



COLAB
San Luis Obispo County

The Coalition of Labor Agriculture and Business

Weekly Update
December 21, 2025



**Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to all of our
COLAB members and friends.**

This is our last newsletter of 2025. Our next edition will be out on Jan 5, 2026

The December 16 San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors meeting had a dense agenda of action items to address on their last meeting of 2025.

In addition to the Board meeting being the last of the year, it was also the last for Supervisor Ortiz-Legg as Chair of the Board. Supervisor Paulding will take the gavel on January 6, 2026 for the first meeting of the new year.

We thank Ortiz-Legg for the respect and patience she has shown to all types of speakers and wish Paulding the best as he assumes the Chair.

Keeping the meeting running on schedule, putting up with sometimes desperate and other times rude and/or disorganized speakers, while keeping track of motions and rules of order along with exercising personal restraint so as to avoid dominating the proceedings with one's own opinions and remarks is a challenge. Always appreciated when done well and deeply missed when not.

Audit leads to Tune Up

The KPMG audit of the Planning and Building department has resulted in several significant recommendations for changes in procedures. Item 32 on the agenda was a report from the auditing firm. The report's findings began with strengths found in the department as are illustrated here:

Commendations

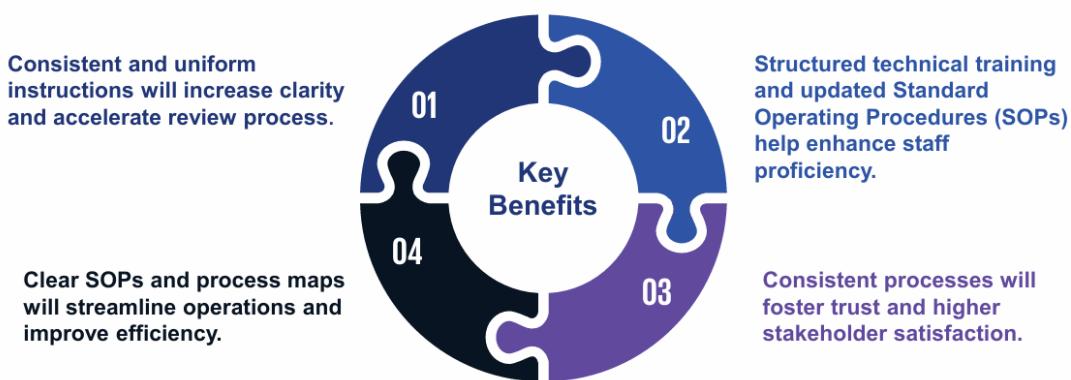


01	Enhanced Data and Dashboarding	
02	Strong Cross-Training Program Planners and permit technicians are cross-trained in building inspections, enhancing their understanding of the processes and broadening their experience.	
03	Permit Center Coordination: The Department has recently updated the permit center to foster cohesive collaboration, integrating both planning and building staff for a more robust and efficient operation.	
04	Demonstrated Commitment to Mission Staff demonstrated a deep commitment to mission and serving the community while stakeholders note that management is responsive in addressing challenges as they occur.	

Recommendations for increased performance are found in the following five KPMG slides:

Process Standardization, Documentation, and Training

Create standardized policies and procedures, and establish a formal technical training program to maintain consistency and provide clear guidance.



Increasing Cross-Departmental Collaboration

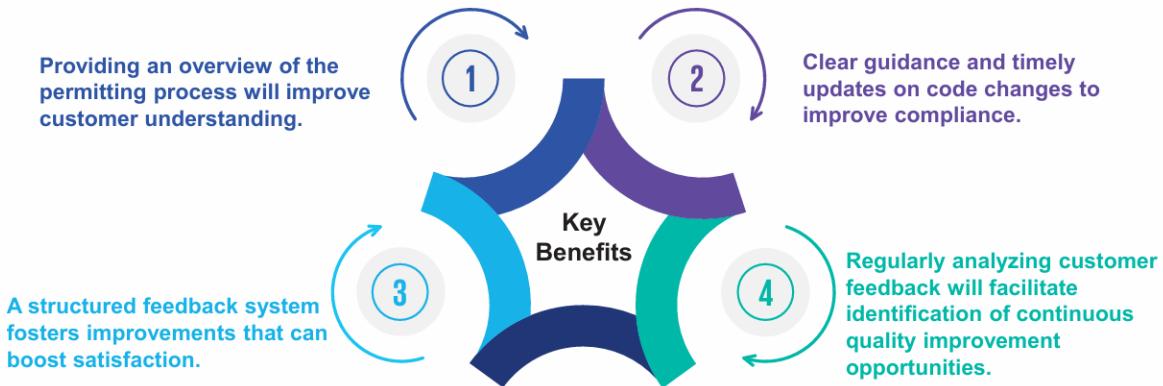
Enhance collaboration with complementary departments by implementing consistent use of shared systems for permit reviews, increasing coordination with cross-departmental finance teams, and offering a more unified approach to the permit center.

Key Benefits

- 1 **Improved efficiency**
Streamlined processes and shared electronic systems will reduce manual tasks and support faster permit reviews.
- 2 **Enhanced communication**
Instituting kickoff meetings and improving cross-departmental coordination will support alignment from project outset.
- 3 **Enhanced customer satisfaction**
A unified permit center will provide customers with consistent and accurate information.
- 4 **Reduced errors and redundancies**
Leveraging shared systems may decrease duplication and opportunity for error.

Enhancing Customer Expectations and Feedback

Create an online development guide and develop a process for communicating updates while implementing a feedback system to gather insights and drive continuous improvement.



Improving Communication with Applicants

Enhance the Planning and Building review processes by implementing meetings with applicants to discuss requirements in detail and provide clear guidance for applications requiring multiple reviews.

Key Benefits



Alignment on requirements will reduce confusion.

Streamlined processes will shorten review timelines.



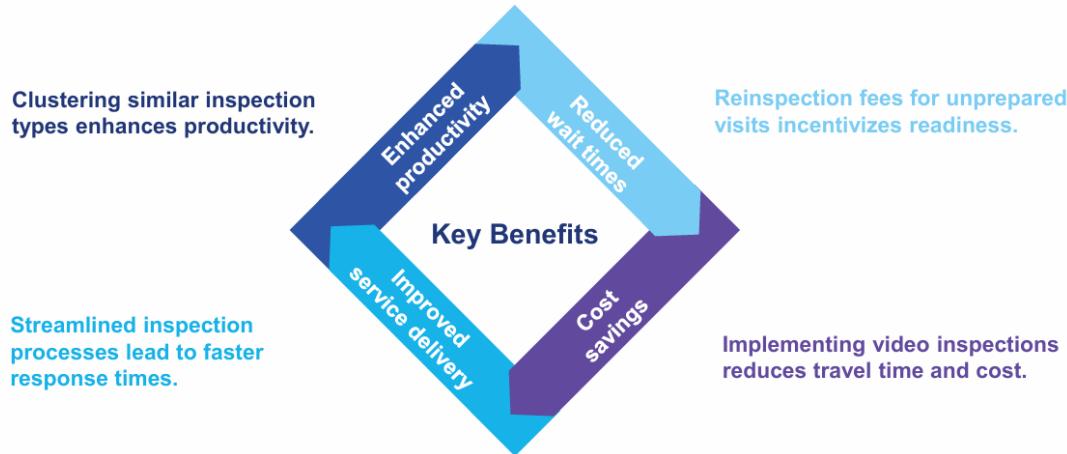
Clear communication will enhance customer satisfaction.



