



San Luis Obispo County

The Coalition of Labor Agriculture and Business

## **Weekly Update**

### **October 20 - 27, 2025**

## **A Housing Hypocrite In Our Midst**

It is good that Supervisor Gibson has declared his intent to vote against the approval of a project that would bring 1242 homes to San Luis Obispo County – including 206 low and very low-income homes. Now we know for certain what so many suspect; that Gibson is a hypocrite. He loves to talk (and talk and talk) about

the need for housing in SLO County. He loves to represent himself as a housing advocate and as a leader guiding the financially challenged to attain their dream of homeownership. He harumphs, stammers and all but chokes back tears when discussing SLO County's Regional Housing Needs Assessment that illustrates pathetically little progress at meeting our local housing needs. However, it appears that it's all for show.

Here is the Merriam-Webster dictionary definition of a hypocrite:



# hypocrite noun

hyp·o·crite hi-pə-,krit 🔊

[Synonyms of \*hypocrite\*](#) >

- 1 : a person who puts on a false appearance of [virtue](#) or religion
- 2 : a person who acts in contradiction to his or her stated beliefs or feelings

**Seems to fit this situation pretty darn well.**

Last week, we wondered if Supervisors Gibson and Paulding would prove themselves to be hypocrites on the subject of housing when the Dana Reserve project would come before the Board of Supervisors for final approval on

November 4. As it turns out, Gibson has taken away all doubt. Yes, he is a hypocrite on housing and he essentially said so much in an Op/Ed piece bearing his name in a local newspaper on October 15. Read it here if you have the patience: <https://www.sanluisobispo.com/opinion/byn-columnists/blogs/article312500234.html#storylink=cpy>

In that Op/Ed, Gibson suggests that his main opposition to the project is that the litigants in a lawsuit regarding the project chose to keep the details of the resulting settlement private – a common practice. He calls the settlement “secret” implying that it was somehow arrived at in a smoke filled back room by a bunch of fast dealing ne’er-do-wells. In fact, like all legal settlements, it was done through the courts and approved by a judge. It was a private matter between three private entities who came to agreement. There was a reason that all parties agreed to keep the details confidential. Perhaps it was to avoid the meddling of certain elected officials who have no business sticking their manipulative noses into other peoples private business.

Despite Gibson’s moaning about a “secret settlement, he goes on to say that he seems to know the details: “I’m told by people who should know that NAC {Nipomo Action Committee} and CNPS {California Native Plant Society} would receive a total of some \$2 million.” He goes on to offer three bullet points of details about the “secret” settlement then whines about how the public “has a right to know the details”.

He also mentions 19 environmental concerns “that can’t be completely mitigated”. That’s an easy cheap shot. Name one 1246 unit housing project that doesn’t disrupt the environment in some fashion.

Then he continues to whine about the number of affordable units that have been cut from the project, down from the original \_\_\_ to \_\_\_ along with the elimination of 100 additional dwelling units (ADUs). So apparently its “so sad too bad” for the hopeful \_\_\_ purchasers of those remaining affordable units. Maybe Gibson can put on his housing advocate hat and help them find one of the many alternative units on the market.

His final point, which he fails to illustrate (probably couldn't) is this whole public good thing and how to "balance public and private benefits."

As we pointed out last week, there is a vast public benefit to this project. Just a few examples: almost all residents of Nipomo who stand to benefit enormously from needed community wide infrastructure improvements brought about through the project, the hundreds of construction workers and trades people who will be employed, local material suppliers, thousands of students and faculty that will be part of the new Cuesta College South Campus included in the project and over 1,200 individuals and families that will make the Dana Reserve their home.

Gibson fails to delineate the public good that is more important than these elements. Where is his balancing that outweighs homes for so many people? Presumably, he thinks the public is better served by an empty field.

It's pretty clear that Gibson doesn't walk the talk (talk, talk, talk). He finds whatever excuse he can, regardless of its baselessness, to vote against housing. If it's not perfect, it's a big fat no!

Here is what he doesn't bring up on his arguments against the project: seven years for the developer working with county staff and the community - creating a plan that is acceptable and conforms with an unimaginable number of rules, regulations and rolls of red tape, the enormous financial investment and the hope of a developer that at the end of such an incredible hassle a profit can be made.

He doesn't mention that this project is an anecdote for SLO County housing.

Gibson is the perfect example of why housing doesn't get built in SLO County – affordable or otherwise. The message that he sends to developers is very discouraging. Its chilling effect moves investors and contractors elsewhere. Sadly, this is especially true for low-income housing where the profit margin is so very low.

