



The Official Publication of ACT

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Next ACT & ADC Meeting Via Zoom on April 1

Pasadena City Government

with

Mayor Victor Gordo and Councilwoman Jess Rivas

Newly elected Pasadena Mayor **Victor Gordo** will highlight his experiences, challenges and priorities at our ACT/ADC meeting on Thursday, April 1 at 7:30 p.m. Mayor Gordo became Vice-Mayor Bill Crowfoot's Field Rep in 1997 while he attended University of La Verne College of Law – where he graduated with honors one year ahead of his class. Victor was elected to represent District 5 and passed the California Bar Exam in the same year – 2001. He currently is Business Manager and attorney for LIUNA (Laborers International Union of North America), Local 777. His wife is an elementary school teacher in El Monte USD. They are the parents of two children.



ACT members Felicia Williams (District 2) and Jessica Rivas (District 5) were also invited to this meeting, Felicia is sorry she is unable to attend on that date. Jessica's attendance had not been confirmed at the time this phoenix went to the printer.

Jessica (Jess) Rivas was unanimously selected by the Pasadena City Council to complete the District 5 term of Mayor Gordo. Her career has been as an attorney in the public sector. She is currently an L A Deputy County Counsel. Jess has served on the Northwest Commission and the Commission on the Status of Women. She is active in the neighborhood association where she and her husband have lived for five years. They have a year-old daughter.



We urge you to join ACT & ADC at this April Zoom meeting. Look for an ACT email the last week of March with the Zoom link to attend.

Socializing begins at 7 p.m. with the meeting following at 7:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome.

UDH Going Strong!



After our successful efforts in the 2020 presidential campaign and the Senate victories in Georgia, the Pasadena Area United Democratic Headquarters (UDH) is continuing to work through the efforts of Campaign Coordinator Caitlin Gallogly, the Steering Committee and a dedicated cadre of volunteers.

Because of our recent success in working with local, state and national Democratic and progressive organizations, the UDH has expanded its network of energetic volunteers who are enthusiastic about continuing progress towards supporting Democratic candidates and achieving progressive goals.

In an effort to support our volunteers, the UDH is striving to become a hub for information about events and efforts that they might wish to participate in.

Those might include voter registration drives, letter writing and postcarding campaigns or nationwide efforts to support issues ranging from raising the minimum wage to fighting voter suppression. The UDH website, as well as social media postings and eblasts, are regularly updated and refreshed to provide information and volunteer opportunities for our volunteers.

Our team is not only in regular contact with our local and statewide elected officials on current legislation, but also with the national Democratic party as well as the many progressive organizations that are promoting positive change for our country. The Trump era and the recent campaigns have taught us that the election cycles are ongoing, and the political struggles don't stop when the elections are over. For those of us who want to remain active and maintain our momentum, the UDH is committed to continue the fight by informing and supporting our dedicated volunteers.

~ Hoyt Hilsman, UDH Chair

More on the ADEM Elections



The California Democratic Party agreed to count late-arriving ADEM ballots after a challenge (that many ballots went out very late and there may have been Postal Service delays as well.) The recount produced some relatively minor changes in order, and the election of Jacque Robinson, and removal of Ellen Dalbey Finkelppearl to a tie for eighth place. (Seven delegates are elected in each category.) Here are the updated results (Name/-Votes) with winners in **Bold**:

Executive Board – **Tina Fredericks** / 614, Robert M. Nelson / 551, John N. Doyle II / 502, Charlotte Char Bland / 489, Steven Gibson / 464, Marcos Holguin / 73

Self-Identified Female – **Tina Fredericks** / 614, **Elizabeth Trejo** /516, **Cindy Montoya** /507, **Marguerite Renner** / 504, **Mindy Pfeiffer** / 502, **Charlotte Char Bland** / 489, **Jacque Robinson** / 483.

Other Than Self-Identified Female – **Robert M. Nelson** /551, **John H. Doyle II** /502, **Ryan Bell** / 496, **Sam Berndt** /488, **Tim Wendler** /470, **Steven Gibson** / 464, **Josue Barnes** / 459.

Congratulations to our ACT member winners: Tina Fredericks, Peggy Renner, Char Bland, Bobby Nelson and Tim Wendler.



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Margaret Sedenquist



Longtime ACT member and friend Margaret H. Sedenquist died on February 9 of Covid-19. She was 94. She was born and raised on a cattle ranch near Douglas, Wyoming. After earning a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Wyoming, Margaret worked at GE in Schenectady, NY as a research psychologist. Back in Wyoming, she worked as a school teacher in Cody, where she met her husband, Charles Sedenquist, a chemical engineer with Husky Oil. Their three children, Mark, Daniel, and Diana were born in Cody.