Meetings with applicants will address issues quickly and enhance efficiency.

Increasing Building Inspections Efficiency

Cluster similar inspection type visits, implement video inspections where possible, and establish reinspection fees for unprepared visits.



Following the KPMG report, the department made a presentation that incorporated many of the recommended changes that have already been put in place or will be soon.

The Department is addressing our Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) by establishing the numbers in each category needed in order to meet the needs.

RHNA Objectives

The County's quantified housing objectives for the 2019–2028 planning period are as follows:

- Very Low-Income: 801 units
- Low-Income: 505 units
- Moderate-Income: 585 units
- Above Moderate-Income: 1,365 units

The Department is prioritizing a series of projects that it believes will assist in meeting the RHNA numbers. The following three charts illustrate just the tier one projects:

Tier 1 Priority Projects

Recommended Tier 1 Board Projects	FY2026 Q3	FY2026 Q4	FY2026 Q1	FY2026 Q2
Annual Minor Ordinance Amendment Package	BOS hearing			
Safety Element Update and Implementation	BOS hearing	Implementation (Evacuation mapping)	Target completion	
Los Osos Community Plan Implementation	Water conservation program update		Growth rate setting	
Los Osos Habitat Conservation Plan Implementation	Ongoing			
Next RHNA Cycle Coordination and Housing Element Update	RHNA distribution methodology setting			

Sea Level Rise Plan Preparation	Existing policies and programs review		Stakeholder and agency collaboration	Grant application process
Housing Element Implementation – Action 1 (Encourage Multi-Family Dwelling Development)	CCC certification process		Target completion	
Housing Element Implementation – Action 2 (Develop Strategic Housing Incentive Program)	Implementation	SLO Council of Governments Agreement	PC hearing (Coastal Zone only)	BOS hearing (Coastal Zone only)
Housing Element Implementation – Action 3 (Preserve Housing Stock)	On pause until further Board direction			
Housing Element Implementation – Action 4 (Encourage Accessory Dwelling Development)	CCC certification process		PC hearing (Coastal Zone SB-9)	BOS hearing (Coastal Zone SB-9)

Housing Element Implementation – Action 5 (Expand Density Bonus Program)	CCC certification process		Target completion	
Housing Element Implementation – Action 6 (Update Nipomo Community Plan)	Community engagement	PC hearing	BOS hearing	Implementation
Housing Element Implementation – Action 7 (Streamline Permit Processing)	BOS Study Sessions for project scoping		Community engagement	Project scope finalization
Housing Element Implementation – Action 8 (Amend Land Use Categories)	BOS Study Sessions for project scoping		Community engagement	Project scope finalization
Housing Element Implementation – Action 9 (Align Infrastructure, Funding, and Resource Goals with Housing Goals)	Affordable housing grant process alignment and Countywide Public Facilities Fee Study support			

As discussion covering the many steps that the Department is undertaking to improve outcomes, the idea of a study session came to light. The concept seemed popular among all the Supervisors. However, it soon became clear that the subject matter would need to be somewhat limited to ways the Department could better serve the public, and avoid tangential topics that could send the whole process down a rabbit hole.

For instance, Supervisor Gibson brought up the question of whether policy development for vacation rentals could also be covered in the study session. He pointed out that if half of the vacation rental properties in the county could be converted to permanent housing, much of our housing shortage could be addressed. Discussion quickly devolved to vacancy taxes, where second homes not permanently serving as primary residences would be taxed at a higher rate than full time residences. Finally, it became apparent that such an issue might overshadow the main proceedings of a study session and the decision was made to stick to the quality-of-service topic.

Exactly how a house currently serving as a vacation rental would be “converted” to a full-time residence was not covered. The difference in revenue for the landlord apparently isn’t of concern to the folks trying to convert other peoples’ properties. It seems it isn’t just Other Peoples’ Money that gets squandered, now we have to worry about other peoples’ property.

As the presentation was finishing, Supervisor Paulding brought one of his “pet peeves” that he wished could be addressed. He noted that several user groups throughout the county parks have grown to understand “our culture of austerity” and have privately fundraised for pickleball courts. He went on to suggest that those groups should be afforded a fast track for any projects that require permits.

No mention of people that are trying to build a home and are making payments on a vacant lot while watching construction costs increase each week and each month that they wait for a permit. No mention of someone trying to create a business and losing money each week and each month that they wait for a permit. No mention of the employees of that business waiting to begin drawing a paycheck when the permit is finally granted. No mention of the contractor, sitting with an idle crew waiting for a permit.

By golly, we really should take care of the pickle ballers before working on “other” people’s pesky permits!

This is the kind of attitude that average people find so very offensive. It’s who you know – not what you know. Its rules for thee – not for me. It’s special treatment for those that send off the right virtue signals to the special people.

Whether it’s Bruce Gibson feeling no shame for hiring his wife or Jimmy Paulding asking that pickle ballers be put in the front of the permit line, we are witnessing a twisted form of rationalization by people who are perfectly comfortable arbitrarily using their position to subjectively pick winners and losers.

And, with a \$1 billion annual budget, how can anyone say we are living in a culture of austerity? We may not be in a position to throw money at frivolous items, but we should have sufficient funding to cover our basic needs and priorities. For most, pickleball is not a high priority. Living within your means and exercising a little fiscal restraint does not equate to austerity. The comment is an insult to those who really do live in true austerity.

Dam Possibilities

Does San Luis Obispo County want to assume the liability for the Salinas River Dam? This is a question that may be recurring for the next year or two as a feasibility study is conducted.

The Salinas River Dam was built by the War Department in 1941-42 in a rushed project to supply water to camp San Luis Obispo. However, the final component of the dam, a steel spillway gate, was never installed. Without the gate, capacity is down by about half of the original anticipated capacity.

The dam is now owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (“USACE”) who jointly holds water rights permits with the City of San Luis Obispo through the County of San Luis Obispo Flood Control and Water Conservation District. USACE leases the Dam to the District for its operation and maintenance, which includes water delivery to the city.

The reservoir behind the dam is known as Santa Margarita Lake.

USACE has been evaluating options for removing the Dam from their books, including transferring ownership to a local agency such as the District. Such a transfer is an opportunity to secure existing and/or additional water supplies to address needs in the County of San Luis Obispo.

In order to evaluate the transfer, a feasibility analysis of dam ownership, condition, and retrofit/improvement (“Feasibility Study”) would be required.

The State of California has provided a grant to the District in the amount of \$500,000 (“State Grant”) to partially fund the Feasibility Study.



The Salinas Dam was built start to finish in six months.

Item 20 on the agenda was a request to accept the grant and further fund the feasibility study. The measure reads as follows:

Request to: 1) approve and execute a 2-year professional consultant services contract with Tetra Tech BAS, Inc., in an amount not to exceed \$1,175,884, to develop a Salinas Dam Feasibility Study; 2) authorize the Director of Public Works, or designee, to approve amendments to the contract in an amount not to exceed a contingency of \$117,855, and to execute extensions for good cause and to delete scope, provided County Counsel approves said amendments as to form and legal effect; and 3) approve A) a Reimbursement Agreement between the City of San Luis Obispo and the San Luis Obispo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District for a portion of the cost to develop the Salinas Dam Feasibility Study, and B) a corresponding budget adjustment for FC 450 - San Luis Obispo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District for an amount up to \$600,000 using reimbursement revenue, by 4/5 vote.

