COLAB
San Luis Obispo County

The Coalition of Labor Agriculture and Business

Weekly Update
Sept. 28 – Oct. 5, 2026

Fall Forum Just Weeks Away

The COLAB Fall Forum is almost 3 weeks away. This fun and informative event is set for the evening of Wednesday, October 21at the picturesque Thousand Hills Ranch in Price Canyon. The event is free, with free parking, free hors d'oeuvres, wine and refreshments. Again, you can leave your wallets at home. The whole evening is free.

Make your reservation soon.

Our speaker is Jon Coupal, President of the Howard Jarvis Taxpayer Association. Jon began his tax fighting career with 9 years of service with the Pacific Legal Foundation specializing in tax and political law. He Joined HJTA in 1991and has been fighting for taxpayers since.

Jon Coupal being interviewed about tax law.

Jon is a bit of an unsung hero. Here is a list of just a few of his accomplishments:

Successfully defended Proposition 140 (term limits) before the California Supreme Court.

Won a major 1995 ruling upholding Proposition 62, guaranteeing the right to vote on local taxes.

Principal drafter of Proposition 218 (Right to Vote on Taxes Act), passed in 1996.

Chaired multiple taxpayer-focused initiative campaigns, including efforts against Proposition 88 (2006) and Proposition 1A (2009).

Jon is a frequent commentator in media and writes columns for publications throughout the country. Now, he is leading Proposition 43, also known as the Save Prop 13 measure, on the November 3 ballot.

Proposition 13 was passed in 1978 and is considered the most significant ballot measure ever passed by California voters. It has saved a countless number of homeowners from having to sell their property because they couldn't afford runaway property taxes. Since then, there have been dozens of legislative and court efforts to undo Proposition 13. Some have been successful in reducing protections. Proposition 43 erases those changes and restores all the protections that were built into the original measure.

We hope that you will join us on the 21st to meet Jon and hear about the great things the Howard Jarvis Taxpayer Foundation is doing to protect all of us from greedy tax and spend politicians and bloated government agencies all wanting more of your tax dollars. You are welcome to bring guests. Make your reservation today by emailing colabslo@gmail.com or by calling **805 548-0340**.

Cha Ching Tuesday

The September 29 meeting of the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors will be an expensive gathering. Nearly $20 million in transactions are on the agenda along with the $1.04 billion county budget. Some of the spending is in the form of pass-throughs from grants and much of the other spending is of already allocated funds. But, THEY ARE ALL TAXPAYER DOLLARS!!!

Eleven of the 43 public action agenda items require a 4/5ths vote. Our fingers are crossed that a fair amount of fiscal accountability and responsibility will be exercised to ensure good value for the taxpayers who generated all of that money.

Budget

Our county budget pays for needed services and programs in the unincorporated portion of San Luis Obispo County. It also defines how much Supervisors get to play Santa. If your community needs public safety help, health and human services help or parks help, you get to work with your Supervisor and likely the rest of the Supervisors to get results. If your roads need help, good luck.

The 2026/27 budget is our county's biggest ever. The main budget is $1.04 billion, but with the Operating Fund costing an additional $834.8 million, the total spending for our county reaches nearly $1.2 billion. That comes out to an average of about $4,250 for every man, woman and child living in our county. Naturally, many people pay multiples of that amount, while some do not pay taxes.

Fortunately the 2025/26 budget appears to have been well managed as $88.7 million will carryover - $9 million above forecast. This little bit of breathing room will get used up fast as many programs throughout the county received far less than desired in county budgetary support. The bulk of those excess funds, however, are set aside for storm recovery. With the expected severe winter from the Super El Nino, this appears to be a wise decision.

We hope to avoid calamity but will be better prepared than ever for El Nino.

The final budget approval begins with the County Auditor-Controller determining the final fund balances as of June 30, 2026. Amounts in the final fund balances above budgeted estimates are placed in contingencies, used for continued financing of the Teeter obligation (a system where public agencies in the county may receive their total secured tax levies and special assessments irrespective of actual collections and delinquencies) or placed in new reserves and/or designations. Amounts in the final fund balances above budgeted estimates may be placed in the operating budget.

Here is a graphic illustrating our county cash balance:

COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO
ATTACHMENT A – CASH COUNT REPORT
FOURTH QUARTER FISCAL YEAR 2025-26

Cash Count of Change Fund	
Employee Who Counted the Cash:	Melissa Blackburn
Date of Count:	6/30/2026
Change Fund Custodian:	Melissa Blackburn
Location of Change Fund:	1055 Monterey St, D-290, San Luis Obispo, CA 93408

CASH ON HAND (VAULT):

Bills				
360	x	100.00	=	$36,000.00
	x	50.00	=	0.00
200	x	20.00	=	4,000.00
200	x	10.00	=	2,000.00
400	x	5.00	=	2,000.00
	x	2.00	=	0.00
200	x	1.00	=	200.00
Total Bills				$44,200.00 a

CASH ON HAND (WORKING DRAWER):

Bills				
8	x	100.00	=	$800.00
18	x	50.00	=	900.00
93	x	20.00	=	1,860.00
5	x	10.00	=	50.00
48	x	5.00	=	240.00
	x	2.00	=	0.00
69	x	1.00	=	69.00
Total Bills				$3,919.00 b

Loose Coin				
15	x	$ 1.00	=	$15.00
17	x	0.50	=	8.50
25	x	0.25	=	6.25
73	x	0.10	=	7.30
31	x	0.05	=	1.55
66	x	0.01	=	0.66
Total Loose Coin				$39.26 c

Rolled Coin					
	x	25.00	=	$0.00	Dollar
	x	10.00	=	0.00	Half Dollar
25	x	10.00	=	250.00	Quarter
15	x	5.00	=	75.00	Dime
14	x	2.00	=	28.00	Nickel
51	x	0.50	=	25.50	Penny
Total Rolled Coin				$378.50 d	

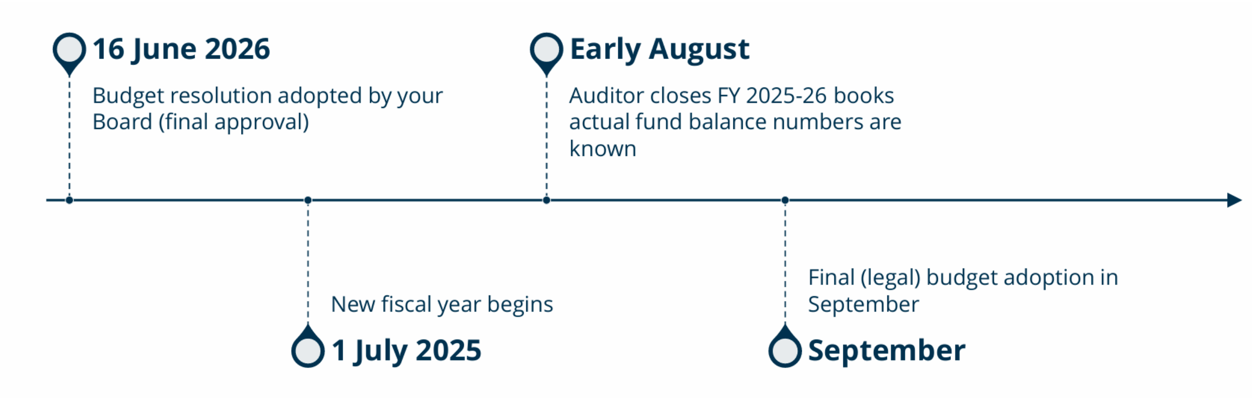
Total Currency	a + b + c + d	$48,536.76
Total Checks		0.00
Total Credit Cards		0.00
Total Cash on Hand		$48,536.76

CASH ACCOUNTABILITY:

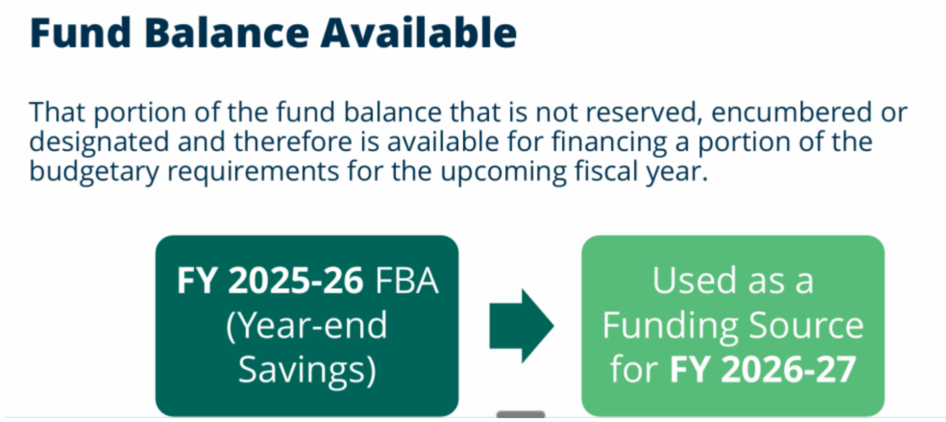
Receipts Used:		
Beginning Number		
Ending Number		
Receipts Amount		$0.00
Total Cash Balance from TDR		48,536.76
Overage (Shortage)		$0.00 *