Along with his obvious hypocritic approach to housing in general, many around town suspect that Gibson has an additional motive to make such a big deal over

bupkis regarding this project. That suspicion is that he is providing cover for his protégé Jimmy Paulding.

If Gibson or Paulding was a true housing advocate and gave a hoot about SLO County residents desperately looking for housing options, they would be looking for ways to make this project happen, not throwing out poorly reasoned excuses to stop it.

Supervisor Paulding is in a pickle. His district stands to benefit enormously from the project, but he is the same kind of “housing advocate” as Gibson. His liberal no-growth housing advocate supporters are pressuring him for a no vote. He needs an excuse to vote against the project in order to appease those who are supporting his reelection. He hopes that if Gibson makes enough noise about the nonexistent public good, that he can skate by echoing those sentiments. Does that make Paulding a hypocrite as well? Do we really have to ask?

## **Strange Elements in Housing Plans**

The first item on the agenda for the October 21 meeting of the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors is to update the 2020-2028 HOUSING ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK. This is a continuation of the many hours that the BoS has devoted, along with the hundreds of hours that county staff has dedicated to modifying our County Housing Element Standards.

As we have reported in recent months, a great deal of work has gone into making numerous changes to the requirements that builders have to conform to if they hope to undertake a housing construction project within SLO County.

Some of the updates seem silly, some important, but the general thrust of the entire effort is to make housing projects either easier or more attractive. We have heard no testimony from actual builders about whether these changes accomplish their goals,

but are a little suspicious of some and wonder about unintended consequences of others.

Here are a few excerpts from the coming presentation by staff. The first is a list of changes sought for multi-family dwelling units:

1. Allowing multi-family dwelling development as a principal use in the Office and Professional (OP), Commercial Retail (CR), and Commercial Service (CS) Land Use Categories
2. Reducing the permit requirements
3. Increasing the maximum number of dwelling units allowed per acre
4. Increasing the maximum floor area allowed
5. Reducing the minimum open space area required
6. Reducing the minimum landscape area required
7. Reducing the minimum parking spaces required
8. Increasing the maximum building height allowed
9. Reduce the minimum setbacks required

Read these carefully and imagine what a product of these priorities looks like. If you are seeing “stack and pack” you are reading them right.

Guiding Principle 1: Plan with placemaking in mind to build towards our community vision while addressing the unincorporated county's housing needs and State regulations.

Guiding Principle 2: Develop more options that incentivize property owners and developers to build housing that significantly contribute to the unincorporated county's unmet RHNA objectives.

Guiding Principle 3: Increase predictability in the permitting process.

Guiding Principle 4: Support and prioritize new residential development in areas identified for strategic regional residential development and other areas that are (a) located along priority transportation corridors (i.e. highways identified by San Luis Obispo Council of Governments as priorities for regional infrastructure investments), (b) located in or between areas with higher concentration of jobs and services, and (c) located within or in close proximity to existing urbanized areas or communities. [Housing Element Policy HE 1.01]

While we like item 3 and wonder why it took so long to call it out, we also find a great deal of irony in the others. Particularly number 2. The irony, of course, is that the Dana Reserve project fits each of those points.

Regarding number 4, it is worth noting that SLOCOG may have some routes or corridors identified in a file somewhere that fall under the category of wishful transportation corridors, but they don't offer a transit service anywhere in the county that has the frequency to qualify as such. Implementing number 4 would be strictly aspirational.

The next segment should be chilling to anybody who owns a home and wishes to do with it what they want. It lays the groundwork to strictly limit and regulate vacation rentals. The concept is that if you couldn't rent a home out as a VRBO, you would rent it out to a low-income person, thus solving their housing problem. What county staff fail to understand is that VRBO revenues are often used to cover expenses such as mortgage, insurance and utilities which in many cases are greater than the potential long-term rental revenue prospects. They also fail to note that

VRBO rentals contribute TOT tax revenue to the county while long term does not. Finally, they completely fail to recognize the concept of private property rights:

One of the primary approaches to address rising housing demand is to increase housing supply. However, the positive impacts of increasing housing supply are nullified if dwelling units are not used for residential purposes. Short-term rental uses, such as vacation rentals, are nonresidential uses that effectively reduce the unincorporated county's housing stock. This action is to establish a limit on short-term rental uses in areas within Urban Reserve Lines and Village Reserve lines.

The last example is regarding incentivizing Additional Dwelling Units (ADUs) as a way to meet the very low- and low-income housing needs in the county. While number 3 makes sense, we really have to wonder about number 1.

