
138	Administrative Office - Emergency Services	188	
140	County Fire	196	
143	Court Operations	203	
132	District Attorney	206	
131	Grand Jury	214	
137	Health Agency - Animal Services	217	
139	Probation	222	16-17
135	Public Defender	234	
130	Public Works - Waste Management	238	
136	Sheriff-Coroner	244	14, 15, and 21
335	Public works - Solid Waste Management	256	

Monday, June 3, 2024

9:00 a.m.

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Public Comment on Land Based Budgets

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**BUDGET HEARING SCHEDULE
FY 2024-25 RECOMMENDED BUDGET**

Public Comment on Public Protection Budgets			
Health and Human Services Budgets			
Fund Center	Department	Budget Book Page Number	Supplemental Budget Page Number
106	Contributions to Other Agencies	261	
134	Child Support Services	265	
166	Health Agency - Behavioral Health	270	20
375	Health Agency - Driving Under the Influence	281	
351	Health Agency - Emergency Medical Services	284	
160	Health Agency - Public Health	287	19
184	Sheriff-Coroner - Law Enforcement Health Care	301	
180	Social Services - Administration	306	21, 22, and 23
182	Social Services - CalWORKS	315	
181	Social Services - Foster Care and Adoptions	318	
185	Social Services - General Assistance	322	
290	Social services - Homeless Services and Affordable Housing	325	
186	Veterans Services	332	24
Public Comment on Health and Human Services Budgets			
Community Services Budgets			
Fund Center	Department	Budget Book Page Number	Supplemental Budget Page Number
425	Airports	340	
331	Fish and Game	349	
377	Library	352	
222	Parks and Recreation - Community Parks	358	
427	Parks and Recreation - Golf Courses	365	
305	Parks and Recreation - Regional Parks	371	
215	UC Cooperative Extension	376	
330	Wildlife and Grazing	382	
Public Comment on Community Services			
Fiscal and Administrative Budgets			
Fund Center	Department	Budget Book Page Number	Supplemental Budget Page Number
104	Administrative Office	386	
119	Administrative Office - Communications and Outreach	393	
109	Assessor	399	
117	Auditor-Controller Treasurer-Tax Collector Public Administrator	406	
100	Board of Supervisors	416	
110	Clerk-Recorder	419	

**BUDGET HEARING SCHEDULE
FY 2024-25 RECOMMENDED BUDGET**

Tuesday, June 4, 2024 9:00 a.m.
Items on the Hearing Schedule not heard on Monday due to time restrictions
Public Comment on items on the Hearing Schedule not heard on Monday's calendar due to time restrictions
Wednesday, June 5, 2024 9:00 a.m.
Items on the Hearing Schedule not heard on Tuesday due to time restrictions
Public Comment on items on the Hearing Schedule not heard on Monday's calendar due to time restrictions
Adoption of the FY 2024-25 Recommended Budget
Public Comment on adoption of the FY 2024-25 Recommended Budget
ADJOURNMENT



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NATIONAL RADIO AND TV COMMENTATOR HIGH HEWITT AT COLAB DINNER



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