Supervisor Peschong noted that he, along with several county officials, has been working with USACE for 10 years trying to get them to update structural concerns

and explore installing a spillway gate. He suggested that USACE should follow through with their efforts and also indicated that maintaining the dam could create an enormous liability for the county.

Four other Supervisors saw no harm in conducting the study and the motion passed 4-1.

Restorative Justice

Almost anytime the word justice is part of a social term, like environmental justice or economic justice, it usually calls for an injustice where some people are held accountable for other people's wrong doings just to provide a benefit to a group of folks who may or may not be actual victims of said wrongdoings.

This is clearly not the case with one of the early items on the agenda which was a "Request to 1) approve a six-month extension of the one-year Restorative Justice conferencing (RJC) for adult probationers pilot program operated by Restorative Partners to increase rehabilitation, reduce recidivism, and increase victim satisfaction".

This innovative pilot program is funded through the District Attorney from 2011 Public Safety Realignment (AB 109) funding.

District Attorney Dan Dow spoke of the success of the program in reducing repeat offender crimes while giving crime victims some satisfaction that their plight is not being ignored. The program requires participation from both the offender and the victim. Results of the pilot program are listed below:

Results have been modified to include a more comprehensive and detailed analysis of projected results after the restart of the program. Successful implementation of Adult RJC Program Pilot in San Luis Obispo County is anticipated to lead to the following results:

1. Of referrals received by Restorative Partners from the Probation Department, at least 70% will complete an intake assessment.
2. Of those assessed for RJC by Restorative Partners, at least 50% will participate in at least one Restorative Justice Practice, including a Restorative Conference, family mediation, pre-conference meeting, or the creation and completion of an amends agreement.
3. Of those assessed for RJC by Restorative Partners, at least 20% will complete a Restorative Conference between the referred individual and the harmed party with their support participants, or a community representative to be provided by Restorative Partners.
4. Among program participants, both harmed parties and those who caused harm, maintain a 75% satisfaction rating.

The motion passed unanimously.

Out with the Old – In with the Same Old?

For San Luis Obispo County, 2025 was a pivotal year. Casual observers may not have noticed the significance, but the hire of Matt Pontes as the new County Administrative Officer (and later promoted to Chief Executive Officer) brought a level of structure, accountability and transparency that has been lacking for far too long.

Pontes immediately fortified the budget process which he called a “rebalancing and realignment effort”. That process trimmed a significant amount of fat from the budget and set in motion a series of audits that are continuing to increase productivity and transparency while reducing inefficiencies. In other words, higher value to the taxpayer.

We face another challenging budget in 2026, but at least we are more prepared than we have been in the past.

A related major development in 2025 has been the careful look at service providers that contract with and/or depend on county funding. These are primarily in the Health and Human Services category and include homeless services, drug and

alcohol treatment and mental health practices. Many have had budget cuts and have needed to re-evaluate their programs as well as their funding sources.

In the category of tax revenue, SLO County voters will face at least one and possibly two sales tax measures in 2026. One, for a half-cent, is designated as a roads and transportation tax and put forth by SLOCOG will appear on the November ballot. The other, a one cent public safety tax for fire and sheriff services could also be on the same ballot. It's too early to tell, but many are wondering if our county voters have an appetite for tax increases.

Each member of the Board of Supervisors, and the Board as a whole, has repeatedly stressed that service providers need to find private supplemental funding and internal efficiencies.

Offshore wind energy continues to die by a thousand cuts. Offshore leases are in question as the Trump Administration reevaluates their future. Vistra, the company that was planning to construct a battery storage facility has announced that it does not anticipate continuing with the project.

If the prospect of offshore energy production has diminished considerably, the issue has not. The local grassroots group React has grown stronger and more organized as the battle has gone on. Now they are behind John Woody, a local Civil Engineer, who is running to fill the Bruce Gibson Supervisorial seat. Many perceive Jim Dantona, the candidate endorsed by Gibson, to be the front runner. However, others question whether Dantona's close association with Gibson will help or hurt. Dantona is taking a job on Gibson's staff in a controversial move that leaves many questioning the judgment of both Gibson and Dantona in what has become a growing discussion across party lines.

The other Supervisorial race is the reelection of Supervisor Paulding. The district is more red than blue, but Paulding has pursued a deeply blue agenda in his first term. Adam Verdin, a local business leader, is challenging and appears to be establishing a formidable campaign. Paulding is taking the reelection seriously and working hard on behalf of constituents. One of his biggest foibles is that he tries too hard to be

everything to everyone. His voting record aligns tightly with Gibson, but he wants to be seen as a centrist. Fundraising will play a key role.

It's impossible to predict just how, but the second half of 2026, once the winners from the June 2 Supervisors races are announced, could take on a very different tone. How will a lame duck Bruce Gibson conduct himself in his final dozen Board meetings? If Paulding is defeated, what will be his agenda for his final months? How will the current Board anticipate at least one, and possibly two new members?

The Paso Water Basin continues to be a contentious topic. The loss in a Prop. 218 vote signaled a deep lack of trust in the current leadership of the Paso Robles Groundwater Authority. Now PRAGA is casting about looking for alternative funding methods to continue its long record of spending millions of dollars doing practically nothing towards real sustainability. Watch for this issue to flare up again in 2026.

The cost of the pay to play deal that the California Coastal Commission extracted from PG&E for the extension of the permit for the Diablo Canyon Power Plant was high and restrictive. Of course, all of the "mitigation" costs associated with committing land for conservancy and creating a very generous endowment will be passed on to ratepayers. It will be fascinating (and probably a bit painful) to see how the deal impacts the cost of doing business for PG&E. At least we will have a more stable economic situation while the plant is in operation.

Aside from revenue, housing remains the sharpest thorn in the side of our Board of Supervisors. Every Supervisor claim to be for housing. Everybody realizes that the housing market has too few homes available and too high a demand. Further, lower cost housing is at a critical shortage. This all means that it's very difficult for lower income people, middle income families and even higher income professionals to be able to afford to live in San Luis Obispo County. It explains why restaurants can't find enough personnel and why we have so few medical professionals.

However, as demonstrated in the recent Dana Reserve permit vote, Supervisors Paulding and Gibson seem to have an entirely different approach to encouraging

housing. They both voted no, and Gibson went so far as to try to involve County Council in private matters with the developer in an attempt to quash the project.

The challenge of attracting housing construction will not diminish in 2026 and could become even more complicated as new state mandates take effect. The Board of Supervisors keep talking, but they will continue to struggle to find ways to walk the talk.

Finally, 2026 is a big election year for our state. Each of our statewide constitutional offices are up for election, with the Governors race being the headliner. So far, the primary field is chock full of candidates with no clear frontrunner for either party. The primary election will be important to establish the nominee from each party, but the “Top Two” system could easily result in a general election runoff between two Democrats, leaving Republicans out of the November Governors race. Will any candidate from either side become a coalescing force, or will the races cause division?

For COLAB SLO, 2025 was a big year as we congratulated Mike Brown on his well-deserved retirement. We are glad to see him get to relax but miss him tremendously. Greg Haskin is enjoying trying to fill a pair of very big shoes and looks forward to the trials and tribulations that 2026 is already presenting.

So, the new year will bring some exciting changes, but it will also drag along a few of the old ones that we would all be happy to see go away.