As it turns out, the county counts all ADUs built as Very Low-Income Housing. They count ADUs built as guest houses, art studios, dance workshops, or any other non-rental use as Very Low-Income rentals. OK, pretty fishy, but if there is an owner occupied requirement, how could any ADU be counted as low income housing. If an owner is so low in the income category, how do they have the property and financial resources to put in an ADU, and what happened to their regular home that they previously occupied?

Also, can a condominium really be an ADU?

1. Removing owner-occupancy requirements for junior ADUs
2. Allowing for ADU condominiums
3. Simplifying ADU regulations
4. Developing regulations to address Senate Bill No. 9 (2021)

## No Kings - No Sense

So, the No Kings crowd hit the streets on October 18. Thousands of them, perhaps tens of thousands if media reports are to be believed. Imagine their commitment. First, they went out and bought sign materials, followed by the painting of slogans and attempts at pithy remarks. Then came the drive to and parking at whatever high profile location was on the docket. Then the hours of yelling, sign waiving and dancing around inflatable toys.

All that to what end? Was there a defined message? What was the take way for drivers witnessing the antics? Was anything accomplished?

Sure, we all got the message that there are people upset at the administration. But that was no revelation. Some signs registered opposition to ICE, some to federal job cuts and some making fun of the President's hair.

But was there any sort of theme regarding what they actually stand for?

Imagine all that energy, and all those people spending all that time cleaning up beaches or parks, fixing up the community center, helping seniors with yard work or assisting at a homeless shelter. There are dozens of tasks that with the same energy spent, would have made a real difference.

Imagine if all those people spoke out about one cause that was important to them – the same cause, in unison as a coalition or even as a political party with a vision.

Yes, there are lots of people who do not like the present administration, and many of them know why they are unhappy. But some are discontent because of one thing, while others are upset about something else.

Where are the leaders to bring them all together to focus that energy and to define their ideals for moving forward?

It's really quite simple to be against. Whatever the subject, a cynic can always find something to fuss about. We hope the day comes when, rather than complaining, those very same people take to the streets working towards attainable goals with real solutions.

## **No King Newsom**

Speaking of No Kings, did any of those protesters notice the arbitrary and imperial act our Governor undertook by creating a very expensive special election designed specifically to undo the last election and circumvent the next few elections in a way that is specifically designed to benefit one political party while completely short changing another?

So much for saving democracy!

Want to give Governor a little push back? The only way to slow his impetuous disregard for true democracy is to defeat Proposition 50. The No On Prop 50 campaign is being run through the two local GOP offices. They have volunteer opportunities, signs and as always, a need for financial support. Your right to complain if Prop 50 passes comes only if you do something to help defeat it.

The bonus is imagining how stupid Newsom will look when it loses and becomes apparent that everybody saw through his lies and deception.

Call or stop by for a friendly greeting and appreciation for anything you can do to help:

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(805) 668-2064



## Last Week

### Gibson Overreach

Did SLO County Supervisor Bruce Gibson show his true colors at the Oct. 7 BoS meeting when he made a motion to require County Council to investigate details of a settlement in a private civil action between two litigants?

The litigants had reached an agreement satisfactory to each regarding details in the Dana Reserve housing project, and having concluded the action, both sides chose to keep final details confidential. This is a common practice and a popular option when both sides are satisfied with the outcome.

The lawsuit did not involve the county and was not part of the permit process that the project is going through.

Gibson made the motion after noting that the project will be before the Board for final approval at the regularly scheduled BoS meeting on November 4. When challenged by Supervisor Ortiz Legg as to why he would want access to a private settlement agreement, Gibson danced around with an attempt at a “public good” explanation.

It’s not clear which public the Supervisor was referring to, but we doubt it was the residents of Nipomo who stand to benefit enormously from infrastructure improvements brought about through the Dana Reserve project. Nor do we think he

was referring to the hundreds of construction workers and trades people who will be employed. How about local material suppliers? Possibly the thousands of students and faculty that will be part of the new Cuesta College south campus. Certainly not the over 1,200 individuals and families that will make the Dana Reserve their home. Perhaps he is worried about extra work for those in the County Tax Collector office who will need to process those new tax bills.

Whomever Gibson is fretting about has had seven years and numerous public hearings to air their concerns.