In 1964, the family moved to Southern California where Charles accepted a job at the engineering design firm, C.F. Braun & Co. Margaret entered the real estate business and had an amazing and successful career. Along with her many business enterprises, her legacy is also deeply rooted in volunteerism and philanthropy.

She served the City of Pasadena as Chair of the Finance Committee, the Endowment Advisory Committee, and as chair of the Pasadena City Hall Restoration Finance Committee. In 2011, the Women's Civic League named her Woman of the Year, and the Pasadena Foothills Association of Realtors gave her their 2018 Distinguished Service Award for her work with nonprofit organizations. Throughout her life, she was a fierce advocate for the rights of women and for many other social justice causes. In the words of Devorah Lieberman, President of the University of La Verne: "Margaret brought sharp wit and humor, visionary ideas, and an earnestness that endeared her to everyone she met. She inspired us to visualize the future, to be bold, and to seize opportunities."

Margaret is survived by two sisters, her children and their spouses, five grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death

by her husband Charles.

We extend our sympathy to the family. They suggest considering the following organizations: City of Hope, Five Acres, A Noise Within, Pasadena Symphony and Pops, the Pasadena Playhouse, Spread the Word Nevada, All Saints Episcopal Church Pasadena or the Margaret H. Sedenquist endowed scholarship at the University of La Verne, <http://univ.lv/sedenquist> if making a donation in Margaret's name.



Allan Eisenman



Photo credit:
George Chen

Our colleague and friend Allan Eisenman died at home on February 10 at eighty-seven years of age. Allan and Diane, his wife, have long been ACT members. Allan served on the Research Committee and was a Steering Committee member.

After graduating from UCLA with a master's degree, Allan worked for several companies before being hired at JPL in the late 1960s. His first job was as cognizant engineer for the Mariner 9 science camera. He was cognizant engineer/CTM more than ten times for projects including Cassini, MER, SRTM, GRACE, and MSL. He was also a group leader for many years.

Allan's pioneering work in using CCD chips for star trackers in the late 1970s may have been his greatest contribution. He was also known for his passion for field testing at the Table Mountain observatory. He will always be remembered for his "can do" attitude. He retired from JPL in '11.

Allan loved scuba-diving, travel, photography, skiing, hiking, and classical music. He was cheerful and funny and he loved life - and he kept in touch with his former colleagues.

We extend our deepest sympathy to Diane.

Political Notes

by Jon Fuhrman



Tuesday, March 9.

We're now six weeks into the new Biden Administration. Typically, that would be too soon to ask how things are going. But in this hyper-partisan atmosphere, with Republicans opposing virtually every single thing the Administration is trying to accomplish, let's take a high-level view of where we are.

The Congress is passing the largest recovery bill in our history, without a single Republican voting in favor. This bill includes direct checks to most low and middle income families (those making less than \$160,000); it includes a major expansion of a refundable child care credit, lifting millions of children out of poverty; it extends unemployment income coverage and special increased benefits through the end of August; it provides billions in support to states and local governments, to vaccine providers and distributors, to farmers, to transit systems, to schools, to health care providers and to employers; and it extends

and improves the Affordable Care Act to increase coverage and reduce costs. It is wildly popular with voters and with local government heads, of both parties, but not a single GOP legislator could see their way clear to support it.

On a second front, vaccine distribution is picking up speed, and more and more Americans are getting vaccinated. Probably a majority of those over 65 now have at least one shot, and many have gotten both shots. States and localities are expanding the universe of those eligible, and probably within two months anyone who wants a shot, regardless of age, co-morbidity or occupation, will be able to get one.

Connected with that, and with the passage of the recovery bill, the economy is starting to turn. Restrictions are beginning to ease, and likely by late summer we will, as a country, be returning to something close to normal. Further, with the recovery bill, most economists are hiking their predictions of economic growth and jobs recovery, with a 6% growth figure being touted by some. That sort of growth rate was long desired and predicted, but never achieved, by President Donald Trump. It will be high irony indeed that President Biden achieves that goal, based on legislation passed without a single GOP vote.

And it looks like the Biden Administration is not going to be shy about claiming credit and pointing out the exclusive Democratic support for that achievement. It reminds me of the 1993 tax and budget reforms that President Bill Clinton introduced. Not a single Republican voted for the bill, a combination of tax hikes and budget cuts, and several Democrats who did vote for it lost their seats because of that vote in 1994. But that bill laid the groundwork for a huge economic boom that, within five years, led to the first federal budget surpluses in forty years (which, after President George Bush's tax cut bill, promptly vanished for the next twenty years).