The COLAB Annual Dinner will take place on March 26 at the Madonna Inn

We will have an exciting speaker (to be announced shortly), great food, an open bar and an opportunity to mix and mingle with practically all of the movers and shakers in our community. Mark your calendars so that you don’t miss one of the biggest events of the year. We hope to see you there.

Last Week

The Truth about a Truth Forum

Maybe the kindest description is misplaced energy. We applaud people who are involved and participate in public discourse – even for causes in which we do not agree. However, the dozen or so people who presented well-rehearsed but extremely redundant remarks at the Dec 9 Board of Supervisors meeting were not only factually wrong, but their accusations were also insultingly slanderous.

It seems that somebody made the assumption that our Sheriff's office was shirking its responsibilities and essentially breaking the law by not holding what is referred to as a Truth Act forum. Such a community meeting is designed as a briefing of the Sheriff's interaction with ICE in review over the last year.

Accusations and insinuations flew, suggesting that the Sheriff's office was cooperating with ICE illegally, and hiding such interaction by not holding a Truth Act forum. This rant went on for the better part of an hour as one person after the next rambled on about these poor people being picked up by evil ICE agents. If listeners didn't know better, it could sound like innocent victims were being kidnapped rather than the real truth, which is that ICE is picking up criminals (really bad criminals) that have federal warrants. The truth is that our sheriff's office has stated dozens of times that it complies with state law which prohibits them from working with ICE except in the case of outstanding federal warrants. This is legal - and much appreciated by most.

After much wasted time listening to misguided and incorrect testimony, the real truth finally came out when the Under Sheriff was asked to respond by Supervisor Ortiz-Legg. As it turns out, a Truth Act forum has been on the schedule for weeks and will take place on January 27.

Frankly, we fail to see the inspiration in this cause. Accusing the Sheriff of breaking the law when he hasn't but going to such extremes to protect violent criminals including child predators, human traffickers, rapists and murderers seems like some sort of bad science fiction. The hours the organizers put in, the time invested by the speakers and the wasted hour for the Supervisors, staff and people with real business before the Board all could have been put to a much greater use.

Coastal Commission Squeezes Rate Payers Severely

The California Coastal Commission has approved the Coastal Zone Management Act Consistency Certification (CZMA) and Coastal Development Permit (CDP) for the Diablo Canyon Power Plant. This after two day-long hearings, Nov 6 and Dec 11, featuring testimony from elected officials, environmental groups, supporters and opponents.

The approval is the last step before or a five-year extension approval of permits from the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board. Concurrently, the federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission remains on track to make its final decision on the plant's reactor license renewal application in early 2026.

The approval was contingent on a great deal of "mitigation" by PG&E in the form of land conservancy and an endowment with properties surrounding the plant. The "mitigation" is supposedly meant to balance the plant's impact on the ocean through its cooling effluent. Interestingly, no compelling evidence was presented at either hearing establishing damage to the ocean or sea life from the plant. Several marine biology specialists testified that plant and animal life in the area was actually quite healthy and abundant.



Nevertheless, the commission insisted on the dedication of lands and an endowment of \$10 million for their upkeep before granting approval. The "deal" was quite

complicated and involves various rights and deeds being dedicated to conservation groups, along with consideration for Native American tribes.

Much of the “mitigation” efforts were driven by State Senator John Laird and supported by Assemblywoman Dawn Addis and Supervisor Bruce Gibson. We assume that their motivation was purely in the interest of committing the lands to open public access but were disappointed to hear each insist that the dedicated lands (and the \$10 million endowment) would not impact ratepayers. The PG&E representative at the hearing did confirm that all costs associated with the “mitigation” would be built into their rate structure. Further, Laird made a production of promising over \$100 million from state funds, somehow forgetting that those are taxpayer funds – and by the way, the state is currently upside down by \$18 billion.

The approved plan has two phases, and two sets of mitigations, The first phase is through 2030, with the second phase going beyond that date to possibly 2045. More mitigation is included if phase two goes into effect.

COLAB, along with some members, testified at both hearings in support of the permit extensions. We are pleased that PG&E was able to prevail with the Coastal Commission. And the land conservation is nice. However, both the process and the subsequent costs are troubling. Ultimately it all comes down to Other People’s Money, and plenty of it was spent in this process. The decision should have been based upon the real impact to the ocean and the real contribution to both the grid and to the economy by the Diablo plant. Not how much concession the land conservancy proponents could squeeze out of PG&E and its rate payers.

No Respect – No Shame

It turns out Supervisor Gibson isn’t as special as he thinks he is. The California Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) has ruled that actions such as a County Supervisor hiring his wife to serve on his staff at taxpayer expense is prohibited. Mrs. Gibson has resigned her position on her husband’s staff and apparently will forgo any pay that she may have earned.



That Gibson felt entitled to hire his wife in the first place is deeply troubling. Every staff member in San Luis Obispo County government is subject to nepotism and anti-favoritism rules. That Gibson believed he is exempt from those very same rules illustrates his lack of respect for the people who pay his salary with the expectation of exemplary leadership in return.



Supervisor Gibson's hiring of his wife at taxpayer expense was illegal.

Even if Gibson had found some special technicality loop hole that would have allowed him to legally hire his wife, it would have been in very poor taste and really bad judgment. While his heavy-handed politics and subjectivity are often a source of tension within county leadership, we doubt that even this serious rebuke will temper his insistence to have things his way.

Money We Don't Have



As we have been reporting in recent weeks, our County Budget is running at a significant shortfall, as is the California State Budget. And we all know those scoundrels in congress can't resist printing ever so much more money, so the Federal Budget has been running an obscenely growing deficit for decades.

It's impossible to say how this overspending will work out nationally, but we got a glimpse of the local impacts at the Dec. 9 Board of Supervisors meeting when several discussions came up about funding for SLO County service providers.

Item 31 on the agenda read as follows: Request to 1) Approve Homeless Services Oversight Council recommended funding allocations of Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention Program – Round 4 (\$1,270,298), and Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention Program – Round 5 (\$1,985,629), and Supplemental County General Fund Support (\$2,315,351); 2) Allocate the remainder of the Supplemental County General Funds (\$184,649) for Permanent Supporting Housing projects in FY2026/27 that will be negatively impacted from the new funding requirements from the 2025 HUD CoC Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).

Discussion included several examples of various programs working to cut costs and find efficiencies, but warning comments were made by each Supervisor that funding will be very tight in the new budget. Supervisor Paulding summed it up when he

suggested that some of the service providers around the county may need to explore consolidation to cut administrative costs.

More Budget Pressure

It's uncommon for agenda items at the Board of Supervisors to require a 4/5ths vote. On average, one item calling for such a majority vote may come up every two or three months. So, it seems quite unusual to have seven such items on the December 16 Board agenda.

The 4/5ths requirement kicks in when funds are requested outside of the existing budget.

The agenda items range from \$1,695,995 from the Airport Enterprise Fund Balance Available to Capital Outlay for a taxi way realignment at SLO Airport to \$361,447 to fund the local share of the Arroyo Grande Creek Levee Project. Most of these projects are important and play a key role in long-term maintenance or operations.



One request that stands out is for \$724,022 from the Paso Groundwater Basin Offset Credits Trust Fund (5911000013) to FC 142 for funding and associated appropriations to implement water conservation programs. Put forth by the Planning and Building Department. The measure will “allow the department to

continue to work with the Department of Groundwater Sustainability to ensure that any water conservation programs will be complementary to any other water resource efforts in the Paso Groundwater Basin area. County Counsel's Office has advised on these water conversation program efforts and have found such programs to be consistent with the objective of all applicable ordinances".