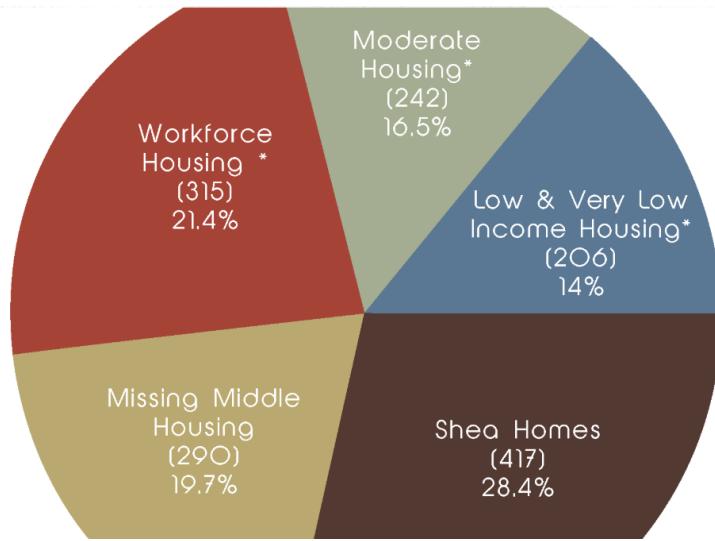
That Supervisor Gibson wants to drag the county into a private and irrelevant agreement already settled is outrageous. That he wants to compromise County Council by requiring that they weigh in is an enormously inappropriate abuse of power.

Even more startling is the inference that the details of the agreement somehow might impact whether the project is finally granted approval - or at least get his vote. This is an overreach that some might view as corruption.

The project has been in the planning process for seven years and has gone through countless major revisions before finally achieving approval of the initial 2024 Dana Reserve Specific Plan in April of last year from the County Board of Supervisors. It initially called for 1,370 homes, but as part of the above-mentioned lawsuit, brought forth by a community group, that number has been reduced to 1,242 homes, while open space has been expanded to over 60 acres. The reduction is primarily due to the elimination of 100 Additional Dwelling Units (ADUs) in the original plan. The project also includes space for neighborhood style commercial developments and for a southern campus of Cuesta College.

Supervisor Paulding was quick to second Gibson's motion and to chime in with support. Fortunately, three reasonable votes killed the motion.

The following graph illustrates the breakdown of the various categories of housing slated for the Dana Reserve. Most importantly, it illustrates the commitment the project has to lower and moderate income housing.



We are sure that Supervisors Gibson and Paulding are well aware of San Luis Obispo's Regional Housing Needs Allocation, and hope that they carefully consider the numbers illustrated above before deciding about the Dana Reserve project. While SLO County is shamefully behind in the Very Low-Income category, so are we far behind in the Low and Moderate income categories. This project makes strong advances in each category.

Table 1: Unincorporated County's Regional Housing Needs Allocation Progress

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

We hope that this attempted abuse doesn't signal a handwringing consternated Gibson yammering on about the need for housing in SLO County, but concluding (gosh darn it) that he just couldn't support this project for some inane reason. The same goes for Paulding.

Housing is stated as one of the BoS' highest priorities. Will we see them live up to that commitment or will we see hypocrisy at the cost of the people needing homes?

## **Counting On Good Data**

Supervisor Ortiz Legg made a motion at the conclusion if the Oct. 7 BoS meeting requesting a contract with an accounting service specializing in energy provider evaluations to assemble financial data regarding Diablo Canyon's role in the economy of San Luis Obispo County.

Her point is a good one; if we are to make the case that the power plant is a critical component in our local economy, we need sound data. Supervisor Peschong agreed and seconded the motion.

Ortiz Legg's motion included a cap of \$15,000 for the service. County Council will draw up the proposal and it will appear again before the BoS in the coming weeks for final approval.

## **A Somber Moment For A Horrific Event**

Special thanks to District Attorney Dan Dow for recognizing the two-year anniversary of the invasion of Isreal by Hamas on October 7, 2023, the Jewish holiday of Simchat Torah, along with the 1,195 lives lost that horrible day. It was kind of Dow to acknowledge the impact that the attack has had on Jewish people around the globe and to offer a moment of silence for those still held hostage a by Hamas.

With the heavily biased media and the rising popularity of antisemitism by the left, it's easy to forget that Hamas invaded Israel, murdered people because of their faith, took and tortured an estimated 250 hostages - and continued to reject peace agreements for two years. We hope that the current peace treaty is successful and that the remaining hostages are returned to their families and loved ones.

## **Buddy, Can You Spare a Half Cent?**

A half-cent sales tax increase measure for transportation will almost certainly be on the SLO County ballot in November of 2026. The measure, under the banner "Local Roads First" will be put forth by SLOCOG, our county wide Council of Governments.

Specific priorities and ballot language have not yet been finalized. Whether or not you support such a tax, it would be helpful if you took the SLOCOG online survey which helps to establish community priorities for how funds would be spent should the measure pass. The survey is simple and takes about a minute. It can be found here <https://localroadsfirst.com>.

The six choices on the survey are: Local Streets and Roads; Safe Routes to Schools; Transit; Local Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements; Regional Trails and Highway Projects. You get to assign your level of interest in each category.



