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## San Gabriel Valley's Changing Economy Topic of Next ACT Meeting



The next ACT Steering Committee and Arroyo Democratic Club meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, June 4** (7 p.m. for socializing; 7:30 p.m. for the meeting) at the home of **Wendy Gordon and Michael Gottlieb, 1535 Ontario Avenue, Pasadena.**

Special guest speaker is **Cynthia Kurtz**, former Pasadena City Manager and president and CEO of the San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership.

The economy in the San Gabriel Valley (SGV) shifted its focus last year from recession and recovery to growth and new opportunities. But how much growth, and opportunities where, and for whom? Ms. Kurtz will report on what's driving the local economy and what we can expect in the near future. SGV cities unite in reaching out to legislators and in marketing efforts to attract employers and develop jobs in our region; not just jobs but good paying jobs; not just good paying jobs but coordination with colleges to train students for those good paying jobs. She will paint a picture of the SGV's economy--who works here, what types of jobs dominate our area, etc.—using the just-released 2015 Economic Forecast and Regional Overview.

The Valley's strongest employment sector last year was health services, followed by professional and business services, scientific research, management and technical consulting, legal services and architectural and engineering services. These types of businesses, schools and services are the reason the Metro Gold Line into greater Pasadena is dubbed the Brain Train. The region also benefitted from increases in international trade and tourism and the quality of its world-class schools and universities.

Also at this meeting we will begin the process of considering the issue of fracking. (See the proposed Fracking resolution on page eight for more details.) A revised livable wage proposal is under consideration too – likely after we know what steps Los Angeles will take. The Steering Committee will decide whether and when these issues will be presented to the ACT membership on an “issues” ballot in an upcoming *Phoenix*.

All ACT and ADC members are welcome at this meeting and are urged to attend.

### ***Judy Boggs Fundraiser Coming***

A fundraiser to benefit the Judy Boggs Intern Fund is coming soon – on either the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in July - so please mark your calendars now.

As you know, this Fund is a tribute to Judy, ACT's late founding member and long-time Executive Director. By tradition the Fund is used to provide stipends to interns who work at our United Democratic Headquarters doing all kinds of political tasks while learning about campaigning, fundraising, GOTVing, etc. - usually while they are college students. And now it's time to get together again and have some fun while contributing to this very worthy cause. We will keep you posted.



### ***ACT Coalition-Building & Outreach Committee Report***

#### **Action Item**

The Committee voted to request that the Steering Committee agendize and publicize in the *Phoenix* that an anti-fracking resolution will be discussed and voted on (for recommendations to the Membership) at the June meeting. (See anti-fracking proposition on page xx.)

#### **Activities Promoted by the CB&OC**

##### Pasadenans for a Livable Wage (PLW)

Petitioning Wednesdays and Saturdays: PLW is gathering signatures on a petition to the City Council to expand the Pasadena Living Wage Ordinance (\$12.60/hour) to private employers (rather than just City Contractors) and to create a pathway to \$15 per hour. Dale Gronemeier at [dlg@dgronemeier.com](mailto:dlg@dgronemeier.com) is coordinating the Wednesday petitioning and Ed Washatka at [ed.washatka@charter.net](mailto:ed.washatka@charter.net) is coordinating the weekend petitioning; Alex Malthun at [alexmaltun@gmail.com](mailto:alexmaltun@gmail.com) is assist-

ing both.

PLW meets most Wednesdays at 3 pm at All Saints. You can get yourself added to the PLW notifications by going to [PasadenaCFMS@yahoo.com](mailto:PasadenaCFMS@yahoo.com).

##### CICOPP Calls for Internal Affairs Investigation of McDade Shooting

Ten speakers from the Coalition for Civilian Oversight of Pasadena Police (CICOPP) – a coalition ACT is participating in - called on the Pasadena City Council on April 27 to initiate an Internal Affairs investigation of the McDade shooting before the Statute of Limitations for officer-discipline expires in early September.

##### McDade OIR Report Lawsuit

The Court of Appeal has continued to June 23 the oral argument on the PPOA appeal of the order to release 80% of the OIR McDade Shooting Report, so no decision will come down before July. But the Court has ordered further briefing; the predicate for the briefing appears to be that the Court will reject the PPOA appeal and is considering whether Judge Chalfant over-redacts rather than under-redacting as the PPOA asserts.

Judge Chalfant deferred ruling on Gronemeier & Associates' motion for \$123,000 in attorney's fees and costs against the City on April 7. He will consider all fee applications after the Court of Appeal rules.



