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Published by Chuck Hains & Sally Beer

# ACT Endorses PCC Candidates

## Don't forget the Nov. 8th Election

ACT has endorsed **Jeanette Mann**, **William Thomson**, and **John Martin** for re-election to the Pasadena Area Community College Board of Trustees. Mann received support from 96% of ACT members voting in the endorsement ballot; Thomson got an 80% endorsement vote, and 87% supported endorsing Martin. ACT has therefore contributed \$2,000 to Mann's campaign, \$500 to Thomson, and \$250 to Martin (based upon the strength of their opponent's campaign, the number of ACT members within their districts, and our available resources).

Please, if you live within PCC Areas 2, 4 or 6, don't forget to vote on November 8th. The PCC races are the only election on the ballot, so turnout is likely to be microscopically small! Don't let fringe candidates steal the election! Be sure to vote; get your family to vote; get your friends to vote!

## ACT -- Our Next Forty Years

About 20 ACT members -- some relatively new, some decades-old members -- met in September to begin brainstorming about how ACT can remain vital and energetic, and where we ought to go, over our next 40 years. Ideas covered a huge spectrum, clustering in three main areas: programming; community action / collaboration / visibility; and candidates / elections. Some of the key questions are should ACT remain a non-partisan organization; what ought to be our geographic "sphere of influence"; how do we attract new members.

At the October Steering Committee meeting, we resolved to poll our membership, in conjunction with the annual membership appeal, to see what you think and where you want us to go. So, early next year, as you get our annual membership renewal appeal, look for our survey for the next 40 years. We need your input and your advice!

## Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee is working to develop a list of ACT and Arroyo Democratic Club officers and committee chairs for 2012. Many officers and committee members are willing to continue, but we do need two new Co-Chairs to replace Wendy Gordon and Neal Wrightson who have served their two-year terms. We also need two new Recording Secretaries, a new Chair for the Election Procedures (endorsement ballot) Committee, and a Telephone Committee Chair (or Chairs) to mention a few. Other committees are Membership, Research, Program, Fundraising, Communications, *Phoenix*, Mailing, and Computer/Website.

If any of these spots interest you please contact any Nominating Committee member: Wendy Gordon, Neal Wrightson, Fred Register, Sally Beer Bill Hackett or Jon Fuhrman. Remember that the work of most committees (and some of the offices) takes place only once or twice a year (or quarterly) so you won't be saddled with numerous meetings. Please call Jon at 626-795-5255 if you have questions about ACT committees.



## 2011 Steering Committee Calendar

All ACT and ADC members are welcome at ACT Steering Committee/ADC meetings on the first Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday of the month - in rotation. (Socializing begins at 7 p.m.; the meeting follows at 7:30 p.m.)

Remaining 2011 meeting dates are:

Thursday, November 3

Tuesday, December 6 (Holiday Potluck meeting)



## Phoenix Deadline

The deadline for the November Phoenix will be Sunday, November 6. Please send items to Chuck Hains at [Hains27@SBCGlobal.net](mailto:Hains27@SBCGlobal.net). The Phoenix will be prepared for mailing on Thursday, November 10 at 7 p.m. at Chuck's house, 1391 La Solana Dr., Altadena and mailed the next morning. (Volunteer mailers please call Ellen Coles at 626-798-2402 to verify date and time.)



## San Gabriel Valley Democratic Women's Club

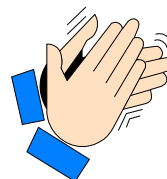
The San Gabriel Valley Democratic Women's Club (the oldest Democratic Club in our area) meets on the second Friday of each month, September through June at 10 a.m., usually in the Community Room at the Altadena Library. An interesting program or speaker follows a brief business meeting.

The next meeting is on Friday, November 11, 10 a.m. at Pasadena Highlands (formerly Sierra Bonita Towers), 1575 E. Washington Boulevard, Pasadena. Pasadena Councilman and Assembly candidate Chris Holden is the guest speaker. Everyone is welcome (men too).