SLOCOG is also presenting a Zoom meeting on Oct. 15 from 6:00 to 7:30 PM where details will be discussed, feedback measured, and questions answered. It can be found at: [bit.ly/slo-localroads](https://bit.ly/slo-localroads) Meeting ID: 828 5613 8033 or by visiting the website at [localroads.com](https://localroads.com).

The priorities put forth in the measure will probably be a major factor in whether it passes. Fans of bicycle paths and mass transit are quite vocal, so even if you plan to vote no, it's worthwhile to have your priorities known.

## **There Is A New CEO In Town**

Our new County Chief Executive Officer should look familiar. Matthew Pontes, who has served as the County Chief Administrative Officer since April of 2024, has been made CEO due to a change enacted by the BoS at the Oct. 7 meeting. The new title comes with greater responsibility and accountability. Minor reorganizations are taking place with the goal of streamlining the leadership, reporting and communications processes.

In his 18 months as CAO, Pontes has been effective in bringing about a much more accountable budgeting process and led the “rebalancing and resiliency” effort to balance a budget challenged by less revenue than income.

During discussion of the topic, it was brought up that the current Supervisors have never had a strategic planning session or study group. Each of the Supervisors agreed that such an effort would be a good idea, so we can expect something like that in the future.



San Luis Obispo County CEO Matthew Pontes

According to his bio, Mr. Pontes earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Forestry and Natural Resources from Cal Poly, where he specialized in wildfire and sustainable land management practices. He has county administrative experience in Shasta and Santa Barbara Counties as well as service in Kern County.

Four of the Supervisors were enthusiastic about the change, but Supervisor Gibson made a very long and convoluted comment about how he thought the Board should hold off until a strategic plan was established.

Congratulations to CEO Pontes.

## **A Bridge Too Expensive**

The Cec3chetti Bridge, south of Arroyo Grande, washed out in the winter storms of 2023 and has yet to be replaced. The bridge serves a large agriculture community as well as a local school and residents.

Traffic has been diverted to the Harris Bridge, causing problems for agricultural equipment and large trucks as well as traffic back ups and accidents due to a poorly engineered intersection and the small size of the bridge.

Because the new bridge currently being planned, will not be in place until 2027, a movement has begun to install a temporary bridge led by Supervisor Paulding. He was able to put \$250,000 into the current budget for such a project.

However, when county planners evaluated the cost of the temporary bridge, they found it to be over \$800,000. The other problem that became apparent with the planning process was that a temporary bridge might only be able to be used for about eight of the 24 months between now and when the new bridge starts construction. A temporary bridge would need to be removed during the heavy rain season as well as when construction on the permanent bridge gets underway.



What is left of the Cecchetti Bridge as it is today.

As funding for the temporary bridge would be an unbudgeted expenditure a 4/5ths vote was required. Supervisors Moreno and Peschong were not comfortable with such a large expenditure for such a short service life, so voted against it.

Supervisor Gibson referred to the extra \$800,000 expenditure as “chump change”.

It is not clear if county planning staff considered other options, but it would be nice to know whether other options exist and whether they have been evaluated. Supervisor Paulding vows to keep pushing for the temporary interim bridge.

## Prop 50 – Keep Up The Fight

Election Day, November 4, for Prop 50 is approaching fast. Ballots have been mailed, and voters are beginning to return them. Should you encounter voters leaning towards supporting Prop 50, here are a few questions you might ask:

- **With the state broke and cutting services, is it wise to spend a quarter of a billion dollars on this special election?**
- **If it's wrong for Texas to gerrymander, how can it be good that we do it too?**
- **Can legislators be trusted to draw their own lines like they have done with Prop 50 and if so, should we bother with the Redistricting Commission in the future?**
- **Newsom brags that he is getting even with President Trump with Prop 50. How far is too far – how much is too much in this feud?**
- **What part of democracy are we saving when we change the rules and custom draw districts specifically designed to highly favor only one political party?**



**For yard signs and opportunities to help fight Prop 50, contact your local GOP office:**

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## **California Losing Company to Texas: GAF Energy Another Big Tech The Proposition 50 Exodus**

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## **Amid Mideast Peace, Gavin Newsom Acts Like a Child**

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# California Losing Another Big Tech Company to Texas: GAF Energy

*This is why California ranks dead last once again in Chief Executive Magazine's Best & Worst States For Business*

By [Katy Grimes](#), October 16, 2025

Another California business bites the dust. Actually, GAF Energy, which sells solar panels embedded in roof shingles, is leaving California for Georgetown, Texas.