Republicans are salivating about recapturing the House (which is, unfortunately, a distinct possibility) and the Senate (which seems less likely), attacking everything Democratic as part of the “cancel culture” and alien to working America. But they may find that the things people really care about – jobs, health care, beating the virus, getting kids back to school and life back to normal – are all happening under a Democratic Administration that consistently reminds voters this is all happening without a single Republican legislator voting for it. That may not be a winning recipe for electoral success.

Further, the leader of all things excessively Republican, our former President Donald Trump, may well be enmeshed in his own difficulties. Local authorities in Georgia are looking at racketeering and election interference charges. Even if they were to go to a Grand Jury next month, and secure indictments, the trial likely would not start until late this year or early next year, and bleed over into the election season. Then there’s the New York City investigation into the Trump Company finances. That’s more complicated and likely to take longer to bring to a Grand Jury and win an indictment, and longer to prosecute in court, so we’re looking at early to middle of next year to start seeing all the secret tax manipulations and loan finagling become public.

Even without a formal conviction, these public revelations will harm the Trump brand, and Trump is trying, with some significant success, to make the Trump brand the Republican brand. He has threatened legal action against the Republican National Committee, and both the Republican Senate and House Campaign Committees, if they don’t stop using his name and picture in their fundraising efforts. He is trying to make



himself the supreme and only fount for low-dollar fundraising efforts to the “base”. That’s critical, because more and more of the party’s traditional high-dollar donors – both individuals and businesses – are starting to shy away, repelled and frightened by the actions of GOP legislators trying to overturn the election and implicitly supporting the insurrection at the Capitol.

Thus, it seems to me that Democrats are likely to be in a substantially stronger position in the summer and fall of 2022 as we face the mid-term elections. Traditionally, the Democratic base falls off in mid-terms to a far greater degree than the GOP base, leading to GOP off-year victories (as in 1994 and 2010) despite Democratic Presidential victories (as in 1996 and 2012). But I think this coming year might be just the opposite. It’s true that with an 80 million vote turnout, Democrats got new voters and infrequent voters out in totally unprecedented numbers. Yet, Trump did get 74 million votes, so his side also turned out in unprecedented numbers.

But what happens when Trump is not on the ballot, when Biden remains President, and when the economy is thriving, kids are back in school, the virus has been beaten, restaurants are open, people have jobs and the market is strong? Will the Trump voters, his vaunted base, really come out? If Barack Obama were still President, or if Hillary were President, perhaps the GOP could stir up the hatred and fear and resentment that contributed to Trump’s 2016 victory. But Joe Biden is a much harder target. People just don’t hate Biden. Perhaps it’s simply because he’s a white guy, kind of down to earth, and it’s just tougher to stir up and take advantage of the latent racism and misogyny of so many voters. The GOP will certainly try to run against Vice-President Harris, and Congress-

woman Ocasio-Cortez, and Speaker Pelosi, but it's just not the same.

So I think the electoral landscape will be far more favorable to the Democrats than most see it now. That's not to say we'll have an easy time. In the Senate, fortunately the GOP has to defend twenty seats versus only fourteen for Democrats, and quite a few of the incumbent GOP Senators are retiring. Toomey from Pennsylvania, Porter from Ohio, Burr from North Carolina, and now Roy Blunt from Missouri are all retiring. Further, Ron Johnson of Wisconsin and Chuck Grassley from Iowa are thinking about retiring. Open seats are always more difficult (and expensive) to defend, and that will be complicated with the likely prospect of tough GOP primaries, pitting hard-core Trump supporters against more centrist (but solidly conservative) candidates who have a stronger chance of winning the November general elections. Even in states like Ohio and Missouri, hard-core Trump candidates emerging from tough primary fights could very well lose to established, centrist Democratic candidates. Further, the foremost GOP targets in the Senate – Mark Kelly from Arizona and Rafael Warnock from Georgia, who both have to defend their seats again after winning partial terms in 2020 – will be incredibly well-funded and seem well positioned to hold on to their seats. Each will have a united party behind them, and each will have unlimited access to President Biden and national party support. So my early guess is that we are likely to pick up a handful of seats in the Senate.