### ***Welcome New and Returning ACT Members:***

Kristen Green, Long Beach

### ***Special Thanks to Our Patron***

Anita Pemstein, Pasadena

## Wonderings and Wanderings

By Inman Moore



### TO VOTE

To vote or not to vote! That is the question before the house. Should people really have the right to vote for those who will lead our government? Our country was started by people who thought so and wrote these words, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness--." So, if equal, then all should have the right to vote for their government leaders at all levels.

But, wait a minute! In a closer reading of this preamble we see that it said "All men--." What about the women? Well, the men of that time would say the word "men" is a generic term including both men and women. Ah! But not true. Women were not allowed to vote until 1920. Blacks, by and large in those early days of America, were slaves and were not allowed to vote until slavery was outlawed in 1865. There were blacks in the North who were free men and could vote, but they were a very small number.

I grew up in Mississippi. In 1860, there were slightly more blacks in the state than whites, but all the blacks were slaves and could not vote. Do you realize what this meant about voters in Mississippi? From the founding of our country until 1865 the only voters in Mississippi were white males. After the Civil War, through poll tax and other devices, blacks in Mississippi (and largely throughout the South) still could not vote until the voting rights act of 1965. So from the beginning of our country until 1920, only white males could vote in Mississippi and, from 1920 until 1965, only white men and women could vote.

We have gone through great travail to ensure that all citizens above a certain age, regardless of race or color, could vote. It was a hard but successful battle. Hooray for America! So, now that everyone has the right to vote, it would certainly seem that all eligible voters would make every effort to vote! Right?

In a recent mayoral election in Pasadena we had two really fine candidates in the run-off. Terry Tornek won with 55% of the vote. Did all the voters turn out? Well, according to the City Clerk's office only 20% of the registered voters actually voted. Can you believe that in a very important election, only 20% bothered to vote? Where were the other 80%? Of course some people were ill and physically could not vote. Some people were out of town, etc. But that is not a great excuse given the fact that one can vote by mail! So what was so important in the lives of the non-voters that they could not make the effort to vote? God only knows!

Now you might say "Wow! Pasadenans are really uncaring!" But, wait a minute, 20% is par for the course all over America except for presidential races and other top US officials. What we have here is a national problem, and we really need to fix it. We could lose our democracy! How about making a critical resolution to take time to vote in every upcoming election in your area? It could happen, and it desperately needs to happen.

There are still those among us who would really like to limit the voters. I sat by a man once at a civic club luncheon who solemnly said "Only property owners should have the right to vote." Recently on TV I heard a fundamentalist preacher who was shouting that our country has been on a downward spiral ever since women became voters. In spite of manipulators, let's surprise ourselves and highly resolve to vote in every upcoming election in our country! You will be glad you did.

## Political Notes

by Jon Fuhrman



Monday, May 18.

The big news these last few weeks has to be the state budget. We've gone from famine to feast, with April revenues being \$1.8 billion over the estimates made last January, which were adjusted upwards from last summer's estimates. Year to date, we're about \$3.3 billion ahead of expectations; further, May and June look to continue that trend, perhaps putting us over \$4 billion ahead for this current fiscal year.

The Governor's final updated budget, called the "May Revise", recognizes the revenue surplus through April, allocating nearly all of those funds to repaying K-12 school districts for "deferrals" from prior years. That was the euphemism used to explain why school districts were short-changed for the last several years from the funding supposedly due them under Prop. 98. The total "deferrals" accumulated to nearly \$11 billion. The state started

repaying that debt in the 2013 – 2014 school year, and by June will have repaid all but \$772 million.

Those funds, however, represent one-time payments, which will help K-12 districts rebuild reserves, catch up on deferred maintenance, and handle other one-time costs. They really should not be used to create new on-going expenses, like raising teacher salaries, rehiring librarians or nurses or counselors or custodians who had been laid off in the tough years, or starting other programs with on-going costs.

However, in addition to repaying the deferrals, Gov. Brown noted that his revised budget for next year will increase funding per student by nearly \$3,000. That sounds tremendous – PUSD would get nearly \$45 million extra. But of course there's a catch. That \$3,000 figure is compared to the funding levels from 2011 – 2012, not this current year's funding levels. Nowhere in the Governor's budget summary or detail can one find the actual year-over-year increase. As best I can tell, the real increase is a bit under \$1,000 per student.

Still, that's pretty good news. For PUSD, it would mean an additional \$10 - \$15 million. That would go a long way to restoring programs and staffing to where they were back in 2007. Sadly, we'd still be behind where we were, but at least we're well ahead of where we bottomed out in 2011 – 2012.