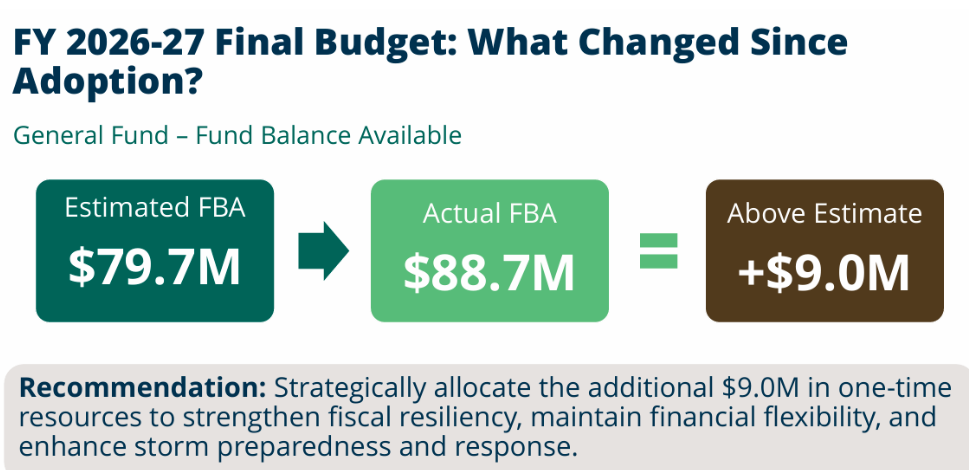
* Total Cash on Hand - Total Cash Accountability

Here is the timeline for the budget:



As mentioned previously, a balance left over from the current budget was larger than expected, allowing for a carry forward of $88.7 million ot $9 million more than forecast:





Here are the details of the $9 million left over dollars:

General Fund – Fund Balance Available
$9M above estimate

Differences between Recommended Budget FBA Estimate and Actual FBA	
Non-Departmental Revenue	$4.1M
Departmental & Contingency Savings	$4.9M
Difference between projected and actual	$9M

Financial Rebalancing and Resiliency Initiative- Phase III: Department-Managed Trust Account Review

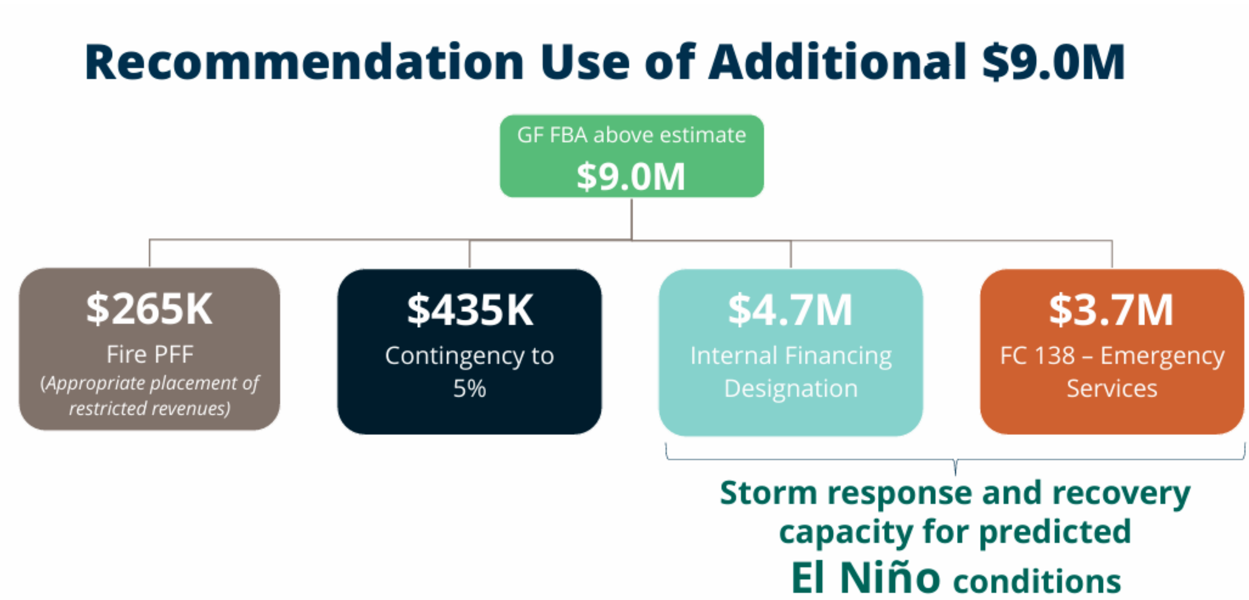
$4.7M of $9M related to "Trust Review Clean-Up Actions" → Internal Financing Designation

Attachment 2 - EXHIBIT 1

COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO
June 30, 2026
Proposed versus Actual Fund Balance Available

COUNTY FUNDS	Fund #	Estimated Fund Balance Unreserved/ Undesignated June 30, 2026	Actual Fund Balance Unreserved/ Undesignated June 30, 2026	Difference Over (Under)	Appropriation to Contingencies	Designation	General Reserve	General Purpose	Revenue Adjustment Inc/(Decr)	Object Level Appropriation Adjustment
General Fund	1000000000	79,663,863	88,713,569	9,049,706	434,995	4,686,880				3,927,831
Capital Projects	1100000000	-	695,817	695,817						695,817
Road Fund	1200000000	-	6,413,284	6,413,284		6,413,284				
DSS Homeless/Affordable Housing	1200500000	-	604,206	604,206						604,206
PFF	1201000000	-	-			265,316			265,316	
Parks	1201500000	-	-	-						
Co-Wide Automation Repl	1202000000	-	1,175,770	1,175,770		1,175,770				
General Govt Building Repl	1202500000	-	-	-						
Tax Reduction Reserve	1203000000	-	-	-						
Road Impact Fees	1203500000	-	5,601,791	5,601,791		2,639,460				2,962,331
Wildlife & Grazing	1204000000	11,610	13,035	1,425		1,425				
Library	1205000000	-	767,474	767,474		767,474				
Fish & Game	1205500000	16,487	21,877	5,390		5,390				
Emergency Medical Services	1207000000	-	82,920	82,920						82,920
COP Loans DSF	1208000000	-	-	-						
Pension Obligation Bonds	1801000000									
Los Osos Habitat Conservation Program	1209000000	-	20,599	20,599						20,599
TOTAL		79,691,960	104,110,342	24,418,382	434,995	15,954,999	-	-	265,316	8,293,704

The $9 million could have been burned up on pet projects, more consultancy contracts or another portion of a mile of some pleasant new recreation path, but surprisingly, wiser choices were made:



We are disappointed to see that our County Road Fund has a Fund Balance Available of well over $6 million. Do they need help finding road repair projects? And just wait until the good folks in Templeton see the Library Fund Balance Available:

Other Funds - Fund Balance Available

Primarily Restricted, Project-Related or Timing Driven

Fund	Additional FBA	Primary Driver	Recommended Use
Capital Projects	**$695,817**	Higher-than-anticipated interest earnings	Appropriate to operating budget for **future project costs**
Road Fund	**$6,413,284**	Timing difference between monthly SB 1/RMRA revenues and project expenditures	Place in **designation for future eligible projects**
Homeless Services & Affordable Housing	**$604,206**	Variability in homelessness and affordable housing grant revenues/awards	Appropriate to **operating budget**
Countywide Automation	**$1,175,770**	Higher-than-anticipated interest earnings	Place in Countywide Automation Replacement Designation for **future projects**
Road Impact Fees	**$5,601,791**	Higher impact-fee/interest revenue plus $2.96M year-end transfer timing error	$2.96M to FY 2026-27 **transfers out**; $2.64M to designation for **future projects**
Wildlife & Grazing	**$1,425**	No project awards plus higher grazing-fee revenue	**Split between Project and General Purpose designations**
Library	**$767,474**	Higher property tax/interest revenue plus expenditure savings	Place in **Library General Purpose Designation**
Fish & Game	**$5,390**	Higher fines/penalties plus expenditure savings	$5,174 to **Project Designation**; $216 to **General Purpose Designation**
Emergency Medical Services	**$82,920**	Unanticipated year-end pass-through revenue	Appropriate to **operating budget** for hospital and physician payments
Los Osos Habitat Conservation Program	**$20,599**	Development-credit revenue	Appropriate to **operating budget**

So with all of that data, here is our semi total budget. Don’t forget the $834.8 million in Operating Funds that are not included in the figure below:

FY 2027-28 Final Budget Numbers

	Adopted	Final	Change
General Fund	$834.8M	**$843.9M**	*$9.0M*
Governmental Funds	$1.02B	**$1.04B**	*$24.4M*

DA Fights Crime Despite BoS

The District Attorney's Office has 3 important items on the Sept, 29 BoS agenda. Two of the items are acceptance of grants designated for victims' assistance programs. We are especially proud of our county DAs office taking this important issue so seriously. In many counties, victims are ignored and left to fend for themselves – a double whammy.