The House is a tougher prospect. First off, with reapportionment looming, Democratic states (like California) are likely to lose seats, and Republican states (like Texas) will gain seats. Given the narrow margin we now have, that alone could shift the balance of power. So Democrats will have to win back at least some of the suburban seats we lost in 2020 – like CD 25 and 39 here in California. Further complicating the

picture will be that those boundaries will change, so we don't really know yet who might be a strong candidate in which district yet. Even worse, because of the incompetence of the Trump Administration leadership, the census data used for reapportionment won't be released by the Census Bureau until the end of September. For California, not unlike many other states, filing opens in mid-November, which would give our independent Redistricting Commission barely six weeks to draw new maps, hold hearings, gather input, and finalize their decisions. A number of states have even earlier deadlines, some embedded in their State Constitutions, for completing the redistricting effort for Congressional and legislative seats. There is just no way those deadlines can be met given the current Census Bureau schedule for releasing data.

Hence states are scrambling, looking to one-time legislative fixes, pushing primary dates later into 2022, and looking at asking State Supreme Courts to waive State Constitutional requirements (which can't possibly be met under these circumstances). There are no good solutions to this mess other than to get the Census Bureau to speed up release of their data, and that horse has pretty much already left the barn. It will make for an interesting political season this fall, as candidates nationwide try to anticipate what their district boundaries will likely be, what their political prospects are, and for which office they should prepare to run. There will be a lot of last-minute scrambling and behind-the-scene deals, adding substantial uncertainty to the picture for the House and for state legislative bodies around the country – which means lots of good stuff for political columnists to keep you entertained.

~ Jon Fuhrman



Welcome New & Returning ACT Members

Dr. Julia Bradsher, Pasadena

**From
25th District
State Senator
Anthony
Portantino**



Dear ACT Friends,

The legislature has been busy passing significant small business relief that adds \$2 billion dollars to the small business support program launched just before the holidays. We also worked collaboratively with the Governor on a \$6 billion plan to help our schools safely reopen. As our students transition back to in-person learning we need to be cognizant of the mental health impacts that have been building during the pandemic. I was pleased that a broad coalition of mental and children's health advocates came together to help me craft SB 14 and SB 224 to help our students post COVID-19.

Today these bills received bipartisan support passing the Senate Education committee. SB 224 and 14 address the growing mental health crisis among California's youth by mandating mental health education and training programs in schools. SB 14 also removes the stigma associated with absences by treating mental health the same as physical health.

Specifically:

SB 224 would require all students in California to receive mental health education at least one time during elementary school, one time during middle school, and one time during high school. Educational topics will include but are not limited to the overarching themes and core principles of mental health.

SB 14 requires the California Department of Education to identify an evidence-based training program for school employees who have direct contact with students. It also permits 10th - 12th

graders to receive similar but age-appropriate training to help identify mental health struggles among their peers. The bill ensures that youth absences from school for mental health issues will be treated as an excused absence in the same way any other health issues are treated.

In addition, I was pleased that SB 237 also passed the committee this morning. It will require the State Board of Education, beginning in the 2022-23 school year, to provide dyslexia screening instruments to be used annually by schools to identify students who are at risk for dyslexia. It is estimated that approximately 10% to 15% of Americans have symptoms of dyslexia, making it the most common form of learning disability. Due to inadequate screening, only about 5% of people with dyslexia are aware that they have it. The proportion of people with dyslexia is believed to be much higher amongst incarcerated individuals. A 2000 study of Texas prisoners estimated that about half the prison population was likely dyslexic, while a 2014 study by the Education Department found that a third of surveyed inmates had trouble with simple reading questions.

SB 237 is personal for me, as I struggled with dyslexia, ADHD, and cross dominance during my own time in school and I continue to face these challenges every day. I am hopeful that collectively, SB 14, SB 224 and SB 237 will help our students succeed in a healthier school environment.

Warmly,

~ Anthony

Senator Anthony Portantino represents California's 25th State Senate District, which includes Sunland/Tujunga, Atwater Village, and the Griffith Park areas of the city of Los Angeles, Burbank, Glendale, La Crescenta, Montrose, La Cañada Flintridge, Pasadena, Altadena, South Pasadena, San Marino, Sierra Madre, Monrovia, Bradbury, Duarte, Upland, Glendora, San Dimas, La Verne, and Claremont.



**From
41st District
Assemblymember
Chris Holden**



Dear ACT Friends,

It has been a busy February in Sacramento with the bill introductions coming to end. The legislature also passed a package of budget bills that will speed needed relief to individuals, families and businesses suffering the most significant economic hardship from the COVID-19 Recession. The package includes SB 87, that I am a principal coauthor of, which will provide \$2.1 billion additional funds for small business and nonprofit relief grants.

We have witnessed this past year how the pandemic has worsened existing issues facing California, including our housing crises. That's why I introduced AB 512, which would allow Housing Related Entities (HREs), like city housing departments and affordable housing developers, to purchase vacant land owned by Caltrans in the 710 North Corridor, at the original purchase price, for the purpose of building affordable housing.