Furthermore, the Governor, as usual, is being fiscally quite conservative. He assumes that revenue from May and June will come in on budget, whereas every month this year has been well above budget. It's quite possible that May and June revenues, together, could add another \$1 billion to the state's surplus. Essentially all that excess would also go to the schools, but it could allow the state fully to repay all the "deferrals" this fiscal year, rather than using up some of next year's funding.

Again, that would be one-time money, but it opens up funding in future years for on-going programmatic support.

The Governor's May revise estimates 2015 – 2016 revenues to be about \$6.7 billion ahead of this year's income. Most of that -- \$5.5 billion – goes to the K-12 and Community College system. Another \$600 million is added to our "Rainy Day" fund, and \$600 million is used to pay off the last of the "Emergency" bonds issued by Gov. Schwarzenegger back in 2003 and 2004.

The Governor was also able to undertake a few new initiatives, since some costs within the budget – like interest costs on state bonds – have decreased, making some new funding available. He is proposing a refundable Earned Income Credit for those workers at the very bottom of the rung; he is proposing to freeze tuition costs at UC and Cal State campuses for the middle class; and he is proposing to extend the safety net to cover those undocu-

mented immigrants who qualify for deferred status under President Obama's new immigration program.

These are all good initiatives, but there remain many other "safety net" programs that have been dramatically slashed over the last few years and which cry out for restoration. The Governor, however, remains exceptionally cautious. He notes that a recession could be just around the corner, so the state should be careful in taking on any new, on-going commitments. He points to several areas where dramatic bills may be coming due – unfunded pension obligations for state retirees, health care obligations for those same retirees, shortages in the teacher's pension fund, shortages in the UC pension funds. Further, the ad-



ditional tax revenue from Prop. 30 will disappear by 2019, unless extended by voters (which the Governor opposes).

Nonetheless, the Governor's projections may simply be too cautious. May and June might well contribute another \$1 billion to this fiscal year. And an increase of just \$100 million each month next year in personal income tax revenue could yield an additional \$1.2 billion in revenue, which could go a long way to restoring some of the safety net programs.

The Legislature will be debating the budget this month, and needs to enact a budget by June 15<sup>th</sup> to meet its Constitutional deadlines. That will be just after the May revenue figures are available, and well before the June numbers are in (which, since June is one of the months in which estimated tax payments are due, is a critical one for revenue forecasting). So the Legislature won't have much solid evidence upon which to base alternative income projections. The Governor's budget forecasts a 2.5% - 3.0% increase in econom-

ic activity over the next year, which is fairly modest. It assumes unemployment in the state will remain above 6% until the end of 2016, and that GNP will grow by 3.4% in this current quarter and 3.0% in the third quarter of this year.

Recent job data, though, suggests a somewhat stronger economy. First time claims for unemployment insurance remain at record low levels; last month's jobs report was quite strong; other leading economic indicators seems pretty healthy. So it wouldn't be too surprising if next year's budget ended up like this year's, with the state showing a \$3 – 4 billion surplus compared to the Governor's budget.

To be fair to the Governor, though, the state's revenues can be extraordinarily volatile. Our

tax structure weighs heavily on those at the very top of the scale, especially after Prop. 30 increased the maximum tax rate to 13% for those with incomes over \$5 million. Much of our tax revenues come from taxes on capital gains and stock options. Those are the most volatile of all tax categories (compared to property taxes, which vary by only a few percentage points from year to year). Sen. Bob Hertzberg, an advocate for revising our tax system, notes that during the recession, economic activity fell by 3.4%, but our tax revenues fell by 23%. So the Governor is acutely aware that modest economic downturns could, nonetheless, savage our capital gains dependent tax structure. That was the whole idea behind the "Rainy Day" fund, which will total \$3.5 billion at the end of the next fiscal year. Of course, \$3.5 billion is not really all that much of a buffer in a \$125 billion budget.

One other issue deserves some comment. The Governor rightly points to quite substantial unfunded liabilities in various pension funds, painting a rather dire picture of the state being behind a \$200 billion eight-ball. Yet, that's probably not quite fair. Pension funds, recognizing the inherent volatility of the market, use a three-year averaging factor in calculating their net worth, from which members can judge how secure their pension obligations are. In a market downturn, this averaging lessens the impact on their net worth, moderating the impact on both employers and employees who have to recalculate how much they need to contribute to the pensions. Similarly, though, in a market upturn, this averaging moderates (even disguises) the positive impact on their net worth. The dramatic uptick in the market in the last year and a half is thus not really represented in the calculations of pensions' net worth.