The third item is a report on real-estate fraud prosecution. This is a serious crime that is growing worse as more and more fraudsters are picking up on this form of grand theft.

It is worth noting that District Attorney Dan Dow had requested funding for several needed positions in order to handle a growing caseload. One of those positions was for a specialist to prosecute fraud. The majority of the Board couldn't be bothered to find funding for such low priority (in their minds) stuff.

Many times in the past year, the majority of the Board made a fuss, wrung their hands and directed staff to do everything possible to address the expected increase in people needing assistance due to stricter rules about Medicaid. But, when faced with an increase in criminal prosecutions, they yawned a big, bored NO!

We will cover the details of the DAs report next week.

Two Worries and a Wobbler

This week we continue with a deep dive into the ballot propositions for the November 3 election. These were analyzed by retired election attorney Charles “chuck” Bell and have been presented on the Protecting What Matters with Barry Fisher radio show.

Elections expert Chuck Bell

The show can be heard every Tuesday at 12:30 on KPRL. Further analysis of additional measures will be presented over the next 2 weeks. Callers with questions about the ballot measures are welcome to call in at 805 238-5775.

Today we are looking at Propositions 2, 5 and 45.

Proposition 2 seeks to nullify protections passed by voters in the Gann Limit passed in 1979 and in Budget Stabilization efforts known as the "Rainy Day" fund in 2014. These measures were put in place to restrain government. We do not need to make it easier to increase revenues.

Is undoing taxpayer protections a wise thing?

2026 CALIFOIRNIA BALLOT PROPOSITION REVIEW

TYPE: CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT/STATUTE/BOTH	**Number 2**
Title: INCREASES STATE'S RAINY DAY FUND	
CATEGORY: TAX RELATED; BOND; ELECTION RELATED; MISCELLANEOUS/OTHER STATE GOVERNMENT FUNDING	
DESCRIPTION OF WHAT ARE MEASURE'S CHIEF PURPOSES AND POINTS • Increases State Rainy Day Fund, approved by voters in 2024, to provide funding for education, helath care, public safety, and "other essential services" during economic downturss • Doubles the budget reserve cap from 10% to 20% to General Fund revvenues, requiring savings until Fund's balance equals 20% of General Fund • Increases budget reserves for education, state debts and pension obligations	
DOES BALLOT TITLE FAIRLY REPRESENT MEASURE'S CHIEF PURPOSES AND POINTS OR IS IT BIASED? No – Fails to mention that Prop 2 makes major, additional exceptions to Gann spending limit so that Gann objective to limit spending by returning to taxpayers the excess revenues over expenditures	
Chief Supporters • Major Democratic officials; California Hospital Association and California Primary Care Association	**Chief Opponents** • Assemblyman David Tangipa
POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS/CONTEXT/DESCRIPTION & ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL IMPACT OF MEASURE • Proponents say Prop. 2 would protect schools, healthcare, and public safety funding. Proposition 2 doubles the state's Rainy Day Fund, stops politicians from overspending when there is a budget surplus, and ensures education funding continues during economic downturns. Opponents say Prop 2 ensures more spending, not savings, creating a Gann Spending Limit loophole that makes taxpayer rebates less likely by excluding additional reserve deposits from California's constitutional spending limit. It provides no new funding for education, healthcare, or public safety. Vote No to protect taxpayer rebates and constitutional limits..	

Sources: [Official Voter Information Guide | California Secretary of State]() - [Ballot Propositions - California Budget & Policy Center]() -

Proposition 5 changes the rules for recall elections by eliminating the election of a replacement, should an office holder be recalled. Instead the replacement would be appointed.

Do we want to change the way recall elections work?

TYPE: LEGISLATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT	**Number 5**
Title: CHANGES RECALL ELECTION PROCESS FOR STATEWIDE OFFICERS	
CATEGORY: Election	
DESCRIPTION OF WHAT ARE MEASURE'S CHIEF PURPOSES AND POINTS • Changes recall and replacement procedures if a Governor is recalled. Lieutenant Governor becomes governor until a replacement is elected or the end of the current term of that office. For other constitutional officers, the office remains vacant or until a special election or the officer is replaced by appointment according to specified law. • A recalled officer can be a candidate in a special election to fill the office.	
DOES BALLOT TITLE FAIRLY REPRESENT MEASURE'S CHIEF PURPOSES AND POINTS OR IS IT BIASED? YES	
Chief Supporters • League of Women Voters CA; Common Cause CA; Secretary of State Weber	**Chief Opponents** • Election Integrity Process CA; California Republican Party
POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS/CONTEXT/DESCRIPTION & ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL IMPACT OF MEASURE • Proponents say Prop. 5 restores the recall to its original purpose: removing corrupt officials. It closes the loophole that allows replacements to win with a small fraction of the vote, reducing the politics and costs of future recalls. Opponents say Prop. 5 degrades California's century-old recall process by limiting voters' right to select a replacement for recalled officials. Instead, when statewide elected officials are recalled, other politicians would choose a replacement. For lower offices, another costly, taxpayer-funded election would come months later, leaving the office vacant and the people unrepresented. • Reverses process used in the 2003 Gubernatorial recall and recall replacement elections, and as set forth in the historic 1911 Progressive reforms. • Insulates recall process from effecting changes when one political party controls most or all statewide offices.	
Related Ballot Initiatives	
None	

Sources: Official Voter Information Guide | California Secretary of State - Ballot Propositions - California Budget & Policy Center -

The California Environmental Quality Act, better known as CEQA causes countless delays and costly compliance hassles for housing. This measure seeks to remedy some of the red tape problems. It does not accomplish broad reforms, but makes meaningful progress towards reform. It does create greater Project Labor Agreement requirements in some cases.

Are the CEQA reforms in Prop 45 worth it?

2026 CALIFOIRNIA BALLOT PROPOSITION REVIEW	
TYPE: INITIATIVE STATUTE	**Number 45**
Title: MODIFIES ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW FOR CERTAIN PROJECTS	
CATEGORY: MISCELLANEOUS	
DESCRIPTION OF WHAT ARE MEASURE'S CHIEF PURPOSES AND POINTS • **Amends CA CEQA (Environmental Quality Act) ot expenditure environmental review for specified project categories (most housing, transportation, water, health, wildfire mitigation, educational facility, internet acces and clean energy projects)** • **Sets deadlines for public agencies to complete environmental review and take require actions** • **Allows expedited review of environmental impacts limiting public agencises' current obligation to consider a range of feasible project alternatives to reduce environmental impacts** • **Establishes deadlines for filing and resolving lawsuits challenge project approvals, limits evidence courts may consider and relief courts can order**	
DOES BALLOT TITLE FAIRLY REPRESENT MEASURE'S CHIEF PURPOSES AND POINTS OR IS IT BIASED? YES	
Chief Supporters • **California Chamber of Commerce including major Silicon Valley donors Brin and Doerr, California Building Industry Assn, CA Realtors; Major Utilities and Hospitals**	**Chief Opponents** • **Cean and Health California Fund with major labor, health and environmental orgnaizations**
POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS/CONTEXT/DESCRIPTION & ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL IMPACT OF MEASURE • Would energize building of commercial and housing projects by making major changes to current CEQA rules that have had major deterrent effects on the timing and building of California projects.	

Sources: Official Voter Information Guide | California Secretary of State - Ballot Propositions - California Budget & Policy Center -

A Great Evening:

Last Week

The next San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors meeting is scheduled for Tuesday September 29th. This results in a four-week gap from the last meeting which was on September 1. The meeting on the 29th is significant because that is when the nearly $1.2 billion 2026/27 county operating budget will be adopted. Don't forget to RSVP for the Fall Forum with John Coupal on Oct.21. It's a free event with hors d'oeuvres, refreshments and lots of great information.

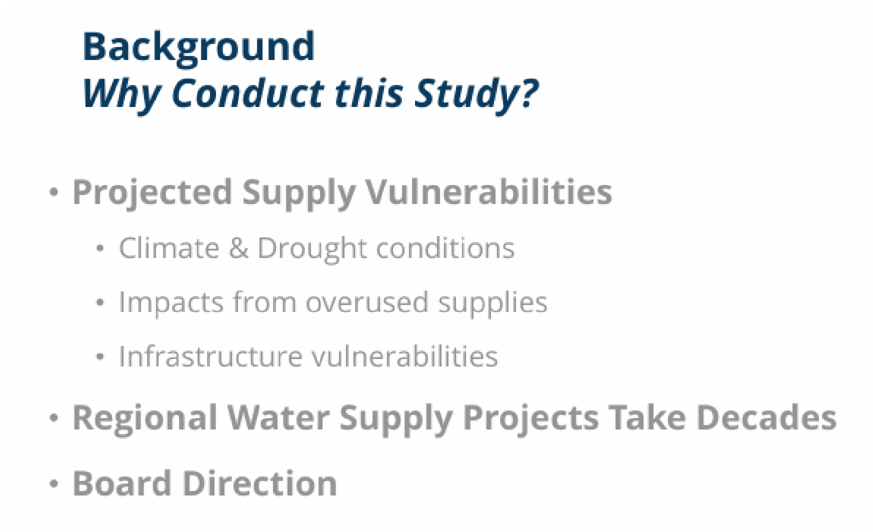
Even Shabbier Than We First Thought

Last week we covered what seemed like some glaring deficiencies in a feasibility study that was paid for with taxpayer dollars and presented to the Board of Supervisors at their September 1 meeting. The report attempted to fool people into believing that all options for desalination along the San Luis Obispo County coast had been thoroughly explored and that even the best options are financially beyond reach. We pointed out real world options that were not explored, leaving many questions and no clear answers.