Last year, was also a year where social inequities were magnified following that massive protests that shined a spotlight on the systemic racism that exists in our society. In addition to my legislation on policy reform and upward mobility, I also introduced bill AB 948 to address discrimination in the real estate appraisal process.

I am also proud to introduce AB 768 that provides critical updates to California's pool and open water safety programs. In June of 2019, six-year-old Roxie Forbes drowned at an Altadena summer camp. In the wake of Roxie's preventable drowning, her parents Doug Forbes and Elena Matyas, established the Meow Meow

Foundation in honor of their daughter and are working tirelessly to develop an end-to-end childhood drowning prevention model. Our bill will help schools provide drowning prevention awareness, and educate millions of students and caregivers.

Lastly, I introduced the Stop Investment in Turkey Act, AB 1019 that will mandate the state to stop all new investments or renewals of existing investments issued or owned by Turkey using the full force of the California government to pressure Turkey to recognize the Armenian Genocide and take steps toward justice for its victims.

In the district (but virtually), I had the pleasure to recognize Altadena and Pasadena area community leader, Juanita De Vaughn with California Legislative Black Caucus (CLBC) as the 41st Assembly District's 2021 Unsung Hero for her positive impact in the community. Juanita De Vaughn was born in Boligee, Alabama, where she began her career as a lifelong educator and civil rights activist. She taught at Charles Eliot Junior High School, Altadena, and retired from a thirty-year teaching career at Pasadena's John Muir High School, where she was inducted into its Hall of Fame in 2018. After retiring from teaching, Juanita continued to make an impact within the community in her church, schools and voter registration projects. Through her dedication and hard work, she carries on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s legacy and is an inspiration for future generations. I have known Juanita for many years and it is an honor and a privilege to recognize her.

Sincerely,

~ Chris R. Holden

*Assemblyman Holden
can be reached
via his website at:
www.asm.ca.gov/holden
and fill out the
contact form.*



Linda Luna

Our dear friend Linda Luna died on February 28. She was sixty-seven. Linda was a stalwart Democratic activist and leader who had a heart of gold.



Photo credit: Malcolm Johnson

Linda worked on countless campaigns over the years for everyone from Adam Schiff to Carol Liu to Anthony Portantino to Judy Chu to Mike Eng. She served as field director for the UDH in 2002 and volunteered her time at the United Demo. Headquarters on Lake Avenue in 2016.

Linda was a kind-hearted, hard-working, proud Union member who was always willing to roll up her sleeves to ensure victory for our great candidates and great causes. She excelled at getting out the vote and fundraising. Linda fought for the rights of all workers and will be greatly missed by all.

We send our love and condolences to Linda's partner Leonard Cash.



What a Wild Ride as Co-Chair 2019-2021

Memorable it Was

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as ACT Co-Chair. I could never have anticipated what we were in for!

2019 began innocently enough, Dem Presidential candidates announce their intentions, suddenly we had twenty-nine total. Bloomberg took 1st - spending the most - over 1 Billion in four months. We all lined up behind our fav, some even had difficulty, citing too many to choose from. I was impressed with Beto O'Rourke's run against Cruz (the one who skipped town for Cancun when TX is suffering from a grid malfunction, contaminated water and Covid). Months later, after running the best Senate campaign in TX history, having just raised \$80M, Beto enters the race.

First twenty-four hrs., he raises more than any other candidate. One month later, announces the most comprehensive Climate Change Policy. Suspends his campaign when a gunman killed twenty-three in El Paso, returns, finding his voice: gun reform, immigration, civil/human rights. His organization, Powered by People, has been coming to aid fellow Texans during pandemic, shortage of electricity and water. Biden has said he will nab him, bring him to DC where he will lead gun reform. We will be seeing much more of him, I predict.

2020 opens sadly with the death of nine people, including iconic L A basketball player Kobe Bryant and his daughter. Senate puts on first Impeachment trial of **forty-five*** (followed by a second one after he leaves office Feb. 2021.) Local Congressman Schiff does superb job proving guilt to all except GOP - not his fault! The list of candidates narrows down, Biden loses first three states, his luck turns, rest is history. On Super Tuesday, Beto hosts TX rally for Biden. Buttigieg and Klobuchar pull out and support Biden. DNC hosts first ever Zoom Convention. Biden selects first female VP. UDH opens, not as brick and mortar, all Zoom, staff does an excellent job within these constraints. Covid has reared its ugly head, we begin lock-down quarantine, led by a President who has lied about the seriousness of this virus, had knowledge of it in Dec., no idea what to do. We all know how that fiasco ended! Waiting for the arrival of a vaccine, occurred quickly. Now at 525,000 lost souls we are getting vaccinated. Lies, deceit, total disregard for democracy, manipulation of placing his followers in government positions became a daily occurrence.