The department suggests that the funding will be applied to the "Paso Robles Groundwater Basin Offset Credits Trust Fund. The Trust Fund finances water-saving programs such as Cash for Grass, Plumbing Retrofit, and the Washer Rebate initiative.

It is not clear whether this proposed funding will address the points we covered last week regarding PRAGA's residual debt from the JPA fiasco, or the new (continued) consulting contract with the Hallmark Group out of Bakersfield, California.



Paso Robles Area Groundwater Authority

We will be disappointed if any of the requested funds are designated for such costs because the proposal language does not address those costs and would appear to be an obfuscation.

At any rate, the discussions about each of these spending measures will need to be guided by the simple question of whether the County can afford it. Not, will it be popular with voters and supporters, not whether it's a priority at the Party Headquarters or socially hip with certain interest groups.

Our county government is spending more than it is receiving in revenues. Early economic restraint could go a long way towards preventing economic catastrophe.

The Battle of the Dunes Continues

A new legal decision puts access to the Oceano Dunes for off-roading at risk. The Oceano Dunes State Park has 2.6 million visitors per year, making it one of the most popular state parks in California. The park is also ground zero for an endless battle between those who want to see access for off road vehicles preserved, and those who want it all shut down.



Last week, a Federal Court Judge in Los Angeles ruled that the State Parks violated the Endangered Species act by allowing off-roading. The endangered species in question is the Snowy Plover, a migratory shorebird that has been on the endangered list since 1993. The legal decision is a result of a case between the Oceano Dunes district of the California State Parks and the Center for Biological Diversity.



A Snowy Plover ponders off-roading.

This Federal Court ruling comes just five months after the California State Supreme Court ruled that attempts by the California Coastal Commission to ban off-roading at Pismo was an overreach of its authority.

The next steps are not spelled out in the ruling. The judge has directed the two parties to work out a plan going forward that does not further the endangerment of the Snowy Plover. Local environmentalists are already demanding that the County Supervisors revisit the Local Coastal Plan (LCP) and amend it to prohibit off-roading.

The Center for Biodiversity describes its mission as important “because diversity has intrinsic value, and because its loss impoverishes society, we work to secure a future for all species, great and small, hovering on the brink of extinction. We do so through science, law and creative media, with a focus on protecting the lands, waters and climate that species need to survive.”



Will this sign still be standing in a year?

The California State Parks has for many years maintained set aside areas for Snowy Plover habitat. Human interaction of any kind is strictly forbidden within these fenced off habitat areas. Apparently in the Federal case, evidence was introduced showing that some Snowy Plovers have been harmed or killed within the Dunes, which established the basis for the violation.

A 2020 study found that off-roading at the dunes contributes over \$500 million to the local economy. Fees from 2.6 million visitors also provide significant funding to the state parks system. Much of that funding goes towards ecological preservation programs within the state parks.

If the Center for Biological Diversity follows the actions of other similar ecology groups, it is likely that they will demand mitigation in the form of land conservation. They don't appear to be interested in preserving any aspect of off-roading, even if it is in fact one part of the diversity along the coast.

It seems unlikely that the Board of Supervisors will want to debate revising the current LCP. Supervisor Paulding's district is heavily impacted by the off-roading business. Already in a tough reelection battle, weighing in on this subject is a no win for him.

The California State Parks is inviting public comments on the issue. Comments can be directed to: comment@oceanoduneshcp.com .



The local organization that has led the battle to preserve access for off-roading access to the dunes since 2001 is the Friends of The Oceano Dunes. This all-volunteer organization has been effective in organizing and presenting compelling support for their cause. Their website can be found at: [News – Friends of Oceano Dunes](#) www.oceanodunes.org

This new chapter in the fight to preserve off-road access will be a complicated and at times frustrating process. We are pleased that there are well-prepared volunteers who are stepping up but would encourage anybody with a strong opinion on the subject to join in the dialogue.

Emergent Trends

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'Major Win' in State's Housing Lawsuit Against Huntington Beach

The California Dream is Driving Small Business Away

COLAB In Depth

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Top 50 Disasters Gov. Gavin Newsom Has Ushered into California: 2025 Edition

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Attorney General Bonta and Governor Newsom Announce 'Major Win' in State's Housing Lawsuit Against Huntington Beach

After extensive proceedings in the courts, the San Diego Superior Court sides with the state

By Megan Barth, December 20, 2025

This article has been updated to include comments from Huntington Beach Councilman, Chef Andrew Gruel.

California Attorney General Rob Bonta (D) announced on social media and in a press release that Huntington Beach has been ordered by the San Diego Superior Court "requiring the City of Huntington Beach to, among other things, adopt a housing element within 120 days and restricting the City's land use authority, effective immediately, until it does so". The City was required to submit a compliant housing element on October 15, 2021, more than four years ago. Today's

decision effectively puts an end to the City's policy of blocking affordable housing for its residents," the press release states.

On X and in a press release, Bonta ironically proclaimed that 'Huntington Beach is not above the law.' ,

"Huntington Beach is not above the law. Its leaders must comply with all our laws, including our state's housing laws. We remain fully committed to ensuring that Huntington Beach does its part to address our state's housing crisis. It has been squandering public money for far too long trying to shirk that responsibility," Bonta stated.

After extensive proceedings in the courts,

@CAGovernor @California_HCD and I have secured the relief that we sought all along. Huntington Beach has now been ordered to adopt a compliant housing element within 120 days.

Huntington Beach is not above the law.

Its leaders must comply with all our laws, including our state's housing laws.

In response to the State's lawsuit, the City of Huntington Beach filed a federal lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of the certain California housing laws. The City's lawsuit was dismissed by the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California, a three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit unanimously affirmed the district court's dismissal, and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit then denied the City's petition for rehearing en banc. The City has asked the U.S. Supreme Court to review the aforementioned rulings, and that request remains ongoing.

In response to Bonta's announcement, Huntington Beach City Councilman, Chef Andrew Gruel noted that building over 13,000 affordable housing units in Huntington Beach is "absurd," confirming that there is pending litigation.

But what about the liberal enclave of Marin County? They remain exempted (or above the law) due to Democrats' chicanery.

In 2023, The Globe reported on Marin County's exemption:

Huntington Beach is a charter city which has more local controls, exempting it from some state zoning laws, according to a panel of the California 4th District Court of Appeal.

The appeals court ruled in 2017 that charter cities like Huntington Beach can approve plans

that don't meet the state's housing requirements and can eliminate sites zoned for affordable housing. The state appealed the ruling.

The Department of Housing and Community Development reported in 2019 that most of California city's housing plans are in compliance, while 51 cities and counties were not, including Huntington Beach... and Selma, Orange Cove, Holtville, Lake County, Bradbury, Claremont, La Puente, Maywood, Montebello, Paramount, Rolling Hills, South El Monte, Westlake Village, Atwater... **while all Marin County cities were listed in compliance.**

That report is no longer available on the housing department website.

In addition to requiring the City to adopt a housing element within 120 days, the San Diego Superior Court ordered the following:

- The June 20, 2024 order finding that the City is out of compliance with the Housing Element Law remains effective for purposes of the penalty provisions of Gov. Code section 65585(l), which provides for escalating penalties after one year of non-compliance with a court order, culminating potentially in the appointment of a receiver.
- The City must fast track the review and approval of Builder's Remedy projects.
- The City must fast track the review and approval of projects that would have been entitled to by-right treatment if the City had adopted its draft housing element in 2023.
- The City cannot use existing land use policies to deny projects that would have been entitled to by-right treatment in its draft housing element.
- The City's permitting, rezoning, and subdivision authority is otherwise suspended for sites identified in its draft housing element.