## Welcome New and Returning ACT Members:

Katharine Kane, Palm Desert  
Kevin O'Connor, Temple City



## Jeanette Mann

### Call for Volunteers for Walking and Calling for Campaign to Re-elect Jeanette Mann to PCC Board

I'm running for re-election to the PCC Board of Trustees against a tea party candidate. These are hard times for community colleges. Thanks to careful budgeting we've expanded course offerings. No faculty layoffs. Our finances are rock-solid. My first commitment continues to be educating our young people. PCC's energetic new president needs an experienced Board to continue to improve training for jobs in today's economy and guarantee district high school students priority admission. With my many years of experience as a university manager, teacher (PhD in English), and Trustee, I believe I can provide the leadership to keep PCC #1.

Volunteers are needed from now until Election Day for walking and calling. You will NOT be asking people for money. These calls are to identify supporters and encourage them to vote. There will not be anything else on the ballot. We're using a virtual phone bank model instead of a traditional model where everyone comes together in one place. Callers will receive a script and a list of registered voters. We'll give you some target completion dates, but it's up to you when you call. Loretta Mockler, the volunteer coordinator of phone-base volunteer outreach, will send you the script and calling lists by email. Once you complete them, either scan them/return them via email or drop them off at my home for coding. Please let Loretta know if you would like to volunteer and tell her how much time you have. She'll adjust the size of your calling list. She can be reached at 626.590.7324 or by email at [loretta.mockler@gmail.com](mailto:loretta.mockler@gmail.com)

We are walking Pasadena and Sierra Madre Precincts every Saturday until the election

between at 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Meet at my house, 2195 East Orange Grove, Pasadena. Ralph Hurtado and I are walking most days if you would like to join us during the week. If you would prefer to walk your precinct, just let us know. Contact either of us:

[rhurtado799@charter.net](mailto:rhurtado799@charter.net) or 626 799 7626 or me at [jxmann@earthlink.net](mailto:jxmann@earthlink.net) or 626 797-0307.

I appreciate your support and hope you'll join us—even if just for a few hours.

-- Jeanette Mann



**Excerpts from *Alternet and Life, Inc.: How the World Became a Corporation and How to Take it Back* by Douglas Rushkoff**

Submitted by Grace Tiessen

**Are Jobs on Their Way to Becoming Obsolete? And Is That a Good Thing?**

**Do we have it backward when we call for job creation? Could we instead radically rethink our economy to benefit everyone?**

We produce enough food and “stuff” to support the country and even the world. We need a way to fairly distribute the bounty we have generated through our technologies. We need a way of creating meaning. Developed-world lifestyles are unsustainable.

Many jobs have been lost to technological advances: robots in a factory; self-checkout at the grocery; sending emails instead of letters; automated garages.

**We've shifted from a manufacturing economy to the “knowledge economy,”** where most of our jobs are not making things but acquiring and transmitting information.

**As the knowledge economy grows, so does the freelance workforce.**

*Continued on page eleven*

## Political Notes

by Jon Fuhrman



Friday, October 7.

I've been holding off commenting directly on the Presidential campaigns, but my patience has run out. The picture seems to be solidifying, at least a bit, but with a few interesting twists and turns.

Leaders of both parties were in broad agreement that the 2008 campaign started too early. Both parties tried to adjust the primary schedule so that Iowa and New Hampshire waited at least until February, and most major primaries were scheduled no earlier than March. Further, they tried to enforce those decisions by promising to slash delegate counts for any state that dared to defy those timelines.

Well, so much for those plans. Florida moved first, with the Legislature moving their primary ahead six weeks to Tuesday, January 31.

(Perhaps, since they are hosting the Republican convention and will be a must-win state for the Reps, they thought the Republican National Committee wouldn't dare reduce their delegation size.) That sparked a whole cascade, with South Carolina moving up to Saturday, Jan. 21 (to be a week earlier than Florida); that pushed the Nevada caucuses to Saturday, Jan. 14. Iowa and New Hampshire, of course, have to go before Nevada, so we're probably looking at Tuesday, Jan. 10 for New Hampshire, and Tuesday, Jan. 3 for the Iowa caucuses.

Not only will these early dates extend the primary season, but they create real challenges for Republican candidates. The field remains surprisingly fluid. Even after six months of close scrutiny, no consensus has emerged within the party. Gov. Mitt Romney has maintained a remarkably consistent 25% - 30% of likely Republican voters. But that means the overwhelming majority of the party doesn't really want him. That huge block is hopelessly divided, flitting from Bachman to Perry to Cain, with pieces going to Ron Paul and the lesser candidates.