The very same upturn in the market that has led to bounteous tax revenues thus has also significantly pushed upward the net worth of

the CALPERS and CALSTRS pension funds, and hence reduced the unfunded liabilities. These calculations won't be redone to reflect the June 2015 values until late this year, or early next year, at which time we should see a somewhat dramatic change. There's no question that the funds will still be underfunded, but the magnitude of that liability will decrease significantly, and that trend will continue as stronger market years replace weaker market years in the rolling 3-year averages.

Overall, then, the state budget is pretty good news. Schools and community colleges will be the biggest winners, but all local government entities will see at least steady funding, if not modest increases. The Legislature will grapple with the Governor's quite conservative estimates of revenue for next year, and very modest increases in those estimates could generate quite significant additional funding opportunities for a host of safety net programs and other favored causes. The Governor, though, has the last word, and he is not at all reluctant to red-line appropriations in excess of his recommendations. The Democrats, with solid majorities in both legislative chambers, should be able to deliver a budget roughly in time to meet their Constitutional deadline, but they are unlikely to get any Republican support for additional tax sources (like an extraction tax on oil and gas), as much as that would make total sense. So my guess is that the Gov's budget will likely emerge relatively unscathed and will pretty much define the state's spending plan for the next fiscal year.

-- Jon Fuhrman



### ***And really special thanks to Our Benefactors***

Councilmember John Kennedy, Pasadena  
Kip Thorne & Carolee Winstein, Pasadena

**From 25<sup>th</sup> District  
State Senator  
Carol Liu**



**Sacramento, May 2015**

**G**overnor Jerry Brown released the May Revision to his proposed state budget. The new spending plan includes \$6.7 billion in higher than expected revenues from the growing state economy. In total, the plan allocates \$115 Billion in General Fund spending, about \$1 Billion more than last year.

I was pleased to see the Governor's May Revise include an Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) to benefit the state's poorest residents. The Governor's proposal does not reach as many working poor families as the approach I have proposed in my bill, SB38. The administration estimates that the proposed \$380 million tax credit will benefit two million people who earn \$13,870 or less a year. The maximum credit for a family with three or more children will be capped at \$2,653. I hope the budget negotiations will result in a broader reach for the EITC that will also encourage more California families to access the federal EITC. Research shows that EITC directly benefit families and the local economy.

While there has been much excitement over the higher than projected revenues, we've all been cautioned to lower our expectations on how these revenues can be used. Because of Prop 98, much of this year's new revenue will be directed towards primary education. Prop 98 increases General Fund spending by \$5.5 billion for K12 schools and community colleges. In addition, Proposition 2 requires that an additional \$633 million be saved in the Rainy Day Fund and an additional \$633 million be used to pay down debts and liabilities.

The May Revise holds tuition flat for two years at the University of California and California State University for in-state undergraduate students by providing increased ongoing funding to CSU and temporary assistance to UC to pay down its unfunded pension liability.

The Governor hopes to take advantage of immigration changes sparked by President Obama's executive actions by providing health care and other safety net services to currently undocumented immigrants who gain Permanent Residence Under Color of Law status because of the changes.

In response to the Governor's revised budget, Senate President pro Tempore Kevin de León asserted the Senate Democrats' commitment to exercising their role in keeping the state's fiscal house in order. He also called out two priorities in particular, "Childcare and higher education are important investments to fortify the future of California's economy. We can and will do more to ensure our budget reflects these priorities."

The Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee, and its Budget Subcommittees have been reviewing details of the budget since the first draft was released in January. They will continue their review, accounting for the new revenue figures and allocations, and work towards a finalized budget acceptable to both houses of the Legislature by mid-June. You can follow the activities of the Senate Budget Committee here: <http://sbud.senate.ca.gov/>.

While legislators consider the budget, we are also moving our bills along. I am pleased to have five of my bills already in the Assembly and two on the Senate floor. Another 18 are awaiting action by the Appropriations Committee at the end of May.