So much civil unrest. BLM emerges, protests begin due to brutality by police. BLM stages peaceful protests across USA, wearing masks and joined by people from all walks of life. White supremacy shows up, causing friction with BLM.

Sadly, RBG could not hang in there 'til Biden took office. **Forty-five** and McConnell rush his SC selection through.

Dems celebrate huge victory, both popular and electoral votes, over **forty-five** - who refuses to concede, lying to his people that the election was stolen. Big push to invalidate VBMs. FBI says was one of the safest elections. **Forty-five** takes fifty-nine cases to SC, challenging elections, two GA Dem senators squeak by in runoff elections in GA, giving us 50-50 in Senate, majority remains in House.

Forty-five verbally abuses many Attorneys General for refusing to change their state's election results. Incites his white supremacists to riot Congress, take it over, return it to rightful winner **forty-five**. Promotes death of his VP. Today, he faces several lawsuits, his empire in shambles. Good riddance to a man whose choice was to destroy democracy and build his autocracy. Good luck lawyering up.

~ Barbara Paul

*Editor's Note: Barbara never ever says the name of the previous occupant of the White House; he is "forty-five" or "45".



Special Thanks to Sustaining Members

Cheryl Brickey
 Mel and Renate Cohen
 Andrea Gordon
 Judy Gripp
 Monica and Tom Hubbard
 Sue Miele
 Gail Bronwen Price
 Janet Rose and Eric Bosc
 Esther Schachter
 Arnold Siegel and Susan Futterman
 Robert and Helen Smith
 Odessa Walker
 Jon and Deborah Williams

Reflections on the ERA During Women's History Month



As we turn the calendar to March, I find myself reflecting on the role of women in our democracy from the beginning.

Despite Abigail Adams's famous advice to her husband to "remember the ladies," he and the rest of the founders left any mention of women out of the founding documents. As a result, the U.S. Constitution does not mention women at all.

This is ironic, to say the least, in our current day and age, when women fill the halls of Congress and hold leadership positions, from Speaker of the House to Vice President of the United States. It's been **101 years** since the 19th Amendment granted women the right to vote.

It's been **98 years** since the Equal Rights Amendment was first introduced in Congress.

It's been **49 years** since the ERA was passed by Congress.

And it's been **one year** since the ERA was ratified by the required 38 states.

But the Equal Rights Amendment still needs to be added to the Constitution.

This year, after a century in the making, the ERA is closer than ever to taking its rightful place in the supreme law of our nation. What stands in our way is an arbitrary, ambiguous and legally questionable deadline for enactment imposed on the ERA at its passage.

In a nutshell, the Equal Rights Amendment states that "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex."

It is important to recognize that, while women's rights are inextricably linked to the ERA, inequality hurts everyone. The ERA represents a promise that our government will not pass laws or take any official action that discriminates

against its people on the basis of sex.

We need the ERA because we need equal pay, fair healthcare coverage that addresses maternal mortality and coverage for caregivers, protection against gender testing laws, prevention of discrimination against LGBTQ+ persons, protections for men in occupations and roles traditionally held by women, and protection against roll-backs in women's rights.

We need the ERA because, just as many women of color faced added barriers for voting until the Voting Rights Act, today women of color are more likely to be under-paid and discriminated against than white women. The ERA would make the Constitution prohibit discrimination on the basis of race AND sex.

But more than that, we need the ERA because our nation must close the book once and for all on the idea that equality of rights is a debatable issue. Because a constitution is not only a set of legal protections: it is a proclamation of a nation's values. And little girls should not grow up in a country where they question their rights simply because they are a girl.

This Women's History Month, tell Congress to remove the ERA ratification deadline, and let's establish gender equality in our Constitution, once and for all.

Sincerely, ~ Dr. Deborah Ann Turner
Board President, League of Women Voters US



Thanks for Additional Contributions to ACT's Operating Account

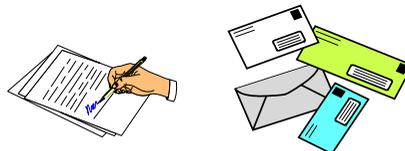
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My Two Cents

By Ron Garber



Letters to the Editor



Since last month's column I've had two letters to the Editor published. One by the Pasadena Star News and one by the L.A. Times which brings the total number of letters and one op-ed published in those two publications to 101. Those of you who regularly attend ACT/ADC meetings may remember the presentation with handout I made titled "Things that enhance the odds of getting your letter to the editor published." I'm using this month's column to challenge each of you to have a letter published and I look forward to recognizing each of you, in future columns, when your letters get published.