The earlier the first caucuses, the less time the Reps have to coalesce around one alternative. It looks likely that Romney will lose Iowa, win New Hampshire and Nevada, and lose South Carolina, with Florida shaping up to be a major battleground. But even winning in those states will give Romney only a modest share of the delegates, with portions from each state going to other candidates. Further, the caucus system tends to over-weight the influence of the zealots. The party could end up quite fractured, with no candidate having a majority going into the convention.

Romney is unquestionably the most logical person to carry the Rep's banner, yet the party seems to crave a true fire-breather, and that's just not Romney. In fact, if Romney is the

nominee, some of the most passionate right-wingers may just sit it out, unwilling to trade Obama for an "Obama-light" candidate. Logically, that seems incredibly self-destructive; the only thing is, logic does not seem to have much of place in our political discourse these days. My bet is on Rick Perry, who may become the Democrats' secret weapon.

And what of the Democrats? The President's job approval rating is hitting all-time lows, driven by both the economic situation and, even more so, the fear about the economic situation. The common perception seems, to me, rather worse than the actual situation. The constant publicity over Greece and other European economic problems leads people to infer that we're next, and imminently so. Yet the facts are that our economy, Wall Street volatility notwithstanding, hasn't really much changed over the past 6 months. Job growth was slow; it may have dipped a bit, but is back up to its steadily positive, albeit somewhat anemic, levels.

In a way, it's better for the President that this is happening now, rather than next summer. To a significant degree, the President's fate is tied to the public's perception of where the economy is going -- if the current deep pessimism (justified for not) holds on through next summer, he'll face a hugely difficult run. But if the public comes to see an improving economy -- even a maddeningly slow improvement -- then the Dems may be in for a very good year.

The irony is that on virtually every major issue, the public is with the Democrats. On the core issue of taxation, the public overwhelmingly sides with the President, that the wealthy should ante up a little more, and that increased revenues are a necessary comple-

ment to budget cuts. On national security, where Republicans often have dominated the discussion, the President will have withdrawn all but a few thousand troops from Iraq, reduced the number of troops in Afghanistan, captured Bin Laden, crippled Al Qaeda, recaptured world esteem, weathered the Arab Spring, helped oust Qaddafi at little cost and no American casualties -- the list makes Obama sound like a super-hero. Dick Cheney would have given his eye teeth (and perhaps a few other body parts) for half of those accomplishments. The President forestalled a potential depression in 2009 and 2010, achieved the first significant health care reform legislation

since the 1960's, appointed two women -- and the first Hispanic -- to the Supreme Court -- yet all of that pales before the broad fears about our economic prospects.

So look for the President to continue pushing hard for his jobs bill, challenging the Reps on their blanket opposition to any movement, and trying to communicate that he and the Dems do, indeed, "feel your pain". I'm pessimistic that the 12-member

Congressional "Super-Committee" (which, incidentally, includes Cong. Xavier Becerra, from the northeast LA area) will be able to reach any compromise -- notwithstanding N.J. Gov. Chris Christie's eloquent defense of "principled compromise" as an absolutely necessary, and classically "Reaganesque", technique to achieve progress in government. That will likely mean more gridlock over both next year's budget and also the potential cuts to this year's spending plans, particularly in the national security area, which a growing number of Congressional leaders on both sides of the aisle see as ill-advised.

Yet the Republicans continue with their unquestioning mantra that government, exces-



sive regulation and taxation are a lead weight around the economy's neck. Interestingly, no one has explicitly challenged them on that assertion. Regulation and taxation levels haven't changed much since the 2000 - 2007 period, when the economy seemed to do just fine, and the Republican Congresses and Administrations didn't seem overly exercised about their impacts. What has suddenly changed (other than the occupant of the White House)? Perhaps next fall's campaign, and the Presidential debates, will finally give President Obama an opportunity and a platform explicitly to challenge the Republican storyline and present one of our own.