Here in the District, I was pleased with the turnout for the 25<sup>th</sup> Senate District Annual Foster Youth Town Hall. Our Senior Scam

Stoppers events have also been well attended. Burbank Water and Power hosted the 25<sup>th</sup> Senate District GREEN21 Council meeting in their LEED certified building in early May. The 2015 GREEN21 project is assembling best practices for individuals, businesses, institutions, organizations, and communities to reduce their water and carbon footprints. Please watch for the launch of our newly updated GREEN21 website at <http://sd25.senate.ca.gov/>

*Sen. Liu represents about 930,000 people in the 25th Senate District, which includes Burbank, Glendale, Atwater Village, Sunland-Tujunga, Pasadena, La Cañada Flintridge, La Crescenta, Montrose, Altadena, San Marino, South Pasadena, Sierra Madre, Monrovia, Bradbury, Duarte, Glendora, San Dimas, La Verne, Claremont, and Upland. Visit [www.senate.ca.gov/LIU](http://www.senate.ca.gov/LIU).*



**From  
41<sup>st</sup> District  
Assemblymember  
Chris Holden**



Dear ACT Friends,

**T**he Assembly (and the Senate too) has been quite busy these past several weeks hearing hundreds of bills as they make their way through various committees. I am happy to report that several of my key bills have been approved in the Assembly and will soon be heard in the Senate. Among them are:

**AB 15 Human Rights:** To ensure victims of human rights abuses get their day in court. The bill expands the time limit for filing human rights claims from two to ten years in cases of torture, war crimes, genocide and human trafficking. This measure would bring state law into line with federal law and allow the reopening of claims from the Holocaust and Armenian Genocide among others.

**AB 265 – Buy Here, Pay Here Auto Loans:** Gives used car buyers additional protection by requiring buy-here/pay-here dealerships to provide a 10-day written notice before using a starter-interruption device which essentially disables the vehicle. These are often dealerships of last resort for buyers with poor credit and little money.

**AB 525 – Franchise Bill:** This measure aims to give small business, franchise owners more protection against abuse. This is a modified version of a Senate bill approved in the Legislature last year, but vetoed by Governor Brown. This bill would prohibit franchisors from refusing to renew a franchise agreement unless the franchisee has failed to “substantially comply” with the franchise agreement and was given time to correct the violation.

**The deadline for bills to be out of their house of origin is May 29.**

May is also budget time. Governor Brown’s revised budget proposal made big headlines this past week with news that K-12 education will be receiving an infusion of billions of dollars. That’s good news for our local schools that suffered during the recent years of budget cutbacks. As part of his budget deal with higher education, the University of California will freeze tuition for California undergrads for the next two years.

There was also good news for California’s low-income wage earners. The Governor’s new state tax credit for the working poor will benefit some 2-million working Californians by helping to move them out of poverty. It’s a big step in aiding working families and moves money into our local communities.

Don’t forget to mark your calendars for our annual Block Party and Resource Fair set for August 8. Stop by and say hello. I look forward to seeing you then.

-- Chris Holden

Holden can be reached at: [www.asm.ca.gov/holden](http://www.asm.ca.gov/holden).



## From Judy Chu 25<sup>th</sup> U.S. Congressional District



### Rep. Chu Announces 2015 Artistic Discovery Winners

Rep. Judy Chu (CA-27) announced the winners of the Artistic Discovery Competition. Now in its 34<sup>th</sup> year, the nationwide competition is sponsored by Members of Congress to promote and recognize the artistic achievements of students. Winners were selected from over 200 submissions by a committee of judges that took into account style, technique, originality, and creativity. The winning work will be displayed in the U.S. Capitol building for a year with other winning pieces from around the country while other selections will be hung in Congresswoman Chu's Washington DC and district offices. All the winners will also receive scholarships. Rep. Chu released the following statement:

"Art is a powerful tool that helps our society move forward. It teaches us to love and to understand, to think and reflect, it inspires us to dream and to reach for the stars. This year's honorees are a group of diverse and highly talented students who represent all of these values. Their artwork puts on display an incredible amount of talent. I'm so proud of all the young artists who took part."

The winners this year are:

- First Place** – Peggy Luk, Arcadia High School
- Second Place** – Rebecca Kruger, Glendora High School
- Third Place** – Leona Chen, Temple City High School
- Judges Choice** – Rebekah Li, Temple City High School
- Honorable Mention** – Aimee Niu, Marantha High School
- Honorable Mention** – Briana Shen, Arcadia High School
- Honorable Mention** – Lilium Wu, Polytechnic High School
- Honorable Mention** – Areli Arellano, Alhambra High School



Representative Judy Chu with the winners



### *Supervisor Hilda Solis to Speak*

At its **36th Annual Champagne Brunch**, the National Women's Political Caucus of Greater Pasadena is proud to have **Los Angeles County Supervisor Hilda Solis** as its keynote speaker. Supervisor Solis was also a former Congresswoman and the U.S Secretary of Labor. She was the **first Latina Cabinet member**.