Accessory Dweling Unit. (Photo: CA Dept. Housing and Community Development)

"Huntington Beach needs to end this pathetic NIMBY behavior," said Governor Gavin Newsom. "They are failing their own citizens by wasting time and money that could be used to create much-needed housing. No more excuses, you lost once again — it's time to get building."

"This decision once again reaffirms that no one is above the law, and Huntington Beach can no longer refuse to do its part to address California's crisis of housing affordability and homelessness," said HCD Director Gustavo Velasquez. "Charter cities are not exempt from state housing law, and the few bad actors who believe so need to stop looking for a way to avoid their responsibilities."



Gov. Newsom signs housing legislation. (Photo: x.com/GovPressOffice)

Chief Editor of the Globe Katy Grimes wrote in 2023:

Neither Marin County nor Huntington Beach should not be forced to comply with the state's one-size-fits-all housing mandates – even granny flats behind the main house. Cities and counties are much better suited to determine housing needs – and if they even want more housing built in their region. Water requirements, roads and bridges, are impacted, as are public schools, hospitals and medical facilities, and even grocery stores.

Even "affordable" housing is very expensive in California, and that is because of state and local zoning and permitting, making it progressively harder to construct new housing. The median home price in California is approximately \$800,000, more than double the national average of about \$350,000. To even build apartments in California, unit costs are also as high as \$800,000.

Adding to construction and housing costs is a new tax signed by Governor Newsom earlier this year.

As we reported:

A new Vehicle-Miles Traveled (VMT) housing tax was quietly buried in the recent budget housing bill package in Assembly Bill 130, the bill Newsom signed in June claiming he was reforming the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Holy Grail of environmental policy.

The Coalition for Affordable, Reliable, and Equitable (CARE) Housing warns that the tax will drive up housing costs, destroy jobs, and worsen the state's affordability crisis. The tax could reach \$324,000 per home or apartment – "a crushing burden that translates into the equivalent of a \$2.00 penalty for every extra mile driven over government-set driving limits," the coalition said.

Joining the warning from the coalition, Senator Tony Strickland (R-Huntington Beach) added:

"So much for Sacramento Democrats calling this the year of affordability as they snuck a Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) mandate into a budget bill, creating new hurdles for housing development by forcing developers to pay costly fees if projects are deemed to increase drive time. Ultimately, this provision will hike up construction costs and make housing even more expensive."

"At a time when Sacramento Democrats declare that California faces a severe housing shortage, this provision is counterproductive and will only worsen our housing and affordability crises."

"Housing is not a one-size-fits-all, and yet this is another attack on the way of life for families who choose to live in rural communities or away from high-density housing."

The California Dream is Driving Small Business Away

California's unemployment insurance debt to the federal government is now on the shoulders of the state's small business owners

By Diane Dixon, December 17, 2025

The California Legislature's high tax, high cost of living, anti-business climate continues to drive businesses large and small and many of their employees out of the state. Shockingly, the Democrat-led supermajority of elected representatives double down on costly regulatory policies and ignore the actual state of economic affairs in California. We have seen the direct negative impact on both large and small businesses, and on the everyday lives of families and workers whose jobs are disappearing, creating the nation's highest rate of unemployment.

California's unemployment rate stands at 5.5%, with more than 1 million people claiming unemployment. Orange County is faring slightly better than the state as a whole, with unemployment at 4.6%, but that is still too high. The fiscal cost of unemployment to the state budget is simple: higher unemployment means less State revenue and increased costs through unemployment checks. Welcome to the state's deficit — projected to be \$17.7 billion this year and \$35 billion by the 2027-28 fiscal year.

Small business owners across the state are being forced to bear the brunt of our deflating economic future. California's unemployment insurance debt to the federal government is now on the shoulders of the state's small business owners. Five years ago, California borrowed \$20 billion from the federal government because the state's Employment Development Department (EDD) didn't have enough money to pay a large number of claims during the COVID pandemic. With the principal reaching \$23.2 billion by the end of this year, and the state making no payments, the burden to pay this unemployment debt silently falls upon employers in the state. Why should employers have to repay the loans plus accrued interest when it was Sacramento that got us into this mess in the first place?

Another key example of the anti-business climate in California is the ongoing challenges posed by the Private Attorneys General Act (PAGA) to business owners. The original intent of PAGA was to allow employees to file lawsuits to recover civil penalties for Labor Code violations. However, this system quickly became a predatory tool for unscrupulous plaintiff attorneys filing nuisance suits against businesses. Despite reforms in 2024, I have taken multiple meetings with restaurant and small business owners from all across my district who are still experiencing significant issues with PAGA and who claim that the problem has gotten worse.

The number of lawsuits against employers has actually increased because bad-faith law firms saw that their success rate would drop. In response, plaintiff lawyers responded by filing more

cases. What never changed were the penalties themselves, which remain so severe and one-sided that even a single proven allegation can shut down a business by forcing it to pay the full legal costs for an entire class of workers. Avoiding court is not much better; arbitration meetings typically cost these businesses around \$150,000 to convene.

Restaurants, exceptionally low-margin businesses, feel this burden more than almost any other sector. Meal break premium penalties have become one of the most common triggers for litigation. State law requires a 30-minute meal break before the sixth hour of work begins. If a break is missed, begins even one minute late, is interrupted for any reason or ends early, the restaurant must pay the worker an additional hour of wages and can still be sued for the violation.

Even when employees voluntarily waive their breaks, the risk remains. Workers may sign a form stating they prefer to continue working instead of taking a meal period, yet lawsuits have been filed claiming these waivers were signed under coercion. Employers must then defend themselves against an allegation that is nearly impossible to disprove.

The most damaging aspect of PAGA, and an issue that Sacramento must address, is the absence of limits on legal fees. The result can be devastating. A restaurant in my district is currently being sued for \$100,000 even though video footage shows the employee leaving for lunch on time, but because the employee forgot to clock out, the manager had to manually adjust the timecard and now is being sued. The choice for the restaurant owner is to settle or go to court and then decide if they can stay in business and provide good jobs or raise prices to cover the cost of doing business in California. Any choice is a bad choice.

If Sacramento truly wants to become business and worker friendly, it must listen to local business owners and cut bureaucratic red tape. Only then will Orange County, and California, be able to fulfill the California dream. Let's make California affordable again.

Top 50 Disasters Gov. Gavin Newsom Has Ushered into California: 2025 Edition

Gavin Newsom is the French Laundry Governor

By Katy Grimes, December 17, 2025

This week the Globe reported on the newly released California State Auditor's report which depicts a devastating state of the state:

"The California State Auditor published a scalding report Friday that is an unvarnished indictment of Governor Gavin Newsom and his administration," the Globe reported Monday following the Auditor's new report. "The report should have everyone living in California horrified."

"The Auditor's report finds Gavin Newsom while in his final year as governor, has upended the state's financial structure, compromised public safety, and left the state's infrastructure in far worse condition."

So, California has many dangerously "High-Risk" state agencies with waste, fraud, abuse, or mismanagement present, and an \$18 Billion budget deficit... the makings of an unstable failed state.