To that end, we might look to Elizabeth Warren, the former Harvard professor, interim organizer of the new Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, and Senate candidate from Massachusetts. She eloquently articulated what is basically the Democratic creed about shared responsibility and shared endeavors. Responding to a town hall question about an entrepreneur who created a new business "on his own", she responded:

"There is nobody in this country who got rich on his own. Nobody. You built a factory out there -- good for you.

But I want to be clear. You moved your goods to market on the roads the rest of us paid for. You hired workers the rest of us paid to educate. You were safe in your factory because of police forces and fire forces that the rest of us paid for. You didn't have to worry that marauding bands would come and seize everything at your factory.

Now look. You built a factory and it turned into something terrific or a great idea -- God bless! Keep a big hunk of it. But part of the underlying social contract is you take a hunk of that and pay forward for the next kid who comes along."

You tell 'em, Elizabeth!

-- Jon Fuhrman



## Dueling Visions for Science

Excerpted from science. 10.11-26/1211494

A clash is under way in Washington, DC, between two starkly different visions for the U.S. government's role in research and development (R&D). The outcome of this debate will shape the nation's scientific landscape for years to come.

The first vision is a grim and pessimistic "No, we can't" view. Its proponents insist that the federal government can play no substantive role in advancing science or technology. The argument is that the government has been ineffective, that "investment" is a code word for wasteful spending, and that the only way forward is for the government to lower its sights, stop making new investments, and scale back spending. This view is encapsulated in the recently enacted Budget Control Act of 2011, which demands \$2.4 trillion in federal spending cuts. Considering that, as a share of the U.S. economy, the government's support for R&D has fallen by nearly two-thirds since the 1960s, I have little doubt that R&D will bear more than its share of these latest cuts.

A hard spending cap forces false choices: Should the United States invest in badly needed new science instrumentation or in educating inner-city kids? The truth is that the nation must invest in many things. Fortunately, there exists another, far more hopeful vision for the federal government, one that rejects the notion that government budgeting must begin with a hard cap. The recent American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 demonstrates how federal investment in R&D can drive the economy forward. I was part of the negotiations that put \$22 billion of new

R&D funding into science agencies, like the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation (NSF), and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. How many jobs did these funds create, and how many more will they create in the future? We won't have the final answer for years. How many lab technicians have been hired, and how many electricians wired the labs? The accounting is difficult now, and until the scientific and technological accomplishments have reverberated through the economy, the full effect cannot be known. It appears that the short-term benefits are similar to those of shovel-ready construction projects, and for the long term, past experience is very promising. The return on spending by the NSF over the decades appears to be very large. And the most comprehensive study of the economics of the Apollo space program found that its \$25 billion in government investments returned \$181 billion to the economy.

Science is usually a smart investment for a nation's future, and is more important today than ever before. America's inflation-adjusted borrowing costs have fallen to historic lows. When the private sector is not making enough investments and consumers are not spending, Congress should make the investments that will pay large dividends: public and private scientific research, education in science and engineering, and infrastructure projects to support scientific growth. An investment-focused vision for America could begin by fulfilling the commitments made in the America COMPETES Act, enacted in 2007 and reauthorized in 2010. That law authorized a doubling of the budgets at key science agencies and created the Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (ARPA-E) to fund transformative research on energy technologies. If Congress were to fulfill that law's vision for scientific investment, it would both create good-paying jobs today and lay the groundwork for a far

stronger economy tomorrow.

This will be a daunting task. With the Budget Control Act, Congress appears to have said, in effect, that federally sponsored science has no role to play in advancing the economy, that unemployment is a problem that only time will cure, and that the nation's best days are behind us. How contrary to American tradition that would be! It must not prevail.

– Rush Holt

Rush Holt is the U.S. Representative for New Jersey's 12th Congressional District and has a doctoral degree in physics.

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## Hell on the horizon

**Climate-change deniers like Texas Gov. Perry don't want to be confused with the facts about extreme weather**



By John Grula, reprinted with permission, from the Pasadena Weekly 09/22/2011

Two of the biggest climate-change deniers currently on the national political scene are Republican Sen. James Inhofe of Oklahoma and Republican Gov. Rick Perry of Texas, who is now also campaigning for the presidency of the United States.