1. While there is the chance of any letter on any topic being published the odds increase based on it being a response to the following and in this order:

- a. An editorial
- b. An op-ed
- c. A column
- d. A story
- e. A breaking news event.

2. When you read any of the above listed and it's obvious to you that something important is not being considered and that creates a passion within you to scream, then it's a good time to write your letter because that passion will transform into something that moves the 'Letters to the Editor' editor to publish your letter.

3. Most publications have guidelines for 'letters

to the editor' which are more suggestion than rule. You should make yourself aware of them before sending your letter.

4. Write your letter quickly at the time you're moved to do so and then edit it and edit it again and again until it's something in which you are proud and you believe others would want to read. If you can get an extra pair of eyes to look at it and make suggestions all the better. In your editing be succinct. Sometimes less is more. Shorter messages have a tendency to be more understandable and easier for editors to approve. Publications have a right and often further edit your letters.

5. Be a reader of 'letters to the editor.' It helps you to learn the styles that get published and it gives you ideas of what editors are looking for. Some publications accept letters that take other letters to task and some don't and some say they don't, but sometimes they do anyway

6. Know that a letter to the editor is not really a letter but rather an email and in the 'Subject' header you should write the headline of the editorial, op-ed, column or story along with the date. i.e., "President can't tell the truth" op-ed Dec. 12" and at the bottom of your letter you need to submit your name, city of residence and phone number where you can be reached during the day.

7. If you hold a position like elected office or organization officer, or your occupation would make you an expert on the issue at hand, add that as an addendum to your letter as this would influence the editor to publish your letter.

8. The smaller the universe the greater the chance your letter will get published. I've had 44 letters published in the L.A. Times over an 11-year period, but 57 in the Star News in a little over 2 years. Depending on the day of the week the Times readership could be anywhere from 30 to 50 times greater than Star News so the odds of getting one of your letters picked up by the Star

News is exponentially greater than that of the Times. I also write more letters to the Star News as their stable of columnists are predominantly conservative and that gives me, a progressive, greater material with which to work. The Phoenix has a little over 300 readers and Chuck and Sally never turned down a letter I sent to them. As a matter of fact, when Inman decided to retire his column Chuck approached me and asked me if I'd like to fill that giant hole. Writing is fun and it's a thrill to see your name in print. Write letters, make me proud.

~ Ron out



Your Photo in *The Phoenix*

Please share a photo (of you) at an interesting place with *Phoenix* readers.



Send it to Chuck at hains27@sbcglobal.net for inclusion in an upcoming issue.



Thanks for Additional Contributions to ACT's Political Account

Marguerite Cooper

Andrea Gordon

Bill Hacket

Fred and Jeanne Register

Anne and Roger Wolf





Calendar

- March 16 Fundraising Committee Meeting
Tuesday via Zoom
7:30 p.m. hosted by Fred Register.
- April 1 ACT and ADC Meeting via
Thursday Zoom. Program: Pasadena City
7 p.m. Government with Mayor Victor
 Gordo and Councilperson Jess
 Rivas. Socializing at 7 p.m.;
 meeting, 7:30 p.m.
- April 12 UDH Steering Meeting via
Monday Zoom. 7 p.m.



April Phoenix Deadline

We expect that the deadline for the April *Phoenix* will be Monday evening, April 4. Please send items for publication to Chuck Hains at hains27@sbcglobal.net and Sally Beer at sally.beer125@gmail.com. (Chuck will continue to contact regular contributors with a deadline reminder.)



ACT's and ADC's Website

You will find the current *Phoenix* and a newsletter archive on our website, plus important political news and links to other relevant items. Our address is <http://www.ACTpasadena.org>.

Bruce Wright, website manager (assisted by Marcus Green) keeps the website constantly updated. Send items to Bruce at: brucewright@sbcglobal.net.



Homelessness is a manmade disaster

By Rick Cole

January 2, 2021



Imagine a natural disaster striking Los Angeles. The epicenter is Downtown. Tens of thousands of our neighbors are displaced across the county. The magnitude of the catastrophe means government aid is sluggish. People begin erecting tents on sidewalks.

Years later, despite massive public spending, the tents are still there, 50,000 living without roofs, plumbing or safe places to cook their meals.

Of course, you don't have to imagine it. We are living through a man-made disaster.