The Brunch will be held on **Saturday, May 23 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.** at the historic home of Connie Holguin, 271 Markham Place, Pasadena.

The **\$35** Brunch charge can be sent to Betty Ann Jansson, 942 South Oakland St., Pasadena 91106 or paid at the door.



### *And Thanks for Additional Contributions to ACT's Operating Account*

Gloria Reynolds, Pasadena

### *And Thanks for Additional Contributions to ACT's Political Account*

Lara Larramendi, Monrovia

Gloria Reynolds, Pasadena

## Candidate for State Senate Anthony Portantino



### "Don't Bring Negative to My Door"

I love that Maya Angelou quote, don't you? Sort of says it all. I'll leave the agitation to people who fundamentally don't understand that our friends and neighbors throughout the Foothills appreciate leaders who foster positive relationships and productive accomplishments. Many of you have heard me say it more than once, **Life is Good!** And, as an optimist, I can't help myself but believe in a positive future.

**Water** ~ I've been amazed at how many people have been stopping me to discuss water. Even as I volunteered as a docent at my daughter's school PTA Home Tour the drought was a much discussed topic. It underscores just how important and complicated the issue has become. Anyone who's ever watched *Chinatown* recalls the long-standing issue and the scene where goats and farmers ran into City Hall demanding water. It's a shame that the problem got bigger than our efforts and solutions over the past 50 years. Governor Brown has inherited a tough hand to play and is doing his best to play the right cards. I wish our Governor and our state well on this important journey.

I wish that I had replaced my lawn with drought resistant native plants a long time ago. It's on my growing list of things to do. Like many of you, our house is struggling with how best to conserve and approach this issue. We certainly are not perfect but we are trying to cut back the best we can. I picked up an egg timer for the shower at a Water Conference in Sierra Madre. Everything helps!

The non-profit, Theodore Payne Foundation, has a mission to promote native plants and

general awareness. Check them out if you have a moment, you might find it helpful. Here's their link and that of the MWD.

<http://theodorepayne.org/>

<http://www.mwdh2o.com/index.htm>

**Campaign for Senate** ~ Recently, I've hinted at the total amount of local support for our campaign through the release of just 60 local endorsements. I am also very pleased to announce support from the *California Small Business Association* and *Teamsters Joint Council 42*. There are many more local elected official endorsements and institutional supporters to come, please stay tuned. At a time when it is becoming clearer that all politics are local, there is no substitute for the strong list of district mayors and councilmembers that are supporting our effort. Having garnered the support from a great advocate for our Main Street Business and for the hard working men and women in California continues this positive and winning trend.

The wonderful Judy and David Brown will be hosting a fundraiser for me on June 28<sup>th</sup> in Pasadena. I was very pleased to have *two* Pasadena Mayors (how's that for a tease) sign the letter calling for support of the event along with former Pasadena NAACP President Joe Brown and Glendale Treasurer Rafi Manoukian. Yvonne Brown, Claire Bogaard, Maria Tornek and Zovig Manoukian all signed, too. The Browns have an awesome 1907 **Greene and Greene** home and the event should be fun. If you'd like to be a sponsor or get an early ticket go to:

<https://causes.anedot.com/browns-host-garden-party>

**Family News** ~ At home, I couldn't smile any more. Bella recently earned her Girl Scout Silver Award making me a very proud dad. Her soccer team had a tough 1-1 tie recently. All 13, she makes me laugh, smile and sigh almost every day. Sofia has been delightful.

Respectfully,

Anthony Portantino

**From  
43<sup>rd</sup> District  
Assemblymember  
Mike Gatto**



Greetings from Sacramento!

**Making Life Easier for Middle Class Seniors**

Passing our belongings to our loved ones is often our final gift, and final expression of love for them. And even though family members can easily deed a house to a loved one while alive, California provides no easy way to do so upon death.

Government should not add on to the headache and hardship caused by the death of a family member. That's why I've introduced legislation to create a "Revocable Transfer on Death (TOD) Deed" in California, allowing a homeowner to specify who their house should be deeded to when they pass away. Just like a person can designate a bank account to go to a loved one upon death, AB 139 will help families avoid the ridiculously high fees and time-consuming bureaucracy of probate, relieve California's already overburdened court system, and most importantly, give families greater peace of mind.

The legislation comes after a recommendation by the California Law Revision Commission that the legislature look to the experiences of the more than 20 other states that provide this streamlined option for those making estate plans.