This week we will look at some of the details that were included in the study and find even more questions that need to be answered before the question of desal is resolved for our community.

Here are some of those details:

On the following cover page, we see the vague reference to "Board Direction" We guess that staff means that they were seeking board direction, but we wonder whether staff received board direction in the choices that were made in the presentation.

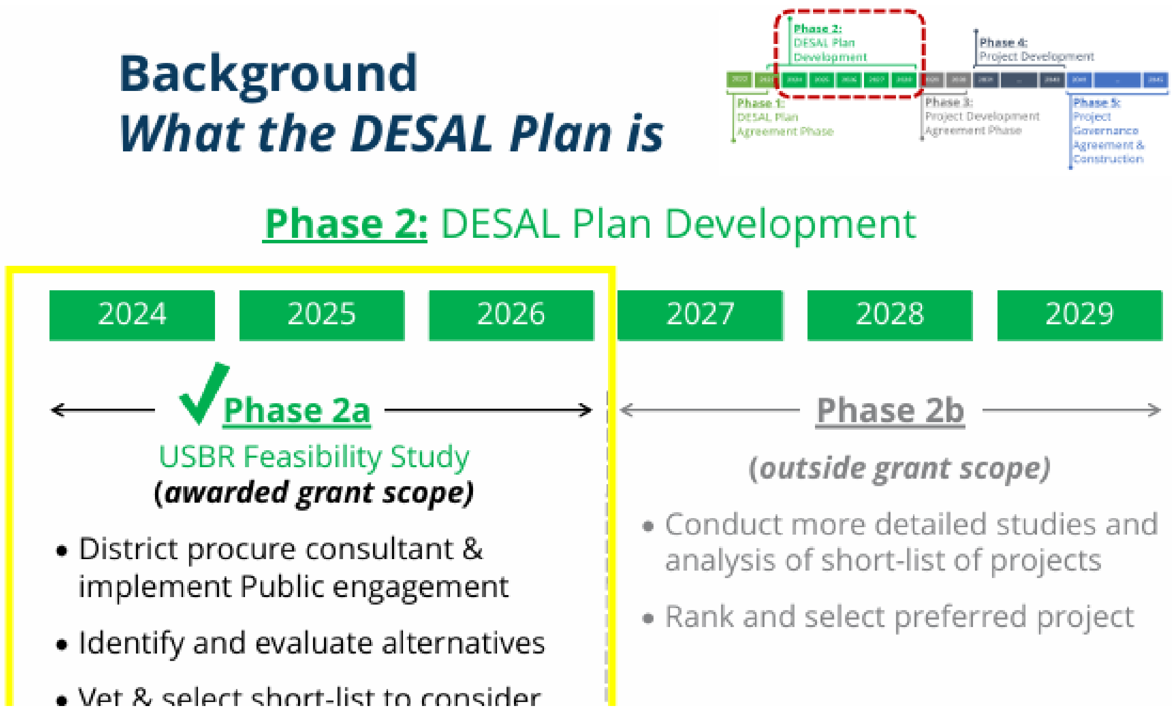


Here we start with more questions. Stormwater capture – where? What about Salinas Dam is an ongoing regional efficiency effort? Is there really any cloudseeding going on, and if so, how much water does it produce?

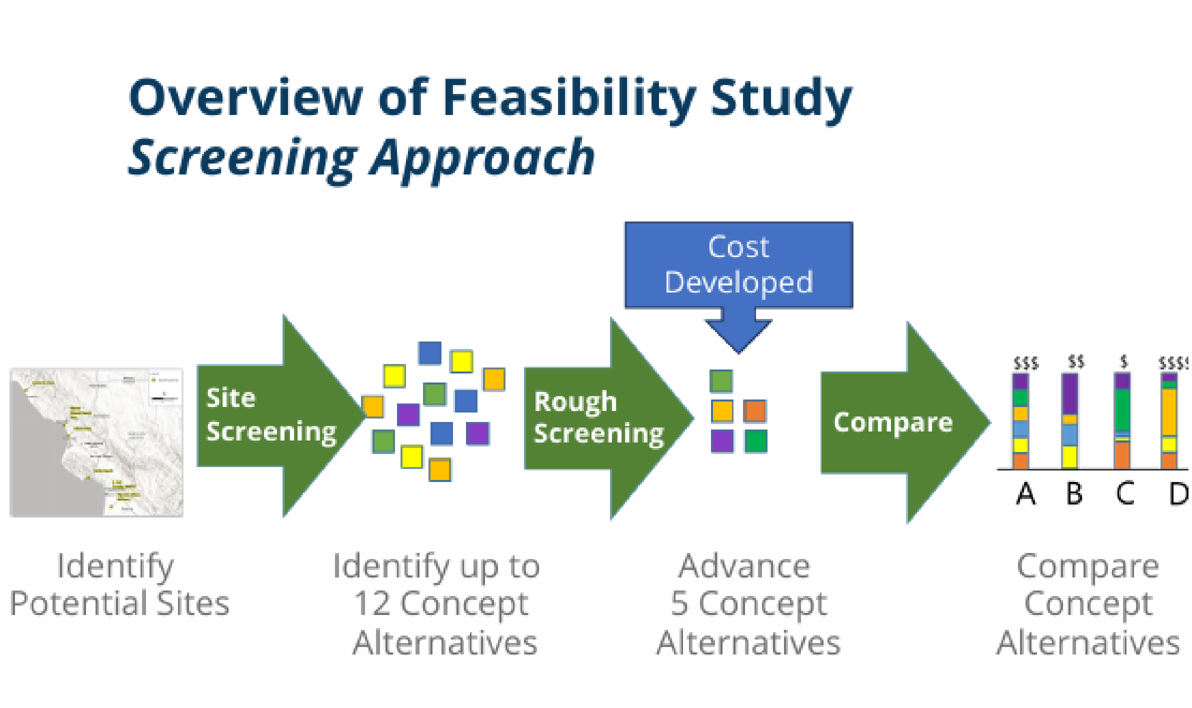
Below is the anticipated timeframe – assuming the hundreds of millions of dollars required can be found:

Below are the various agencies that make up the consortium investigating the potential for desal on our coastline:

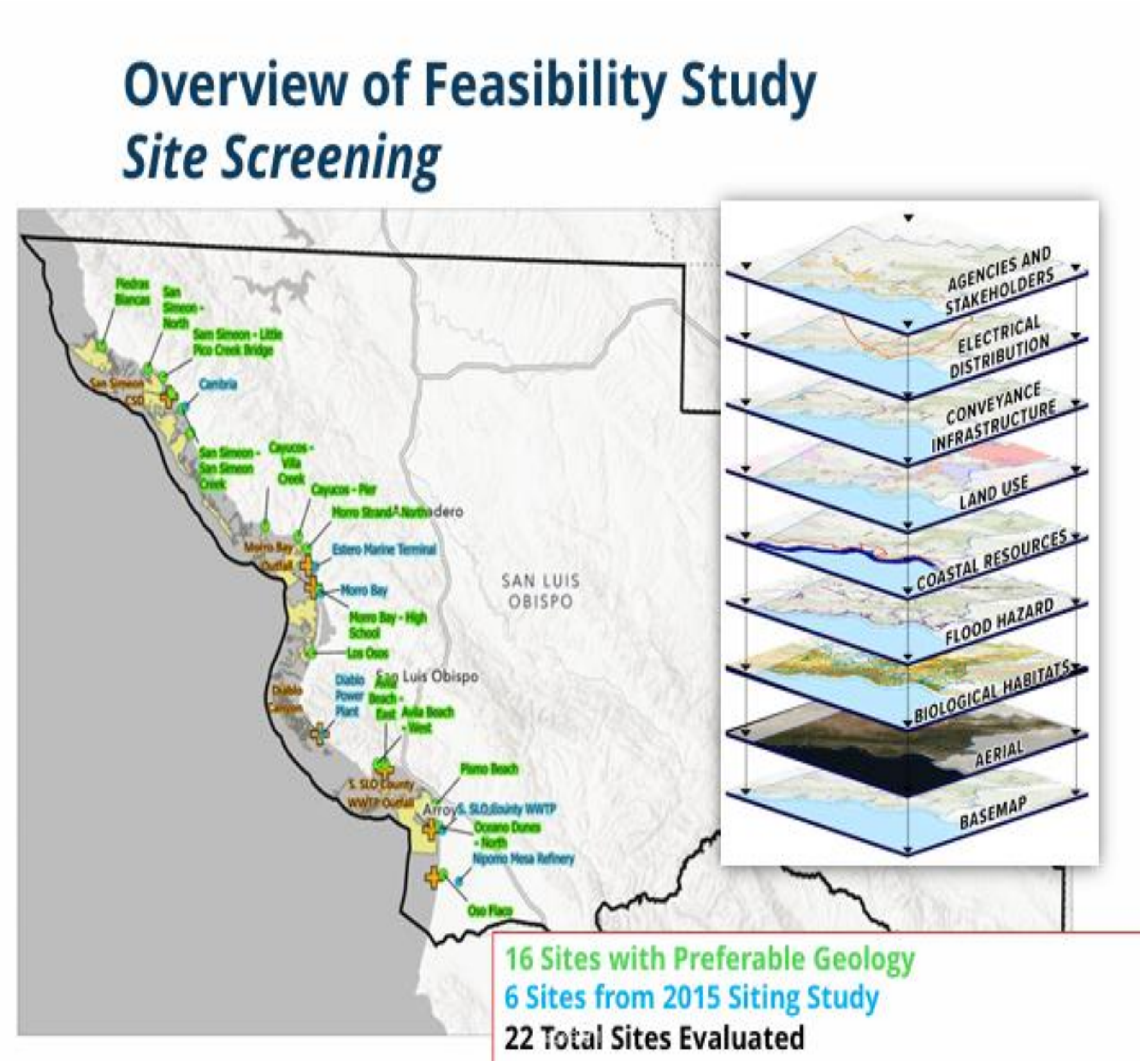
Apparently, the "plan" is at stage 1.5. There was no real reporting on how public engagement took place, or what the reaction was:



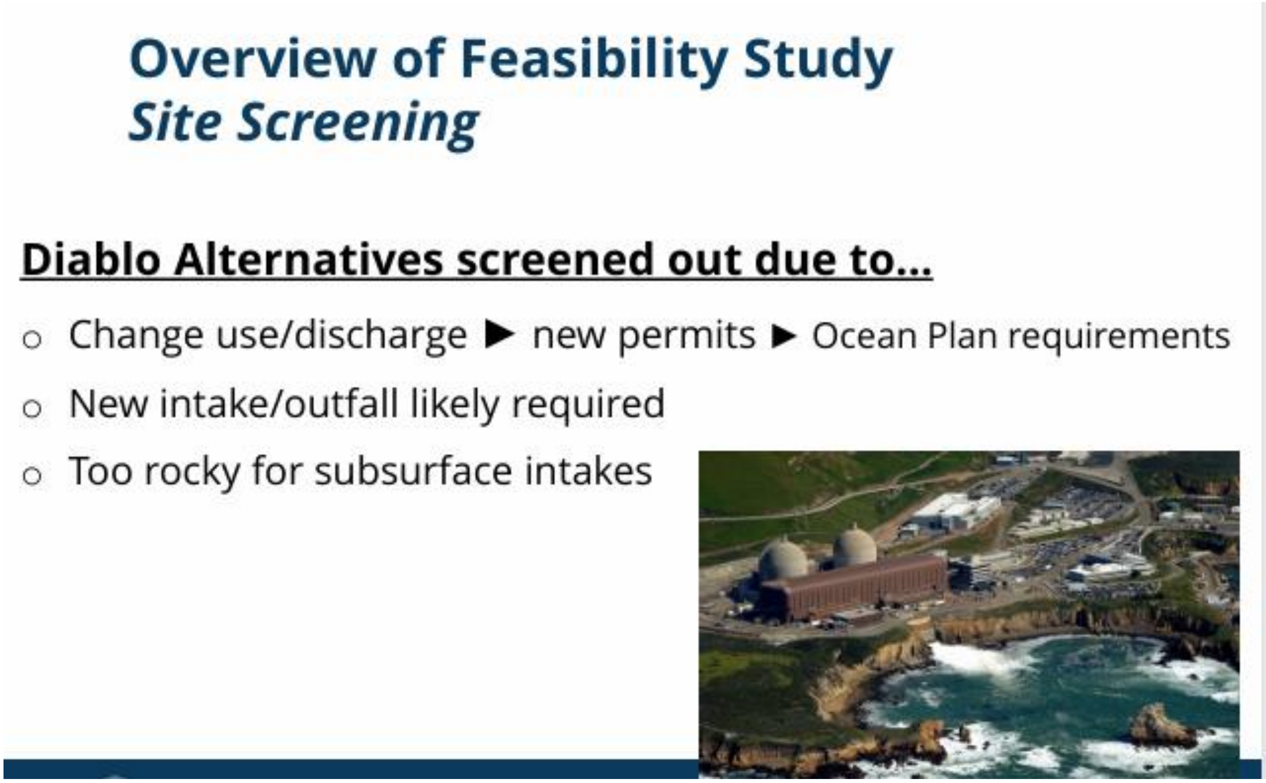
The screening approach seems to have been done well:



The criterion also seems to be reasonable and well thought out:

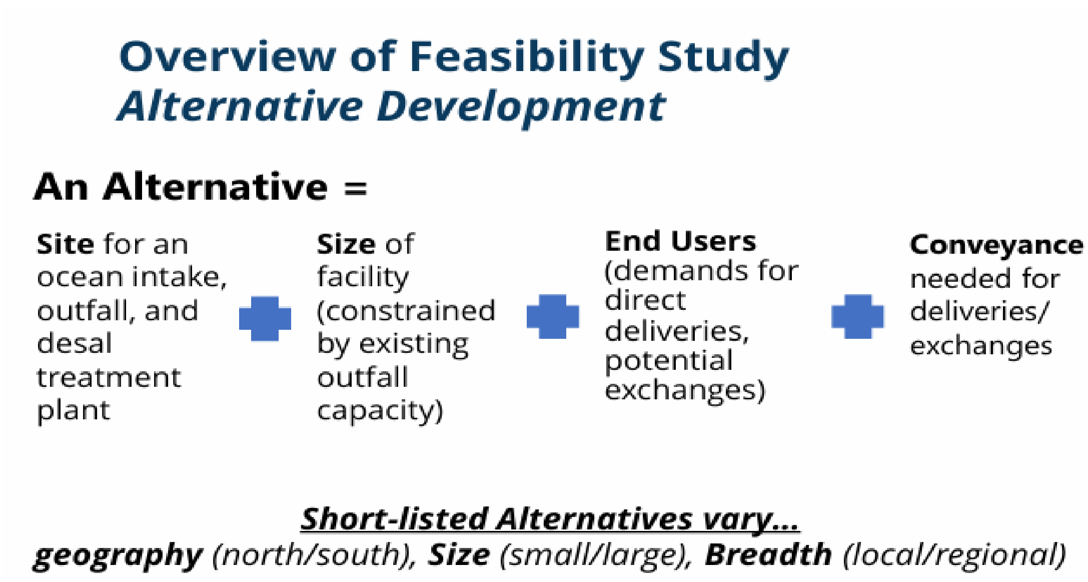


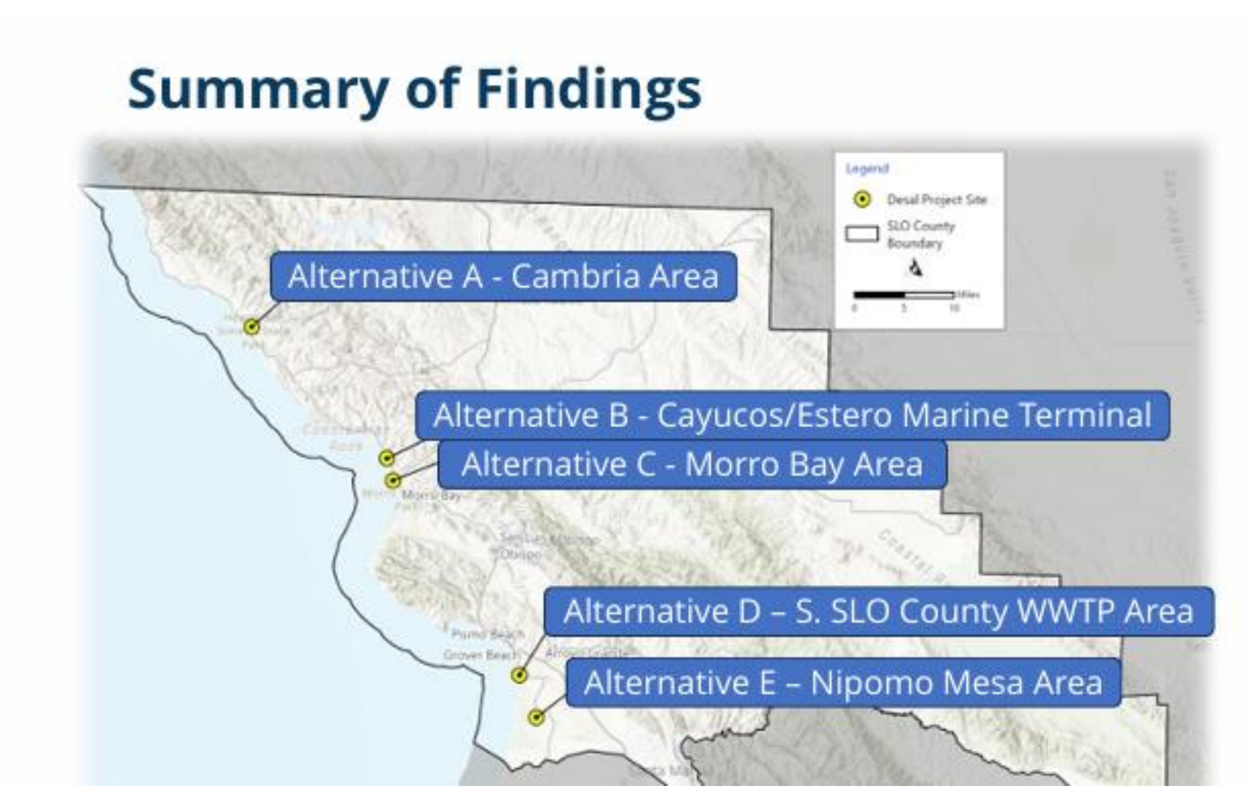
Just when things were looking credible, the Diablo Canyon Power Plant is stricken from this list in what feels like an arbitrary gesture. The reasons given apply to any site but are singled out in an effort to disqualify the plant without any comparison to how similar challenges would be met at other sites. Further, no credit was given for the power source already being onsite or for brine remix technology also already onsite.