California's budget problem is now significantly larger than anticipated – and the state is undeniably less prepared for downturns.

Headlines around the state provide titles for this failure:

OC Register: Costly incompetence: Audit uncovers more California mismanagement

USA Today: Gavin Newsom is no moderate. California's progressive failures are on him

Santa Monica Daily Press: Gavin Newsom's Fiscal Missteps: A \$12 Billion Hole in California's Budget

NY Post: How Gavin Newsom has failed California and set fire to his own political prospects

Washington Examiner: Gavin Newsom failed California. America, don't make the same mistake

As governor, Gavin Newsom prioritizes style over substance – his style over your substance. But remember that the emperor has no clothes, and the people he surrounds himself with won't tell him.

Remember when Gov. Newsom, who has presided over the exponential growth of hundreds of thousands of homeless drug addicts living on California streets, magically cleaned up San Francisco ahead of the arrival of Chinese President Xi Jinping and the Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit? Style over substance. The streets were suddenly shiny clean, devoid of the usual tents and encampments, piles of trash and filth, human excrement, and drug addled zombies. The sidewalks and the many businesses which have been rotting under the burden of the filth from homeless tent camps allowed by city officials, received a world-class cleaning – for the Chinese President, and not for the people who live there. Gavin Newsom is the French Laundry Governor. He would rule the country as tyrannically as he did California during three years of Covid lockdowns, and with the same, or worse, results.

This is a list of the top 50 crucial California issues, made worse by Gavin Newsom's bad policy decisions – it wasn't easy narrowing the list down to 50. Governor Newsom's failing California is reflected in this list of disastrous policy decisions:

1. Water rationing continues: How can California have a water crisis when the state borders the Pacific Ocean, and the Sierra Nevada mountain range, 400 miles north-south and 50 miles to 80 miles east–west, drains into more than 15 rivers, 6 lakes, and numerous creeks? The Sierra Nevada snowpack is the major source of water and a significant source of electric power generation in California.
2. Highest taxes in the nation: California ranks among worst in U.S. for high taxes. Gavin Newsom's state ranks in the bottom two for worst for individual taxes. Even with the highest taxes in the nation, Gov. Gavin Newsom is pushing a retroactive billionaire tax targeting the roughly 220 billionaires residing in California in 2025. Newsom and Democrats tried to pass legislation to force successful Californians to pay additional taxes

on wealth and income that has already been taxed – and vowed tax “avoidance” would not be allowed as California would tax them for the next ten years, despite what state they live in.

3. More than four million people left California for other states since the start of the century. 817,000 Californians left California in just 2022, and of those, more than 200,000 net migrants 25 or older, the bulk of whom had either four-year or associate degrees, while that cohort’s numbers surged in Nevada, Arizona, Texas, Florida and the Carolinas,” demographer Joel Kotkin recently reported. Thousands of businesses have fled to other states.
4. California’s crime problem: Gov. Newsom announced in 2020 he planned to close two state prisons – he has closed five – and all three state-run juvenile prisons. He also increased sentencing credits to allow inmates to leave prison more quickly, shortened parole to a maximum of two years, down from five years for felonies, and let ex-felons earn their way off supervision in just a year, or 18 months for sex offenders. Gov. Newsom made very clear his budget priorities in May by not funding voter-passed Proposition 36, and continuing to allow illegal immigrants receive taxpayer funded Medi-Cal.
5. All big cities in California are in decline under Gov. Newsom: Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco, Sacramento.
6. Teachers unions are striking. Again.
7. Gavin Newsom Is The First Governor to make homelessness a way of life. California’s Governor has only grown the mentally-ill, drug addicted homeless population littering streets with feces and drug needles, tent encampments and filth. Remember, Gov. Gavin Newsom has spent \$37 billion on homelessness since 2019, according to the California Legislative Analyst’s Office.
8. California denied housing vouchers in Los Angeles.
9. Lawmakers continue to push reparations for descendants of slaves. Nope. Reparations are just a shakedown, the Globe has reported. The State Reparations Task Force, which was quite openly expanding reparations beyond slavery, proved that it was just a grab and hustle for all grievances. They said the quiet parts aloud: “the racial wealth gap in the state of California.”
10. \$8.00-\$12.00 per-gallon-gas coming, courtesy of Gavin Newsom, who has forced oil companies to shutdown refineries. At one time California was home to over 40 operating refineries. However, due to high operating and regulatory compliance costs, a harsh political environment,

conversions to bio and renewable fuels, and **Governor Newsom's 2020 directive banning the sale of new internal combustion vehicles in the state, the number of refiners has declined by 84% from 43 in 1982 to just seven survivors in 2026.** California's in-state oil production has declined by approximately 65%, while its dependency on foreign imports has risen by nearly 70%.

11. Gov. Gavin Newsom has a problem with no-bid contracts to favored donors: [details of these contracts here](#).
12. Porn in K-12 curriculum – school books show actual graphic sexual acts, and in cartoon form, clearly targeting kids. Pure pornography.
13. State mandated secrecy of gender transitioning children from parents.
14. Gov. Newsom was the first Governor in the country to declare a COVID emergency, install himself as a virtual dictator by seizing this unilateral power, and completely ignore the democratic process.
15. COVID mandatory vaccine bills – SB 871 by Sen. Richard Pan (D-Sacramento), Forced Vaccinations for School Enrollment required all school-aged children up to age 17 to get the COVID-19 vaccine(s) to attend school and child care. AB 1993 by Assemblywoman Buffy Wicks (D-Oakland), mandated the COVID-19 vaccine to all employees, including independent contractors; employees and contractors would be required to show proof of COVID-19 vaccine to be able to work in California. Financial penalties would be imposed on employers who fail to comply. Newsom's tyranny.
16. Single Payer health coverage – Socialized medicine. Assembly Constitutional Amendment 11 was introduced in 2022 in the California Legislature to enact significant tax increases to fund universal single-payer health care coverage in California.
17. Public school teachers strikes – forever strikes.
18. Energy shortage, rolling blackouts by the state utility companies.
19. Newsom's COVID State of Emergency order from March 2020 until the end of February 2023 – he hung on to his emergency powers three years, conscribing the state to a dictatorship.
20. Newsom's Vaccine mandates for school children, days after opposing one for prison guards. He's still pushing vaccine mandates, and "Californians may soon find themselves subject to vaccination policies and enforcement. mechanisms designed and sustained by unelected private interests operating through a state-sanctioned structure voters never approved."