I believe that one of the primary roles of the legislature should be to make life easier for the average Californian. By helping Californians avoid government bureaucracy and probate fees, AB 139 will do just that. It is illogical and unfair to force hard-working, middle-class Californians into probate to leave their house to a loved one.

I am committed to protecting our families and communities from unnecessary hassle, expense, and bureaucracy. If you have ideas for additional legislation or events on this topic, or if you are in need of assistance with a state or local agency, please contact my district office at 818-558-3043. My staff and I will be happy to assist you.

Follow Mike Gatto on Twitter @MikeGatto or visit [www.asm.ca.gov/gatto](http://www.asm.ca.gov/gatto)

**Altadena Town Council Race Draws  
14 Candidates for Eight Seats**

Fourteen candidates have applied to run for eight openings on the Altadena Town Council, an advisory body to Supervisor Michael Antonovich.

The final list of candidates is to be approved by the Town Council at its regular meeting May 19 at 7 p.m. Candidates are:

CT 4601: Anne Chomyn and James Walker, Jr.

CT 4602: Ruben Balter and Billy Malone (incumbent). Malone has also filed to run for Mike Antonovich's 5th District seat on the LA County Board of Supervisors.

CT 4603.01: Damon Hobby (incumbent and running unopposed)

CT4603.02: Hermond Dean Cooper (running unopposed)

CT 4610: Cecil Griffin and Brent Musson (incumbent)

CT 4611: Amy Cienfuegos (incumbent), Justin Robertson and Otis Triplett

CT 4612: Anne Lansing (running unopposed)

CT 4613: Vahe Atchabaharian and Sylvia Vega (incumbent)

A candidate forum will be held Thursday, May 28, in the Altadena Library Community Room, beginning at 6:30 pm. The candidate forum is sponsored by Neighbors Building a Better Altadena, a group dedicated to creating a stronger, more cohesive community. At the candidate forum, each candidate will be offered an opportunity to speak to the entire community and respond to additional questions from attendees.

Then the group will gather by census tract with each tract's candidates available for more detailed discussions with their neighbors.

Prior to the forum, each candidate will be asked to answer in writing three questions about their goals for the community and the Town Council, and the responses will be posted on the group's web site at [buildingabetteraltadena.org](http://buildingabetteraltadena.org).

Election day is June 6. Early voting will also be available on June 2. As of Phoenix press time, voting locations and times had not yet been published by the Altadena Town Council's election committee chaired by Okorie Ezieme.

For more election info visit: [www.altadenelection.org](http://www.altadenelection.org).

## Proposed ACT Resolution Against Fracking

**Proposition:** Prompt and forceful action should be taken by public and private entities to preserve a livable environment for future generations by preventing the extraction of a significant majority of the known fossil fuel reserves, beginning with a ban on fracking.

**Rationale for the Resolution:** Some scientists estimate that the adverse climate change will reach a tipping point if we do not keep 2/3 of the known fossil fuel reserves (coal, oil, and gas) in the ground. Restricting and prohibiting fracking should be a first priority because it is causing harm beyond the adverse effects on the climate and its substantial presence in California means action here can be effective (as distinct from coal, for example). Fracking poses a direct and immediate threat to drinking water, air, food, health, wildlife, and climate and possess potential increased earthquake risks. Extractive industries are gearing up to frack an estimated 15 Billion barrels of oil in the Monterey Shale Formation. The area is home to some of California's most productive farmland, critical water resources and wildlife extending from Salinas Valley to the Los Angeles Basin.

The state of New York has maintained a fracking moratorium since 2008 and extended has extended it until 2015. New York's Health and Environmental Review has recently been released, recommending fracking not be allowed, and reporting the economic benefits are far lower than originally forecast. California is implementing fracking before the completion of such studies.

**Action:** The ACT Steering Committee and the ACT Coalition-Building and Outreach Committee is authorized to take such steps as they deem appropriate to implement this Proposition.

## Letter from Congressman Schiff Regarding Proposed SR710 North

Congressman Schiff forwarded a letter dated May 6, to the LA Metro Board comprised of Chairman Garcetti and Board Members regarding his "opposition to the SR 710 North freeway tunnel". He reviewed the draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement and concluded "it is my belief that a tunnel would be cost prohibitive and detrimental to the communities overall, including many cities that I represent in Congress".