Existing desal infrastructure currently in place and functioning at Diablo.

We notice a couple things about the short list. First, Alternative B in Cayucos where locals recently put up a big fuss, opposing the expanded use of a small existing emergency desal unit because it could lead to new growth. We would guess that local community opposition would be difficult to overcome. The other is Alternative E which is presumably the Phillips 66 property which is privately owned. Wouldn't it be arrogantly presumptive of government to be scheming to put a public facility on private property without cooperation from the owner? Perhaps they have such permission, but there is nothing to indicate such:





The now closed Phillips 66 refinery is now being cleared for its next use.

So, what is next? Here is the planned approach. Notice funding isn't mentioned until the end of "mid-term" activities:

Just to draw a conclusion to the subject that will seemingly divert the hopeful to other less growth friendly (and less expensive) options, we are left with this:

The path to regional resiliency continues on multiple fronts

- **Recycled Water**
  - About 70% of wastewater is or is planned to be reused
  - Direct potable reuse, additional storage and blending water for brine options to consider for remaining
- **Nacimiento Water Project**
  - Sales program development next steps
- **State Water Project**
  - Local survey of interest, contract modernization and use of management tools
  - Regional study with Santa Barbara County and Central Coast Water Authority

Recommended Action

1. **Receive a presentation on the DESAL Plan Feasibility Study**
2. **Receive and file the DESAL Plan Feasibility Study (Attachment 1); and**
3. **Direct staff to continue engaging with potential regional project partners in discussions regarding water supply and resiliency, including desalination project concept alternatives, opportunities, and projects.**

Questions?

For more information, please visit:
https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/DESAL

Questions? Why yes, we do have a few:

Did the consultant that prepared this “feasibility study” choose to ignore the private sector options that are widely available? Were they unaware of those options? Were they “strongly suggested” to leave them out by someone high up in county government?

The quick dismissal of Diablo Canyon because it would require a pipeline seemed too convenient. Don’t other options also require pipelines? How much would a pipeline from Diablo Canyon cost and how much would be saved with existing infrastructure such as energy and brine remixing technologies already in place? How does the total cost of desal at Diablo Canyon compare to building a new facility from scratch at one of the other suggested sites? Did someone high up in county government instruct the consultant to dismiss Diablo as an option? If so, could that be because dependence on Diablo would require the 20-year extension of the operating permit?

Could it be possible that the NIMBY no-growthers in leadership in our county discreetly put their thumb on the scale to produce a study that made desal seem impracticable locally? After all, one of the biggest things standing in the way of new homes, especially in coastal communities, is water.

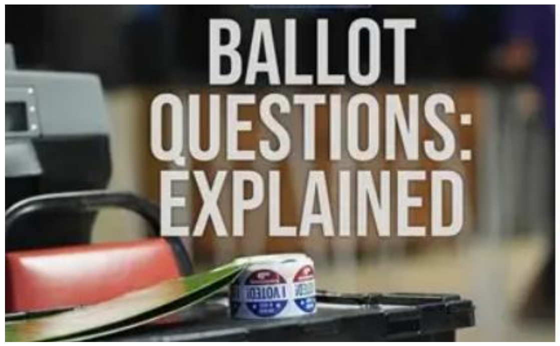
We have the situation in the Paso Basin where we are now seeing $1.1 million in taxes to pay consultants. No answers, no progress towards greater sustainability. Just reports. Now we have coastline water issues generating money for consultants. Again, no solutions, no progress towards desal. Just paper telling us that we probably can’t afford it.

Ballot Measure Details

Ballot propositions are increasingly becoming a new way to legislate. They used to be for big issues that the legislature was afraid to take up, or incapable of addressing. Now, special interest groups with money see them as pathways around the legislative process. It now becomes all about the marketing language and how warm and fuzzy the description reads.

The most confounding part of many ballot measures are the unintended (or hidden) consequences. Few voters take the time to read and understand what they are actually voting for – or against. Instead, they rely on snippets posted on social media or 30 second media buys filled with meaningless fluff.

As tempting as it is to just vote “NO” on everything, some measures do a lot of good and need to pass.



Retired election attorney Charles (Chuck) Bell has done a detailed analysis with Protecting What Matters radio host Barry Fisher of all the measures on the November 3 ballot. Over the next couple of weeks, we will share these analyses so that you can decide for yourself how to vote based on factual information.

The first ones covered are Props 40, 41 and 42 along with Prop 3.

Prop 40 is known as the Billionaire Tax. There are several areas of strong concern. To begin with, it taxes “wealth” rather than earnings. This means that unrealized profit is taxed, despite the chance that things like stocks or real estate could decline in value after the tax is collected. Of course, there are a few misrepresentations involved as well. For example, it is promoted as a “one time tax” and only on billionaires. Only a fool would believe such outrageous fibs. Then there is the enormous impact of so many successful and productive people leaving California to avoid this deeply unfair tax,

Here is the analysis:

2026 CALIFOIRNIA BALLOT PROPOSITION REVIEW	
TYPE: CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT/STATUTE/BOTH	Number **40**
Title: IMPOSES ONE TIME TAX ON CERTAIN TAXPAYERS	
CATEGORY: TAX	
DESCRIPTION OF WHAT ARE MEASURE'S CHIEF PURPOSES AND POINTS • **Imposes one-time tax on "wealth" of taxpayers with covered assets valued over $1 billion. "Wealth" includes businesses, securities, art, collectibles, intellectual property, but not real estate and 'some pensions and retirement accounts. Also allows the Legislature to impose tax on lower wealth brackets without complying with other state Constitutional limits on taxation.** • **Allocates 90% of tax revenues for health care, 10% for food assistance or education related expenses.** • **Prohibits using revenue to replace existing funding for the above purposes and exempts tax revenue from school fund, budget reserves and the state's Gann spending limit**	
DOES BALLOT TITLE FAIRLY REPRESENT MEASURE'S CHIEF PURPOSES AND POINTS OR IS IT BIASED? NO. It grossly misrepresents the magnitude of the tax and who will or could be subject to the tax.	
Chief Supporters • SEIU-United Healthcare Workers; Teamsters; AFSCME Unions; California Democratic Party	**Chief Opponents** • Gov. Newsom; California Teachers Association; Silicon Valley Billionaires (*Building A Better CA*); California Medical Association; California Primary Care Association; California Republican Party; San Francisco Democratic Party
POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS/CONTEXT/DESCRIPTION & ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL IMPACT OF MEASURE • Proponents say Prop. 40's wealth tax would fill the gap which the Trump administration created by slashing healthcare funding to pay for billionaire tax breaks, eliminating coverage for over a million Californians and doubling health insurance premiums for millions more. The make the class argument that the wealthiest should pay their "fair share" and stop sticking the middle class with the bill. Opponents say Prop. 40 is a flawed, one-time tax scheme that hurts our economy, damages our state budget, and contains a loophole exposing all Californians to unaffordable taxes but does nothing to lower healthcare costs. Passage would blow a major hole in traditional system of income taxation and drive wealth generators away from California. Hidden provision would allow future Legislatures to apply this wealth tax to lower bracketed individual taxpayers. Legislative Analyst's estimate seriously misses the mark on estimated revenues and particularly on the long term effects on California budget revenues.	

Sources: Official Voter Information Guide | California Secretary of State - Ballot Propositions - California Budget & Policy Center -

Prop 41 is good government. It calls for levels of accountability and disclosure that should have been in place all along. It allows voters to see a much more detailed assessment of how much money (taxes) various ballot measures really cost.