If there had been a massive earthquake, we would have found solutions. It would have required a huge mobilization of public, private and charitable efforts, but we would not have let down our neighbors. Homelessness is different.

Why? Three toxic emotions warp our reaction to tens of thousands of homeless people living on the streets: hostility, apathy and cynicism.

Hostility is everywhere on social media. It explodes when a site is proposed for a shelter or permanent supportive housing. It demonizes the homeless as dirty, degenerate and dangerous. Apathy is also widespread. Many simply accept homelessness as a feature of urban life, a sad but inevitable byproduct of a free-market economy. After all, didn't Jesus say, "The poor ye shall

always have with you?” Cynicism is pervasive. The problem is too large, capitalism too ruthless, government too inefficient.

Hostility, apathy and cynicism cloud our judgment. There are solutions to homelessness. They aren't easy, cheap or popular. But endemic homelessness isn't either. Fifty thousand people living in makeshift camps and sleeping in doorways is a disaster for Los Angeles County. When disasters happen, Americans rise to the occasion. Ending homelessness will make us healthier, safer and more prosperous. Let's fix it.

The solutions are already in sight — we just don't have enough of them. It's estimated that more than 80,000 people in L.A. County fell into homelessness during 2019. More than 50,000 actually found a way out with help from government and nonprofit services. Another 22,769 were placed in housing.

The biggest bottleneck for solving homelessness is building enough “permanent supportive housing.” Recovering from mental illness, addiction or family trauma means some people need more than just an apartment they can afford. But such housing and services are unwelcome and expensive. Overcoming neighborhood hostility, bringing down the cost and allocating more money are crucial to a lasting solution. Tall orders, but doable.

In the meantime, we need more temporary and transitional housing. “Tiny homes” and “pallet shelters” are better than tents on sidewalks, especially if they offer access to toilets, showers, hot meals and social services. Here again, the key is bringing down the cost, allocating more funding and finding sufficient sites.

We need better data and better organization. The sprawling “homeless industrial complex” is expensive and inefficient. It's not rocket science to improve coordination and manage for results. The best way to secure more funding is to more

effectively deploy the money we're already spending.

Government can't do it all. Nonprofits are stretched. We need more housed people to donate and volunteer. Like the fable of the child who rescued stranded starfish, anyone can make a difference. You can offer a job, help serve meals, rent an empty backhouse, or simply be a friend to assist someone getting back on their feet.

Hostility, apathy and cynicism won't cure it. Compassion, caring and activism will. Instead of accepting homelessness as something we cannot change, it's time to change something we cannot accept.

~ Rick Cole

This article was reprinted from the Pasadena Star News, with permission.

Rick Cole is the former mayor of Pasadena and city manager of Azusa, Ventura and Santa Monica. He welcomes feedback at venturacole@yahoo.com



2021 ACT and ADC Membership Renewal

Have you renewed your ACT and/or ADC membership for 2021?

If not please use the form below, or renew online at

www.ACTpasadena.org.

If you have any questions about your membership, contact

Executive Director Jon Fuhrman at jon_fuhrman@outlook.com

or 626 864-5255.



Many thanks to our generous members who have already renewed!

I'd like to join both groups for one low price! (Checks payable to ACT/ADC)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$40 Single | <input type="checkbox"/> \$70 Single Sustaining |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Each additional member per household | <input type="checkbox"/> \$90 Double Sustaining |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$15 Student or limited income | <input type="checkbox"/> \$150 Patron |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> \$275 Benefactor |

I'd like to join ACT (Checks payable to ACT)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 Single | <input type="checkbox"/> \$60 Single Sustaining |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$20 Each additional member per household | <input type="checkbox"/> \$85 Double Sustaining |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$15 Student or limited income | <input type="checkbox"/> \$125 Patron |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$20 Gift Membership (NEW!) | <input type="checkbox"/> \$275 Benefactor |

I'd like to join the Arroyo Democratic Club (Checks payable to ADC)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 Single | <input type="checkbox"/> \$60 Single Sustaining |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$20 Each additional member per household | <input type="checkbox"/> \$85 Double Sustaining |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$15 Student or limited income | <input type="checkbox"/> \$125 Patron |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> \$275 Benefactor |

Extra Contribution

- \$ _____ Political Account (for endorsed candidates and issues)
- \$ _____ Operating Account (for organizational costs) \$ _____ **Total enclosed**

Name

Home Phone

Address

Office Phone

City

ZIP

Email address

Mail to ACT, P. O. Box 40074, Pasadena, CA 91114-7074

Information you provide will be available to other members and endorsed candidates upon request.