SF Gate [reported](#):

“GAF Energy will shut down its San Jose headquarters on Dec. 13, it announced in a Thursday WARN document, filed with California officials. The company uses the facility for researching, developing and manufacturing its solar shingles — a whole green energy factory at San Jose’s southeastern corner, [operational](#) since 2021. But now, GAF Energy will lay off local workers and shift its official headquarters to Georgetown, Texas.”

GAF is so serious about their move they filed a Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification “WARN” document notifying its 138 employees of the decision to move the business in advance.

“The Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act helps ensure advance notice in cases of qualified plant closings and mass layoffs,” the [U.S. Department of Labor](#), says. The DOL has compliance assistance materials to help workers and employers understand their rights and responsibilities under the provisions of WARN.

[Booming](#) Austin suburb [Georgetown](#) is gaining another corporate headquarters as [GAF Energy](#), a solar roofing company, relocates from the California Bay Area, Yahoo Finance reports. “The company will close its facility in San Jose, Calif., and lay off 138 employees. It told the California Employment Development Department the moves are expected to be permanent.”

“This decision was not taken lightly,” GAF Energy President Martin DeBono said in a statement. “In light of ongoing changes in the solar industry, we are aligning our business and our team to focus on key markets where solar is most compelling for builders and homeowners. We are deeply grateful for our employees in San Jose and are committed to assisting those impacted through this transition.”

Yahoo Finance reports that GAF is receiving tax rebates, development fee waivers and cash incentives from the city of Georgetown, a suburb of Austin, Texas.

Over the summer the Globe reported that In-N-Out President Lynsi Snyder was relocating her family and company headquarters to Tennessee.

California ranks dead last once again in Chief Executive Magazine’s Best & Worst States For Business 2025 – the 14th year in a row. Tennessee ranks #1 once again, and now “The Volunteer State” is getting another of California’s oldest and one of the best known businesses in the country: After 77 Years in California, In-N-Out Is Moving to Tennessee.

In August, Bed Bath & Beyond announced that the company won’t open or operate retail stores in California, saying the decision “isn’t about politics – it’s about reality.”

Bed Bath & Beyond Executive Chairman Marcus Lemonis told ‘The Big Money Show’ that Bed Bath & Beyond will relaunch 300 stores nationwide — excluding California — while blasting high costs, strict regulations, and weak crime enforcement.

Bed Bath & Beyond filed Chapter 11 in 2023. Chapter 11 is a business reorganization, something Gavin Newsom doesn’t understand based on his nasty X post:

“The company that already went bankrupt and closed every store across the country two years ago? Ok.”

Notably, Bed, Bath & Beyond doesn’t have the Getty family as its business benefactor.

Marcus Lemonis was far more gracious in his reply to the governor.

California’s governor, who has a strained relationship with the truth, denies that Californians and their businesses are fleeing to other states, despite mountains of

evidence, well-documented news articles, and economists across the country chronicling the phenomenon.

California's own Chevron Oil company announced in 2024 that it would move its headquarters to Houston, Texas from San Ramon, California – another big business to flee the Golden State. Chevron joins X/Twitter, Space X, Oracle, Hewlett Packard, Charles Schwab, and Toyota Motor North America, to name a few of the mega-businesses that departed California because of the state's leftist/Marxist politics and regulatory environment.

"GAF Energy's decision is likely influenced by Texas' booming housing market as much as its business-friendly environment," Yahoo Finance notes. "In 2024, the state accounted for 15% of all U.S. housing permits, driving demand for new construction and roof replacements, ideal for the company's solar-integrated products, according to data from Realtor.com."

## **The Proposition 50 Exodus**

*Will Democrats tighter grip on state politics drive more Republicans and businesses out of state*

By Joel Fox, October 14, 2025

There was an interesting Letter to the Editor in the Los Angeles Times over the weekend. In commenting on Proposition 50, the ballot measure to alter congressional district lines, the letter writer noted the disparity of California Democratic representatives in Congress to Republicans both now and if Prop. 50 passes and delivers five more Democratic congress members as predicted. He compared that to the percentages of Democratic and Republican representatives in Texas, the state that started the redistricting wars.

He also offered a possible consequence if Prop. 50 passes to reinforce Democratic dominance in the state. More Republicans and businesses might leave California.

Could Proposition 50 continue to drive the country to what I called in a previous commentary a two -state solution in which partisan voters choose to gather with their own political kind?

The letter said California's congressional representation currently consists of 83% Democrats while Republicans make up 17%. If Proposition 50 passes with the expected change in five congressional seats the numbers would be 92% Democrats and 8% GOP. Meanwhile, the Texas numbers before and after redistricting to favor Republicans by five seats would increase GOP dominance in the Lone Star State but not nearly as dramatically as the California situation. (Texas now 59%-41% GOP; after 62%-38% GOP.)