Inhofe has called human-induced global warming a "hoax," while Perry states in his recent book "Fed Up!" that it is "a contrived phony mess that is falling apart under its own weight."

Meanwhile, the citizens in their respective home states have been sweltering through the hottest summer ever recorded. The average temperature during the meteorological summer (June 1 to Aug. 31) in Texas was 86.8 degrees. In Oklahoma, the average was 86.5 degrees. These numbers didn't just set state records, they set national records. By the end

of August, the city of Wichita Falls in northern Texas had recorded 94 days this year in which the temperature rose above 100 degrees, also a record by far. Such brutal and unrelenting triple-digit heat was almost a daily occurrence over the rest of Texas and most of Oklahoma as well. In the latter state, the heat has so far caused the deaths of at least 14 people.

Heat waves often coincide with droughts, and that's been the case this year in both Texas and Oklahoma. The 11 months ending this August was the driest such period in Oklahoma since records were first kept in 1895. Texas has also had its worst one-year drought in the state's recorded history, and the cost so far to its agricultural sector has been estimated at \$5.2 billion.

Cities and towns all across Texas and Oklahoma have ordered water rationing or outright bans on certain uses of water. In Llano, Texas, a town of 3,100 about 70 miles northwest of the capital city of Austin, the river from which the town gets all of its water has been running at critically low levels. This August, the Llano River flowed at 2.3 to 3.4 cubic feet per second, far below the median level of 123 cubic feet per second for the month of August. The Llano City Council has banned the filling of swimming pools, washing cars outside homes and most types of outdoor watering.

As Southern Californians well know, extreme heat and dry conditions greatly increase the risk of wildfires, and Texas and Oklahoma have recently had plenty of those. According to the Texas Forest Service, from Sept. 2 to Sept. 9, firefighters in Texas responded to 176 wildfires that burned 126,844 acres. The largest fire, about 30 miles east of Austin, destroyed 1,386 homes — a state record for a single fire. Many thousands of other people were given mandatory orders to evacuate their homes. At least four who failed to do so perished in the flames.

Of course, Gov. Perry, who is a well-known and vociferous critic of government spending, has asked the Obama administration to expand the scope of federal disaster relief for his beleaguered state. And while Mr. Perry and other Republicans, such as Congressman Eric Cantor, have recently argued that federal disaster relief for states hit by hurricanes must be offset by federal spending cuts, for some reason Perry has not yet made that same argument in the case of his fire-ravaged state.

It also does not sit so well that Texas recently made a 75 percent cut in funding for its volunteer fire departments as a cost-saving measure. In the recent Texas fires, many volunteer firefighters were completely overwhelmed by flames and did not even have trucks or basic fire-fighting equipment.

Many climate change-models predict that extreme weather events will increase in frequency and severity as the planet gets warmer. In 2011, we are certainly witnessing this in Texas, Oklahoma and much of the rest of the country. In addition to the epic heat and drought, Oklahoma recently set state weather records for the greatest 24-hour snowfall total (27 inches) and the most tornadoes in one month (50 in April). In May, a single monster tornado with wind speeds of up to 198 mph tore a six-mile path of destruction across southwestern Missouri and slammed into the city of Joplin, where it killed at least 160 people, injured hundreds more and destroyed thousands of homes and businesses. It was the single deadliest twister in the US since the National Weather Service began keeping records 61 years ago.

Officials at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) have said that extreme weather events have become more frequent since 1980. Gary McManus, the as-



sociate state climatologist for Oklahoma, was recently quoted in the Los Angeles Times as saying, "I think it would be a mistake to not think that this has become the new normal. Until it stops happening, we should expect it to continue."

Will Senator Inhofe listen to Mr. McManus? I'm not holding my breath. People in denial don't want to be confused with the facts.

John Grula, PhD, is affiliated with the Southern California Federation of Scientists

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## From 43th District Assemblymember Mike Gatto



Greetings from  
Sacramento!

### Long Awaited Victory for Locals: Gatto's Local Speed Limits Bill Signed into Law

**Sacramento, CA** – AB 529 authored by Assemblyman Mike Gatto (D-Los Angeles) was signed into law today, after enjoying bipartisan support throughout the legislative process. The bill gives local government some discretion in setting speed limits on local roads, a power they were afforded until 2004.