Here is the analysis:

2026 CALIFOIRNIA BALLOT PROPOSITION REVIEW

TYPE: CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT **(adds new Article XXIV to the Constitution)**	**Number 41**

Title: PROHIBITS NEW STATE TAXES THAT EXCLUDE REVENUES FROM STATE SPENDING LIMIT. REQUIRES AUDITS FOR NEW STATE SPECIAL TAXES

CATEGORY:
TAX & GOV'T FINANCE

DESCRIPTION OF WHAT ARE MEASURE'S CHIEF PURPOSES AND POINTS

- Requires financial and performance audits of new state programs funded by new taxes
- Attempts to effectively negate Proposition 40 that establishes wealth taxes on 'billionaires' (and perhaps others)
- Applies Gann Limit (a special limit on spending new revenues that exceed the Gann Limit on annual state spending) to taxes that fund new state programs. This means that revenues raised must be offset to affect spending on other programs.
- Requires that the pre-election audits of new state special taxes proposed to be adopted by the voters and such an official audit would appear in the State Voter Information Guide; also would require regular periodic audits of any programs funded by such special taxes.

DOES BALLOT TITLE FAIRLY REPRESENT MEASURE'S CHIEF PURPOSES AND POINTS OR IS IT BIASED?
YES

Chief Supporters	**Chief Opponents**
• Yes on 41—Californians for Transparency and Accountability, A Coalition of Small Businesses, Taxpayers, Good Government Advocates, Accountants, and Auditing Experts • California State Chamber of Commerce • Reform California	• SEIU – United Health Care Workers

Sources: [Official Voter Information Guide | California Secretary of State] - [Ballot Propositions - California Budget & Policy Center] -

2026 CALIFOIRNIA BALLOT PROPOSITION REVIEW

POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS/CONTEXT/DESCRIPTION & ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL IMPACT OF MEASURE

- Proponents say Prop. 41 would require that when special taxes are proposed by voter initiatives, the California State Auditor would review programs funded by the tax before the initiative appears on the ballot. The California State Auditor also would regularly review programs funded by special taxes approved by voters or the Legislature. In addition, the state might not be able to exclude any new special tax spending from its spending limit. Opponents contend it is a ruse to defeat Prop. 40, Prop. 41 directly conflicts (by intent of drafters) with Proposition 40 that imposes a special (wealth) tax for the purpose of funding health care programs. If Propositions 41 and 40 both are adopted by voters, Proposition 41 would have to attain more affirmative votes that Proposition 40 to become law and accomplish the negation of Proposition 40.
-

Related Ballot Initiatives
Proposition 40 and 42

Prop 42 makes it impossible to undertake some of the abuses in the taxation system that are utilized in Prop 40:

2026 CALIFOIRNIA BALLOT PROPOSITION REVIEW

TYPE: INITIATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT	Number **42**
Title: PROHIBITS NEW STATE PERSONAL PROPERTY TAXES AND CERTAIN RETROACTIVE STATE TAXES	
CATEGORY: TAX	
DESCRIPTION OF WHAT ARE MEASURE'S CHIEF PURPOSES AND POINTS • Prohibits new state taxes on personal property, including business interests, intellectual property and financial assets (including assets in retirement and investment accounts) • Prohibits retroactive application of new state taxes based on taxpayer's conduct, activity or state that occurred before new tax's effective date. Specifically to new taxes that are enacted or take effect on or after January 1, 2026	
DOES BALLOT TITLE FAIRLY REPRESENT MEASURE'S CHIEF PURPOSES AND POINTS OR IS IT BIASED? Yes	
Chief Proponents • Silicon Valley Billionaires (Build Better California); Reform California; California State Chamber of Commerce; State Building Trades Council	Chief Opponents • Proposition 40 Proponents
POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS/CONTEXT/DESCRIPTION & ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL IMPACT OF MEASURE • Proponents say California's Constitution currently allows the Legislature to tax retirement and savings—even though you already paid taxes on that money when earned. Prop. 42 protects Californians from this double taxation, by prohibiting new and retroactive taxes on personal property, including retirement and savings. Opponents say Prop. 42 isn't really about protecting your retirement	

- Would also prevent the Legislature or voter by initiative from enacting taxes on assets in the future without a Constitutional Amendment ballot measure.
- Legislative Analyst concludes it would thus result in reduction of taxes in the future.

Related Ballot Initiatives
Propositions 40 & 41

Sources: Official Voter Information Guide | California Secretary of State - Ballot Propositions - California Budget & Policy

Prop 3 really comes down to whether voters are comfortable with the indebtedness that is ultimately repaid by taxpayers at nearly double the bond offering. Some might see it as an investment, while others see it as a tax increase. Either way, the cost should be carefully considered:

2026 CALIFOIRNIA BALLOT PROPOSITION REVIEW

TYPE: CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT/STATUTE/BOTH	**Number 3**

Title: PROVIDES PERMANENT FUNDING FOR SCHOOLS AND HEALTH CARE BY EXTENDING TAX ON HIGH INCOMES

CATEGORY: TAX RELATED; BOND; ELECTION RELATED; MISCELLANEOUS/OTHER

TAX

DESCRIPTION OF WHAT ARE MEASURE'S CHIEF PURPOSES AND POINTS

- **Makes 2012 voter-approved tax rates permanent for high income Californians currently set to expire in 2031**
- **Rates apply to $371 K for single taxpayers, $742 K for joint filers and $505 for heads of households, adjusted annually for inflation**
- **Allocates 89% to K-12 schools, 11% to community colleges**
- **Allows local school boards to decide how to spend revenue**
- **Increases general fund revenues available for health care, budge reserves and other programs**

DOES BALLOT TITLE FAIRLY REPRESENT MEASURE'S CHIEF PURPOSES AND POINTS OR IS IT BIASED?

YES

Chief Supporters	**Chief Opponents**
• Major CA Labor Unions (primarily California Teachers Association)	• California Taxpayers Association

POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS/CONTEXT/DESCRIPTION & ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL IMPACT OF MEASURE

- Proponents say Proposition 3 protects our schools and healthcare without raising your taxes. Prop. 3 prevents a massive tax cut for millionaires and billionaires by maintaining the current tax rates the wealthiest 2% have paid for 15 years and requires strict accountability and audits. Opponents say Californians already pay the nation's highest income, sales, and gas taxes—and have the highest cost of living. Prop. 3 makes temporary income taxes permanent while Sacramento *wastes billions* on failed programs instead of voters' priorities. They say we should fix spending first before making taxes permanent.

Sources: Official Voter Information Guide | California Secretary of State - Ballot Propositions - California Budget & Policy Center -

Next week, we will continue with analyses of Props 43, 1, 38 and 39. We will also preview some of the issues scheduled for discussion by the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors at their September 29 meeting.

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Jon Coupal
President of HJTA

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Newsom Discovers Governor Overreach – Right When He's About to Leave Office

Newsom's veto message pretends he has always been a separation-of-powers conservative; Californians know that he most certainly has not

By J. Mitchell Sances, September 27, 2026

Governor Gavin Newsom has spent eight years treating the California Constitution as a mood board. Emergency pandemic orders, budget trailer bills, and "values" statutes have flowed from Sacramento with one consistent theme: lock in the program before the next election. However, when Assembly Bill 2164 reached his desk, the governor magically discovered principle. Extradition, he announced, is an "exclusively executive function." He would not let an outgoing administration and a friendly Legislature "erode the executive authority of an incoming Governor based on their shared policy preferences, regardless of how righteous and well-intended those actions may be." He vetoed the bill on September 20.

AB 2164, by Assemblywoman Rebecca Bauer-Kahan (D-Orinda), would have written Newsom's own 2022 anti-extradition order into the Penal Code and widened it. Except where federal law compelled otherwise, a California governor could not recognize another state's demand to surrender someone whose alleged crime was providing, receiving, assisting, or "materially supporting" abortion care or gender-affirming care that is legal here. Vicarious and conspiracy theories were covered too. The point was to make California a statutory dead end for prosecutors in states that still treat those acts as crimes. Reproductive and LGBTQ caucus allies called the veto a betrayal. They had reason to expect the governor to sign. Newsom had already promised that "extremist politicians from other states" would not "reach into California" to punish doctors. "Not today. Not ever." Ever, it turns out, lasted until the statute would have bound whoever sits in the office after him.

The bill was dangerous for a reason that does not depend on anyone's view of abortion or pediatric transition. Extradition is how the fifty states remain one country for criminal law. The Constitution's Extradition Clause and the Uniform Criminal Extradition Act exist so that California cannot become a hotel for people another state has charged with a crime. A governor already has discretion at the margins. Turning that discretion into a legislative list of favored offenses invites the next majority to add its own list. What's next: gun cases, immigration detainers, environmental felonies, speech crimes invented in a blue capital or a red one? Once the Legislature can order the governor not to honor a valid demand because Sacramento prefers the underlying conduct, "legally protected activity" is just a slogan for picking which sister-state judgments count. That is a power either party would abuse. It is also a power that makes California's own warrants look optional the day another state decides to play the same game.

Newsom's veto message pretends he has always been a separation-of-powers conservative. Californians know that he most certainly has not. He has signed shield laws, funded out-of-state travel for procedures California wants to export, and used the executive order precisely because it can be withdrawn. He has not spent two terms worrying that he might "erode" the next governor's authority when the subject was climate rules, public-health mandates, or spending locked in by trailer bill. The sudden piety is specific to a function the Constitution assigns to the executive and to a calendar that includes a November election. Advocates said the quiet part out loud. The organization Reproductive Freedom for All (formerly NARAL Pro-Choice America), named Republican candidate Steve Hilton and warned that providers were "one election away from extradition." The Senate analysis of AB 2164 noted that a gubernatorial candidate had already said he would honor future requests. Newsom left the discretion in the office. He did not lock the door on a successor he may not control. That is not a conversion to limited government. It is an admission that the incoming governor might not be a member of the club. A Democratic Legislature tying a future Republican's hands on extradition would have been a gift to the very people who wanted AB 2164.