21. AB 5 Newsom signed into law: AB 5, authored by Democrat Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez (who left the CA Legislature early to head up the California Labor Federation), completely redefined independent contractors in California, as well as greatly reducing the number of contractors in the state by creating an “ABC test” that instead made them employees, or put them out of work. AB 5 was passed by Democrats in the California Legislature and signed into law in 2019 by Gov. Gavin Newsom.
22. Gun control bills overturned by federal judges. Again. Again. Again.
23. Rolling power blackouts: during the state’s heatwaves, wind events and general less-than-perfect weather throughout the state, power outages and rolling blackouts hit millions during the very hottest weather. While the governor claimed to be investigating the power outages, he also said Californians needed to get used to it.
24. \$4.5 Million Free Immigration Legal Services Pilot Program.
25. Newsom’s own Ministry of Truth – his “Commission on the State of Hate,” he created via Executive Order also establishes the state’s first Racial Equity Commission. Even the First Partner weighed in on California’s Ministry of Truth with a blathering statement about working together “toward a more just and equitable society...”
26. Gov. Newsom even officially created a new state website, abortion.ca.gov, to assist anyone needing financial assistance from a Red State, with abortion travel plans and financial assistance, to California for an abortion, or to commit infanticide if you’re nine months along (It’s now legal in California), courtesy of the California taxpayers.
27. Gov. Gavin Newsom signed AB 2098 by Assemblyman Evan Low (D-Campbell), which would have punished physicians and surgeons for “unprofessional conduct” for advocating for the potential benefits of early treatment with off-label drugs, or those who dare to ask questions about COVID vaccine safety – i.e. for “spreading Covid “misinformation.” A judge issued and injunction to halt implementation, and eventually Newsom had to push a bill through the Legislature to officially overturn AB 1098. Epic fail.
28. Gov. Newsom tried to pass a Tax on ‘Windfall Profits’ on Oil Companies after abandoning and thoughts on a gas tax pause. In March, the Globe reported on a study by oil and gas expert USC Professor Michael Mische, which found that the factors contributing to California’s high gasoline prices over 50-years are self-imposed by state officials and

politicians – the professor used 50 years of data. It turns out that California is its own worst enemy. And Governor Newsom and his administration of radical climate change disciples are a significant part of chasing Chevron out, and the upcoming closure of two refineries.

29. Newsom, in 2021, largely killed hydraulic fracturing for natural gas in California as part of his overall plan to end oil extraction. He also announced his action to halt issuance of fracking permits by 2024.
30. Gov. Newsom signed Senate Bill 1137, gut-and-amend legislation by Democrat Senators Lena Gonzalez and Monique Limón, now requires 3,200-foot mandatory setbacks around California oil and gas wells.
31. California Gov. Gavin Newsom ordered letting another 76,000 prisoners out of state prisons – on his own authority through Executive Order, as violent crime is spiking in California's cities.
32. State Capitol staffers told the Globe in February 2022 that elected members of the Assembly and Senate were exempted from COVID vaccine mandates, but Capitol staffers were not, and in fact were required to receive a booster by March 1st, or be fired. Where was the media on this?
33. Gavin Newsom's French Laundry moment wasn't confined to dining out – besides multiple vacations out of the country while he locked down Californians. In Feb. 2022 he starred in "MaskGate" at the NFC Championship game in Los Angeles – despite his own face mask mandates.
34. Gov. Gavin Newsom betrayed the state's voters within 6 weeks of being sworn in January 2019 when he announced in March 2019 he was granting reprieves for all death penalty murderers on California's death row, calling the death penalty "ineffective, irreversible and immoral." He promised during his campaign that he would abide by the will of California voters who in 2016 rejected Proposition 66, a ballot initiative that would have repealed the death penalty, and instead voted to expedite the executions of the inmates currently sitting on death row. Newsom supported the initiative to repeal.
35. Gov. Newsom signed SB 152 quickly after its passage June 2021, which changed the rules of his own recall election by allowing Lieutenant Governor Kounalakis to set an earlier date for the recall election – exactly what Gavin Newsom decided would be best for Gavin Newsom. State officials bypassed one of the very steps in the recall election certification

process they themselves put into law less than four years ago in order to protect a fellow state senator from his own recall defeat.

36. Also by Executive Order, Newsom announced closure of San Quentin State Prison.
37. Gov. Gavin Newsom signed Senate Bill 145 by Sen. Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco) which lowers the penalties for adults who have sex with same-sex minors – this means the new law allows a 24 year old to have sex with a 14 year old and escape a felony conviction and requirement to be a registered sex offender.
38. Gov. Gavin Newsom signed a slew of Marijuana Bills.
39. Governor Newsom signed AB 205, income-based utility billing, rather than using an all-of-the-above approach to abundant energy production in California: Oil, gas, coal, nuclear, hydroelectric, solar and wind.
40. While Gov. Gavin Newsom sued the Orange County city of Huntington Beach for failing to provide enough additional “affordable housing,” his own home county of Marin is enjoys a moratorium on affordable housing building requirements until 2028. Coronado and Elk Grove have also been sued by the state.
41. Gov. Newsom announced in 2022 he would be developing the state’s lithium reserves in the Salton Sea region, and create a Lithium Valley Commission. “Proponents of mandating unrealistic policies and tight deadlines to fight climate change are finally having to confront the consequences of those sweeping decisions against a backdrop of an unreliable global supply chain impacting our national security.”
42. Newsom gifted free Medi-Cal coverage to every illegal immigrant in the state, costing taxpayers \$10 billion to \$12 billion. Very recently, Newsom admitted the state’s Medi-Cal program for low-income Californians is insolvent. His solution? Newsom is going to cut Medi-Cal to any poor or disabled elderly Californian who has \$2,000 in “assets.”
43. Newsom reinstated the Obamacare individual mandate requiring everyone to buy health insurance or face tax fines.
44. Newsom signed an executive order that he would grant reprieves for all 737 death penalty murderers on California’s death row, calling the death penalty “ineffective, irreversible and immoral.”
45. During COVID, Gov. Newsom issued a nine different sets of re-opening plans, moving the state re-opening goalposts over and over again
46. Rampant and large scale pandemic unemployment assistance fraud was exposed November 2020 – upwards of \$31-\$54 billion

dollars in unemployment claims was fraudulently sent to prison inmates in California's county jails, and state and federal prisons, out of state, and even out of the country, while legitimate claimants were been stiffed for months, or received late payments. Death row inmates, life and life without possibility of parole inmates, rapists, child molesters, human traffickers, and other violent criminals received California unemployment benefits.

47. Governor Gavin Newsom's 58 'COVID' Related Executive Orders from March 4, 2020 to November 2020 – running the state as a dictator (never let a crisis go to waste)
48. Gov. Gavin Newsom Makes Hurried \$1 Billion Deal With China's BYD for Masks. The Chinese electric bus maker suddenly got into the medical mask business, and Newsom bought more than \$1 billion worth. Hmm.
49. In March of 2020, CA Gov. Gavin Newsom Ordered 40 Million healthy Californians to shelter at home because of the Coronavirus.
50. When he was elected, Gov. Newsom, in January 2019, promised the world and a bag of chips to Californians.

- Newsom's campaign promises included:
-
-
- Universal healthcare for everyone, regardless of ability to pay, including immigrants in the country illegally
- A "Marshall Plan" for affordable housing production of 3.5 million housing units over the next decade
- A master plan for aging with dignity
- A middle-class workforce strategy
- A cradle-to-college promise
- Universal pre-school
- An all-hands approach to ending child poverty
- "Audacious" and "bold" action on the homelessness crisis

The California State Auditor just published a scalding report that is an unvarnished indictment of Governor Gavin Newsom and his administration, the Globe reported. The report should have everyone living in California horrified.

But remember, these are policy decisions, which can be overturned by a reasonable, sincere, Republican governor.

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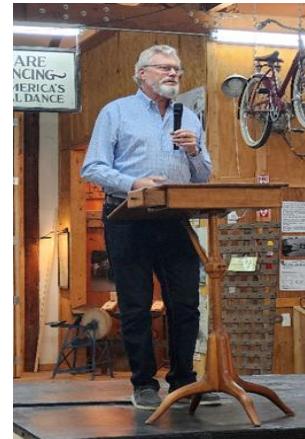
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Cardholder Name: _____ Signature: _____

Card Number: _____ Exp Date: ____/____ Billing Zip Code: _____ CVV: _____

TODAY'S DATE: _____