Several prior efforts by local representatives to pass similar legislation had failed to make it past even the first committee. But since his election in June 2010, Gatto has worked with stakeholders, including the traditional opponents of the bill, to reinforce the importance of the legislation and come up with mutually agreeable language. Locals are lauding Gatto's efforts as, "A long-awaited victory for public safety and local control."

"I promised residents that I would do some-

thing about those who speed through our neighborhoods," says Gatto, "I am proud to have delivered that promise today, and proud to know that our local authorities will be given another tool to protect the safety of drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists in our communities."

The speeding problem in Glendale and other local cities had been exacerbated by a 2004 change in state law. Before that, cities could set speed limits within a range of the speed at which traffic traveled on a street. After the 2004 change however, cities have been forced to round up their speed limits, which some drivers treat as permission to drive even faster. AB 529 gives local governments the option to round speed limits down within a range after a traffic survey, which will slow the process of escalating limits on roads.

The current rules also have proven to be a financial burden on cities. According to Wayne Ko, traffic engineer for the city of Glendale, 44% of Glendale's locally set speed limits would have been forced upward without Gatto's bill, resulting in the city having to replace 44% of their expensive metallic signs.

Captain Carl Povilaitis of the Glendale Police Department flew to Sacramento to testify in support of the bill in committee. "AB 529 will improve traffic and community safety by giving communities more flexibility in setting speed limits," says Povilaitis. "That's good for drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists." Glendale Police Chief Ronald De Pompa concurred, saying, "This is a huge win for Glendale. With Assemblyman Gatto's help, we have provided local governments with another tool to protect their residents."

Mike Gatto is the Assistant Speaker Pro Tempore of the California State Assembly. He represents the cities of Burbank, Glendale, and parts of Los Angeles, including Los Feliz, North Hollywood, Silver Lake, Toluca Lake, Valley Glen, and Van Nuys.

**From  
44th District  
Assemblymember  
Anthony  
Portantino**



**Furlough Update**

Dear Friends,

Thank you to all of my friends and neighbors who called, faxed and e-mailed the Speaker's office and asked to have the unprecedented furloughs of my entire staff rescinded. Your hard work paid off! ... I have received a letter rescinding the unjust furlough of my staff.

I'd also like to thank the local cities and government organizations that came to my support, for my vote to protect Redevelopment, and opposed the unprecedented consequence that I received for voting my district's interests. I don't believe that the Speaker's reversal would have happened without all of your pressure!

I am very happy that the majority of my staff will remain intact. Sadly, we have lost my Legislative Director Diane Shelton to another position inside the Assembly. I wish Diane well in her new endeavor; she has faithfully served the 44th Assembly District and became a great friend to many of you. In particular, Diane staffed the Umbilical Cord Blood Collection legislation where she was instrumental in its success. Her loss to our staff is a significant blow to our team and she will be sorely missed.

I am very grateful to the press who well-detailed this silly episode and kept the heat on the Assembly Leaders. And, the terrific residents of the 44th AD, who have watched me practice fiscal restraint for the past five years and never bought in to the specious argument

that the guy who doesn't take a state car or participate in the state paid mail program is anything but frugal. As I've said from the beginning, we fought this battle with facts, while they chose to fight it with insults. In the end, facts, good journalism and old fashioned grass roots activism won the day.

Since the furloughs have been lifted, folks have been asking me about my fight for transparency in the legislature. These past few months have made me want to fight even harder to drag the Assembly out into the open. The Los Angeles Times / Sacramento Bee lawsuit is progressing and I am confident that the press will prevail in its effort to force the release of comprehensive budgets. I will also renew my call for both houses of the legislature to pass AB 1129 to force Sacramento to abide by the California Public Records Act. As I have said to the press, if Mr. Speaker thinks he can sweep his effort to keep the public from reviewing his budgeting practices under the Assembly's green carpet, he doesn't know me very well.

The LemonAde event was a great success. We thank everyone for coming and donating their spare food items.

Ellen and I, and my entire staff thank you for your support and friendship. It is an honor to serve as your representative and call so many of you friend. There is much work to be done and I pledge to keep on fighting for the kind of open, transparent government of which we can all be proud.