The argument of dominance by one party's congressional standing is not new. Often Massachusetts is brought up in debate because all nine members of the delegation are Democrats. In fact, a number of states are represented by one party in Congress. The one-party dominance might prompt debate for either proportional representation or a federal independent redistricting commission to even the playing field. But that discussion is for another time.

Let's go back a few months to a report issued by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) on the demographic changes in the Golden State. The blog report on the study was titled, "California's Republican Exodus."

The report stated: *According to the data, voters who moved out of California between the 2020 and 2024 presidential elections have a strong Republican lean. Recent departures (39%) are much more likely to be Republican compared to California registrants overall (25%). By contrast, those who moved into California during that period are disproportionately Democratic (54%, compared to 45% of Californians overall).*

The authors noted that while there are several reasons for migrations to other states, partisanship plays a key role.

A Prop. 50 win is another example of state Democratic leaders using their majority muscle to solidify Democratic political dominance. Recall one example when the legislature declared that citizen ballot measures could only appear in a November General Election. The change was inspired by Democratic partisans because the General Election provides a larger turnout by Democratic voters meaning a better opportunity to gain the outcome Democratic leaders want.

The idea that Republicans are at best tolerated in the state was reinforced by leading Democratic gubernatorial candidate Katie Porter's explosive interview with a CBS Reporter in which Porter indicated she didn't need Trump voters to win the governorship. Her meaning: This is a Democratic state; Republicans can't win.

Critics have translated the moment as Porter suggesting she doesn't need to represent Republicans or simply that Republicans don't count in California. Whatever Porter's intention, the inflammatory language and a Proposition 50 win could boost the frustration of GOP voters with the Democrats tighter grip on the state's politics in which they already control. The result could convince more GOP oriented voters to say goodbye to California, reinforcing the findings in the earlier PPIC study.

## **Amid Mideast Peace, Gavin Newsom Acts Like a Child**

*The President's nemesis can't accept Trump's success*

By Richie Greenberg, October 14, 2025

President Donald Trump continues to exhibit unparalleled support for American Jews, Israelis and the Holy Land. Yet today, amid the historic signing of a multi-national peace agreement in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, to end the war in Gaza and facilitate the return of final 20 hostages to Israel, California's petulant governor Gavin Newsom throws another of his childish tantrums. Trump was on the world stage, successful and credible, and Newsom couldn't handle it.

Trump stands as a towering figure in the history of U.S. support for American Jews and the State of Israel. His policies, during his first term (2017–2021) culminating in the Abraham Accords coupled with his current term beginning in January of this year, reflect an unwavering commitment to safeguarding America's Jewish communities and bolstering Israel's security and international standing. From actions directed at protection of Jewish students against campus antisemitism to providing military and diplomatic support during the 2023 Israel-Iran conflict, Trump redefined American leadership in these areas. His legacy, including historic diplomatic breakthroughs, robust financial backing, and antisemitism sets him apart.

One of Donald Trump's most commendable achievements is his resolute defense of Jewish students on American college campuses, where antisemitism has surged in recent years, particularly following the October 7, 2023, Hamas attacks on Israel.

Recognizing the hostile environment on campus, Trump has implemented policies to ensure students safety and dignity. His administration's aggressive enforcement of the 2019 Executive Order on Combating Antisemitism, signed during his first term, has proven to be a game-changer. This order extended Title VI protections of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to Jewish students, incorporating the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Working Definition of Antisemitism to address discrimination rooted in anti-Jewish prejudice. Now in his current term, Trump has elevated this framework, ensuring that universities are held accountable for failing to protect Jewish students or risk crushing financial penalties.

The Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, under Trump's leadership, has pursued rigorous investigations into institutions accused of tolerating—and effectively supporting—antisemitic harassment. A landmark achievement came this year when New York's Columbia University agreed to pay \$221 million in fines following a probe into its inadequate response to antisemitic incidents. This financial penalty sent a powerful message: universities must prioritize the safety of Jewish students or face severe consequences. Trump's commitment extends beyond investigations. He has boldly threatened to withhold federal funding and accreditation from colleges that permit "antisemitic propaganda," a stance that has resonated deeply with Jewish advocacy groups like the American Jewish Committee. In March 2025, Trump began withholding funds from institutions deemed complicit in antisemitism, demonstrating his willingness to use executive power to protect Jewish students.