Newsom refused the gift and called it institutional hygiene. The more parsimonious reading is presidential and parochial at once: do not create a precedent that a GOP governor is a constitutional infant, and do not hand that governor a statute he can campaign against as Sacramento nullifying other states' criminal law. Better to keep the 2022 executive order, claim the moral high ground, and let the next occupant own the choice.

Californians can believe two things at the same time. Interstate extradition should not be a policy buffet. And Gavin Newsom did not become a scholar of executive restraint in September 2026 because he suddenly understands the dangers of tyranny. He became one because the office he has treated as a personal instrument might soon have someone else's name on the door. If that someone is a Republican, Newsom would never dream of giving him a Legislature-written script for which fugitives California will hide. He would rather keep the power and the option where he has always preferred it: in the governor's office, until the voters decide whose office it is.

J. Mitchell Sances
J. Mitchell Sances, PhD is a linguist, writer, and a researcher. He is a contributing columnist and assistant editor for Outspoken. As a Louisiana native with strong conservative and Christian roots, he seeks to preserve American values and freedoms for future generations.

Everything Online Feels Like a Scam

What we do need are more people who can follow the money, find the people behind these operations, and shut them down before they change their name, buy another domain, and start again tomorrow

By Hector Barajas, September 25, 2026

I almost miss the Nigerian prince.

You remember him. He had several million dollars, a complicated banking problem, questionable spelling, and, for reasons never fully explained, needed my help.

It was a simpler time.

The scam practically introduced itself. Delete the email, feel slightly smarter than the scammer, and move on with your day.

Today, the scam arrives wearing business casual.

It has a professional headshot, a real-looking company page, and a message that sounds like it was written specifically for you.

Looking for a job? Perfect. A recruiter just found your résumé.

Waiting for a package? Amazing coincidence. FedEx suddenly can't find your house. Have a bank account? Bad news. There has been "suspicious activity."

The scammer may know where you work, what you do, and enough about a real company to sound legitimate.

That is what makes the story of Jay Jones, who calls himself “The Profiler,” both entertaining and depressing.

The Wall Street Journal recently wrote about Jones and his effort to find fake recruiters and job postings. He has found multiple profiles using the same smiling photo and even the same name: Linda Anthony.
Jones says he has tracked nearly 60,000 fake jobs and flagged about 7,000 scam profiles.

And he has been doing this while looking for a job himself.

This must be the most 2026 job search imaginable. Apply for a job. Investigate whether the job exists. Investigate whether the recruiter exists. Then consider adding “fraud investigator” to your résumé.

Looking for work was already a full-time job that doesn’t pay. Now apparently you also need a minor in cybersecurity.

And it isn’t just jobs.

Your social media account is about to be suspended unless you click immediately. Your bank detected suspicious activity. Your toll payment is overdue. Your package cannot be delivered. Your friend desperately needs $500 in Apple gift cards.

Every message has the same goal: get your heart moving faster than your brain.

Then there are the health scams and questionable pitches.
Watch one innocent video about nutrition, and suddenly someone is explaining that fruit is destroying your metabolism, vegetables are poisoning you, and everything your mother told you about breakfast was wrong.

Fortunately, this person also has a powder.

Three easy payments and apparently everything will be fine.

Not every health claim or supplement ad is a scam, of course. But the formula is familiar: scare people, tell them you know something “they” don’t want you to know, create urgency, then sell the solution.

And people are paying a huge price.

The Federal Trade Commission says consumers reported losing $15.9 billion to fraud in 2025.
Behind that number are real people. Savings accounts emptied. Identities stolen. Social media accounts hijacked. Hours spent changing passwords and explaining to your bank that no, you did not decide at 2 a.m. to invest your life savings in cryptocurrency.

Artificial intelligence can write better messages and create convincing images. Automation allows scammers to create accounts by the thousands. Fake job listings can sit right next to legitimate ones.

LinkedIn told the Journal that it stopped close to 90 million fake accounts before they went live during the second half of 2025. Banks send alerts. Email providers block spam. Government agencies issue warnings.

But somehow the responsibility still comes back to us.

Use a different password for everything. Turn on multifactor authentication. Freeze your credit. Check every URL. Verify every caller. Don’t open attachments. Don’t click links. Don’t trust anyone asking for money.

This is all good advice, but at some point it feels like the airline handing you a wrench and saying, “Before we take off, would you mind checking the plane?”

Which brings me to The Beekeeper.
In the 2024 Jason Statham movie, a phishing scam wipes out a woman’s finances. Statham responds the way Jason Statham usually does: gasoline, broken furniture, and blowing up things.
To be clear, I am not advocating we start blowing up scam operations.

Although after changing your password for the 47th time, I understand the appeal.

What we do need are more people who can follow the money, find the people behind these operations, and shut them down before they change their name, buy another domain, and start again tomorrow.

Maybe we need a few more Beekeepers. Just with fewer explosions.

Until then, unfortunately, all of this falls on us.

Slow down. Go directly to the company’s website. Confirm that the job exists. Never pay someone for the privilege of being hired. And if someone wants your password, bank information, gift cards, or cryptocurrency immediately, stop.

So yes, I almost miss my Nigerian prince friend.

I never responded, so I assume my millions are still waiting.

But at least with him, I knew where I stood.

Hector Barajas
Hector Barajas is a communications strategist who advises companies, associations, and campaigns on public affairs and policy issues. He is the founder of Amplify360 Inc., a strategic communications firm, and a frequent commentator on politics, legislation, and Latino issues in English and Spanish-language media.

Supreme Court Clears Trump Admin to Use Voter Citizenship Verification

The decision paused a ruling by DC District Judge Sparkle Sooknanan who blocked the expanded system

By Katy Grimes, September 25, 2026

The Supreme Court on Friday cleared the way in a 6-3 decision, for the Trump administration to move forward with its plan to use a modified centralized database to verify voters' citizenship. In a seven-page opinion issued just 39 days before the Nov. 3, 2026, election, the justices paused a ruling by a federal judge in Washington, D.C., that had blocked the government from doing so on the ground that it violated (among other things) federal privacy laws," SCOTUS Blog reports. The Supreme Court has allowed the Trump administration to resume its expanded voter citizenship verification program, which lets states use Social Security records to check voters' citizenship.

Justices Sotomayor, Kagan, and Jackson dissented.

The unsigned emergency stay lifts the lower-court injunction by Biden-appointee, U.S. District Judge Sparkle Sooknanan, which agreed with the challengers that the modified SAVE system violates federal privacy laws, the Social Security Act, and the federal laws governing administrative agencies, and she barred the government from using it.

The Supreme Court has now allowed the Trump administration to proceed with a modified version of the Department of Homeland Security's Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) database for voter citizenship checks.
The majority concluded that a 1996 immigration statute, the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act, likely authorizes Department of Homeland Security to request and receive citizenship and immigration-status information from other federal agencies, including the Social Security Administration, notwithstanding other privacy restrictions. The Court also held that the district court's order blocked the federal government from assisting states with "individualized" verification requests in the run-up to the November 3 midterms.
SCOTUS Blog reports:

On Sept. 4, a divided panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit turned down the government's request to pause Sooknanan's order while its appeal moves forward, but the court fast-tracked the appeal, directing the litigants to quickly propose a briefing schedule. The litigants subsequently agreed to postpone any briefing in that court until the Supreme Court acts on the Trump administration's emergency appeal.

U.S. Solicitor General D. John Sauer went to the Supreme Court on Sept. 8, asking the justices to freeze Sooknanan's ruling while the litigation continues. Sooknanan's decision, he wrote, was an "indefensible order that threatens the integrity of upcoming elections by vacating the federal government's authority to internally use Social Security data when fulfilling its duty to respond to requests by States to verify the citizenship of individuals for voting and other purposes." Moreover, he argued, Sooknanan did not have the power to enter her order because the challengers do not have a legal right to sue, known as standing. Among other things, he contended, the federal government is not the source of any injury that the challengers and their members might suffer, because the SAVE system "merely notifies the States whether the federal government can confirm citizenship."
Justices Jackson, Sotomayor, and Kagan dissented, arguing that the majority misread the statutes, downplayed privacy and accuracy problems in the expanded database, and undervalued the risk of eligible voters being wrongly flagged or removed.

The stay is interim; the underlying case, *League of Women Voters et al. v. DHS*, continues in the D.C. Circuit, with briefing postponed pending this ruling.

Katy Grimes

Katy Grimes, the Editor in Chief of the California Globe, is a long-time Investigative Journalist covering the California State Capitol, the co-author of California's War Against Donald Trump: Who Wins? Who Loses? and a contributor to "Taxifornia 2016."
A California native and Navy mom, Katy lives in Sacramento, CA.

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