When the tunnel concept was first raised, he "was willing to explore its fiscal, technical and community feasibility". Metro represented a cost roughly \$1.5 Billion at that time, calling it a "wildly optimistic" estimate. Today, "whatever the technological feasibility, a single-bore or dual-bore tunnel is cost prohibitive and could cost anywhere between \$3.15B and a whopping \$5.65B." The EIR/EIS addresses four other alternative proposals which "put together would cost less than even the more modest tunnel option".

As to present status of communities along the proposed route, Congressman Schiff responds to that: "Our communities want new and innovative ways to move people and improve air quality, not more freeways above or below ground with their smokestacks for ventilation and even more vehicles belching exhaust through their neighborhoods".

Regarding Metro's role, he states "Metro could help reshape the transportation future of LA by thinking outside the box to get people outside their vehicles, by integrating parks and better urban planning, smart traffic lights and smarter mass transit, all of this and more, and all for less than the cost of a tunnel." He concludes "I urge Metro to think anew, reject the tunnel, and give serious consideration to other, more forward thinking and more suitable options".

Congressman Adam Schiff's letter can be reviewed in its entirety on the ACT website: [WWW.ACTPASADENA.ORG/](http://WWW.ACTPASADENA.ORG/)

-- Barbara Paul



**Congratulations Terry Tornek**

We congratulate ACT member and ACT-endorsed candidate Terry Tornek on his election as Mayor of Pasadena.

Best wishes Mr. Mayor!



**Special Thanks to Our Sustaining Members**

- Bill Hacket & Thom Uber, West Hollywood
- Lara Larramendi, Monrovia
- June Thurber Paine & Garrett Paine, Pasa.
- Michael Reagan & Carolyn Garner-Reagan, Pasadena

**2015 ACT and ADC Membership Renewal**

A red check on your address label on this Phoenix tells you that we haven't yet received your 2015 membership dues. Please use the form below and mail your check c/o ACT/ADC, P. O. Box 40074, Pasadena, 91114-7074. Or if you wish you may renew online at [www.ACTpasadena.org](http://www.ACTpasadena.org). ACT and ADC dues are still a bargain, especially if you join both organizations. Your continued support is critical to our getting important work done.

P.S. Grateful thanks to everyone who has already renewed.

P.P.S. If you have any questions about your membership contact Executive Director Jon Fuhrman at [jon\\_fuhrman@charter.net](mailto:jon_fuhrman@charter.net) or 626-795-5255.

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

\$40	Single	\$70	Single Sustaining
\$25	Each additional member per household	\$90	Double Sustaining
\$15	Student or limited income	\$150	Patron
		\$275	Benefactor

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

\$35	Single	\$60	Single Sustaining
\$20	Each additional member per household	\$85	Double Sustaining
\$15	Student or limited income	\$125	Patron
\$20	Gift Membership (NEW!)	\$275	Benefactor

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

\$35	Single	\$60	Single Sustaining
\$20	Each additional member per household	\$85	Double Sustaining
\$15	Student or limited income	\$125	Patron
		\$275	Benefactor

**Extra Contribution**

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Office Phone \_\_\_\_\_



## Calendar

- May 26  
Tuesday  
7:30 p.m.      ACT Coalition Building and Outreach Committee meeting at Yuny Parada's office, 1015 N. Lake Ave., Suite 104, Pasadena. Parking in back.
- June 4  
Thursday  
7 p.m.          ACT Steering Committee/ADC meeting at the home of Wendy Gordon and Michael Gottlieb, 1535 Ontario Ave., Pasadena. Special Guest is Cynthia Kurtz. Coffee at 7 p.m.; meeting begins at 7:30 p.m.
- June 5  
Friday  
9 a.m.          Progressive Discussion Group at Dupar's Restaurant, 214 S. Lake Ave., Pasadena. Contact Inman Moore at 626 795-2201 for details.
- June 7  
Sunday eve      ThePhoenix deadline. Send items to hains27@sbcglobal.net.
- June 19,  
& July 3          Progressive Discussion Group. Details same as 6/5.



## June *Phoenix* Deadline

The deadline for the June *Phoenix* will be Sunday night, June 7. Please send items to Chuck Hains at [hains27@sbcglobal.net](mailto:hains27@sbcglobal.net). Mailing preparation will Thursday, June 11 at 7 p.m. at a location to be determined. (Mailers will receive a reminder via phone.)



## Progressive Discussion Group

Friday Morning Progressive Discussion Group still meets every first and third Friday of the month at 9 a.m. Join the discussion. Everyone is welcome. Order breakfast, coffee, etc., or not. See reminder at left.



**P. O. Box 40074  
Pasadena, California  
91114-7074**