Further showcasing his decisive leadership, Trump has addressed the role of foreign students in campus unrest. In March 2025, he initiated deportations of international students who violated their visa terms by engaging in antisemitic or anti-Israel protests. This policy not only reinforces campus safety but also aligns with his broader commitment to law and order, ensuring that those who threaten Jewish students face tangible repercussions. These actions have worked to quell Jewish students' anxieties, giving them confidence that their government stands firmly behind them. By prioritizing their safety and leveraging federal authority, Trump has created a safer academic environment, earning widespread praise from Jewish communities who see his policies as a vital shield against rising hatred. The President additionally threatened to cut funding if California's universities didn't adopt specific policy changes regarding admissions, faculty hiring, free speech, and gender identity policies here in this state.

In response, Gavin Newsom condemned Trump's actions. In an on-camera interview, he claims "*Trump only cares about the "red" states. He's a wartime president, head of a war party: the war on women, war on voting rights, war on hispanics, war on California.*"

Reality shows (and we know) the opposite is true: Newsom put Californians directly in harm's way, with great risk and danger.

President Trump's support for Israel is nothing short of historic, marked by bold decisions that have strengthened the Jewish state's security, sovereignty, and global standing. His first term laid a foundation of unparalleled achievements, and his current term has further solidified his role as Israel's staunchest ally, particularly during the critical Israel-Iran conflict of June 2025. Trump's actions reflect a deep understanding of Israel's strategic needs and a commitment to ensuring its survival and prosperity in a volatile region.

During his first term, Trump delivered transformative victories for Israel. In 2017, he recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital and relocated the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, fulfilling a promise that previous presidents had avoided due to diplomatic sensitivities. This embassy move affirmed Israel's historical and cultural claim to its capital, earning Trump immense gratitude from Israelis and pro-Israel Americans. In 2019, he recognized Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights, a strategic region critical to Israel's defense, further cementing U.S. support for Israel's territorial integrity. Perhaps most significantly, Trump brokered the Abraham Accords in 2020, facilitating normalization agreements between Israel and the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Sudan, and Morocco. These accords reshaped Middle East diplomacy, creating a coalition of Arab states aligned with Israel without requiring concessions on the Palestinian issue—a diplomatic masterstroke that expanded Israel's regional influence.

In his current term, Trump has taken his support for Israel to new heights, particularly in response to the June 2025 Iran attacks. When Israel launched airstrikes on Iranian nuclear facilities on June 13, targeting military leaders and infrastructure, Trump swiftly aligned the United States with Israel's objectives. On June 22, he authorized U.S. military strikes, delivering a powerful blow to Iran's nuclear ambitions. The operation, which followed Israel's initial strikes, demonstrated a seamless U.S.-Israel partnership.

Trump's leadership during the crisis extended beyond U.S. military action. On June 23, 2025, he announced a ceasefire between Israel and Iran in their 12-day war. His diplomatic intervention, coupled with public calls for restraint—such as his urging Israel to avoid further strikes—helped stabilize the region, allowing schools to reopen in Israel and residents to return to Tehran. Trump's ability to balance military strength with diplomatic pragmatism ensured that Israel's gains were preserved while preventing a broader regional war.

Financially, Trump has ensured Israel's military dominance through unwavering support. He has continued the \$3.8 billion annual aid package established under the 2016 Memorandum of Understanding, supplemented by an additional \$14.3 billion in emergency military aid passed in March 2025. This funding has enabled Israel to acquire advanced weaponry, which proved critical in defending against Iran's barrage of over 550 ballistic missiles and 1,000 drones in June 2025.

Newsom doesn't care. Instead, he uses social media and public statements to mock or challenge the president. He rarely if ever credits Trump for the above successes. Instead, his rhetoric frames Trump's efforts as cynical ploys for mere political gain, ignoring their substantive protections for Jewish communities and Israel. This selective omission aligns with broader Democratic Party critiques of Trump while downplaying actual policy wins. In a 2024 open letter to Muslim/Arab communities, Newsom condemned Trump's 2017 "Muslim Ban" as hateful and instead supported Biden's ceasefire push—implicitly contrasting it with Trump's "deal-making" style, without acknowledging the Accords' role in Arab-Israeli normalization.

Newsom's October 2025 signing of anti-hate bills emphasized "confronting hate in all its forms" but he criticized Trump's approach as using antisemitism as an "excuse" to silence protesters and erode democracy. He positioned California as the "national model" for Jewish safety. In a 2024 statement marking the October 7 anniversary, Newsom stood "beside... Israel" but tied it to California state actions, not federal precedents set by Trump.

When Gavin Newsom does it, it's good, wholesome and credible (according to him). Trump's successes, though, are seen through a lens of "authoritarianism." Yes, Newsom acts like a petulant child.

###

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