Respectfully,

Anthony

*Assemblymember Anthony Portantino represents the 44th Assembly District of California, including La Canada, Pasadena, Altadena, South Pasadena, Eagle Rock, Highland Park, Glassell Park, Temple City, Duarte and parts of Arcadia and Monrovia. He can be reached by Email at:*

<http://democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a44/>

*David Rushkoff, Continued from page three*

This transition is nothing less than a revolution. Entrepreneurial activity in 2009 was at its highest level in 14 years, online freelance job postings skyrocketed in 2010, and companies are increasingly outsourcing work. Many have chosen independent work because of greater flexibility that lets them skip the dreary office environment and focus on more personally fulfilling projects.

**Freelance work isn't so much employment as it is creative activity.** Unlike Industrial Age employment, digital production can be done from the home, independently, and even in a peer-to-peer fashion without going through big corporations. We can make games for each other, write books, solve problems, educate and inspire one another -- all through bits and bytes instead of stuff.

**Throughout Western Europe, you have a safety net because you're a person, not because you're a worker.** In the US we conceive of the social safety net in terms of jobs. The New Deal-style social safety net is based on the idea of workers in a long-term full-time job: unemployment benefits are only given to those who are laid off from a permanent position, and health insurance and sick pay only come to workers with employers who choose to provide them. We need a new conception of the social safety net for a post-job economy.

**One trend has been emerging all over: sharing.** People are buying less, and sharing more. Businesses are learning to cater to a generation of people who want access to things without needing to keep and own them forever. **Our very ideas of private property are changing.**

In New York City Alta Bicycle Share will have 10,000 bicycles all over the city at 600 stations, creating the biggest bike share program

in the nation. Netflix streams video straight to your computer for a small monthly fee.

And as we buy less stuff, we lower our carbon footprint. And the less we work at jobs, the more time we have to do things ourselves, from spending time with our kids instead of paying babysitters, to cooking at home and buying less prepackaged food. Which in turn, cuts down on jobs once again.

Work sharing allows more people to get the benefits of a paycheck, and subsidizing those part-time checks with unemployment money, keeps people able to pay the bills. **What if we agreed as a society that we all ought to work less, and that we should be paid the same amount for fewer hours?**

The current problem is a lack of demand — that most don't have enough money to spend to stimulate growth. **But is “growth” really what we want—**do we have this equation wrong once again?

Submitted by Grace Tiessen



**The Phoenix Editorial Policy:** Signed articles and letters appearing in the Phoenix represent the opinions of the individual writers and not of ACT. Their appearance does not imply endorsement by ACT or agreement with the opinions expressed. The accuracy of facts is not guaranteed. We welcome articles of interest and encourage members to write.



## From State Senator Carol Liu...



### Sacramento Update

#### Governor Brown Signs All Of Senator Liu's Bills

Happy Fall everyone! I am pleased to report that Governor Brown signed all of my bills that were sent to his desk. These measures provide job training, expand food stamp benefits to the needy, protect young people, and help the disabled. As you know, the Governor has until October 9, 2011 to sign or veto legislation passed at the end of the Legislative Session and he had a very high veto rate this year.

Passing legislation is not a solo effort. There are many individuals and groups that took time and energy to advocate for these bills, testify at hearings, write letters, and encourage the Governor to sign the legislation. The state's budget challenges have made it even more difficult to move bills that require any implementation funds through the process so I have focused my efforts on finding ways to help children and other vulnerable citizens and to make government work better by streamlining processes or leveraging federal programs.

The Governor signed these bills, which take effect Jan. 1, 2012:

- **SB 43** streamlines the process for people in need to acquire job experience and receive federal food stamps under the California program known as CalFresh.
- **SB 309** gives youth with disabilities between the ages of 18 and 22 the option to

participate and socialize with youth in their school-aged day care category, rather than be prematurely transitioned to an adult program.

- **SB 368** allows courts to appoint an individual to represent a disabled child who is in the juvenile justice system but has no parents or guardians. The court-appointed decision maker can access the child's information and records and act on his or her behalf for developmental services.

I am pleased that these bills and three more that I introduced this year have become law. Still pending are bills to reform the K-12 education governance system, streamline state education mandates, and address higher education policy coordination.

Of course, I don't believe that passing new laws is the only way we can make positive change. In fact, we need to examine what laws currently in place pose barriers to innovative and more effective policies and practices. There are also many things communities, working together, can accomplish on their own by pooling resources and ingenuity. This fall I am rolling out two programs in the District: ***Pathways to Wellbeing and Economic Security (Pathways)*** and ***Greening the 21<sup>st</sup> District for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (GREEN21)***. I'll be sharing information on these programs and how you can become involved in the next newsletter. More information on my legislation and district programs is available at my website: [www.senate.ca.gov/Liu](http://www.senate.ca.gov/Liu).

*Senator Carol Liu represents nearly 850,000 people of the 21st District, which includes Altadena, Burbank, Glendale, Pasadena, La Cañada Flintridge, San Gabriel, Temple City, several City of Los Angeles communities and portions of cities and communities stretching West to Reseda.*



## How Science Can Lead the Way

By [Lisa Randall](#), excerpted from  
Time Magazine, Oct. 03, 2011

Today's politicians seem more comfortable invoking God and religion than they do presenting facts or numbers. Of course, everyone is entitled to his or her own religious beliefs. But when science and reason get shortchanged, so does America's future. With science, we put together observations with explanatory frameworks whose predictions can be tested and ultimately agreed on. Empirically based logic and the revelatory nature of faith are very different methods for seeking answers, and only logic can be systematically improved and applied. As we head toward the next election, it's important to keep an eye on how our political leaders view science and its advances, because their attitudes frequently mirror their approaches toward rational decision making itself.

When Rick Perry, who defends teaching creationism in school, says evolution is merely "a theory that's out there, it's got some gaps in it," he's demonstrating a fundamental misunderstanding of scientific theory. And when he chooses to pray for the end of a drought rather than critically evaluate climate science, he is displaying the danger of replacing rational approaches with religion in matters of public policy. Logic tries to resolve paradoxes, whereas much of religious thought thrives on them. Adherents who want to accept both religious influences on the world and scientific explanations for its workings are obliged to confront the chasm between tangible effects and unseen, imperceptible influences that is unbridgeable by logical thought. They have no choice but to admit the inconsistency--or simply overlook the contradiction.

What we are seeing in the current presidential race is not so much a clash between religion

and science as a fundamental disregard for rational and scientific thinking. All but two of the Republican front runners won't even consider that man-made global warming might be causing climate change, despite a great deal of evidence that it is. We know CO<sub>2</sub> warms the planet through the greenhouse effect, and we know humans have created a huge increase in CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere by burning coal and oil. That man-made climate change is not proved with 100% certainty does not justify its dismissal.

In fact, an important part of science is understanding uncertainty. When scientists say we know something, we mean we have tested our ideas with a degree of accuracy over a range of scales. Scientists also address the limitations of their theories and define and try to extend the range of applicability. When the method is applied properly, the right results emerge over time.

Public policy is more complicated than clean and controlled experiments, but considering the large and serious issues we face--in the economy, in the environment, in our health and well-being--it's our responsibility to push reason as far as we can. Far from being isolating, a rational, scientific way of thinking could be unifying. Evaluating alternative strategies; reading data, when available, either in the U.S. or other countries, about the relative effectiveness of various policies; and understanding uncertainties--all features of the scientific method--can help us find the right way forward.

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

### Do we have your current Email address?

Please send your new Email address to Jon Fuhrman at [jon\\_fuhrman@charter.net](mailto:jon_fuhrman@charter.net)



## Calendar

- Oct 21  
Friday  
8-9 a.m.      Friday Morning Progressive Discussion Group at Conrad's Restaurant, NW corner Lake & Walnut, Pasa. Call Inman Moore for info at 626-795-2201. We meet on 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Fridays.
- Nov 3  
Thursday  
7 p.m.      ACT Steering Committee and ADC meeting at the home of Neal Wrightson, 1633 Mar Vista Ave., Pasadena. Coffee at 7 pm; meeting at 7:30 p.m. All members welcome & urged to attend.

- Nov 4  
Friday      Friday Morning Discussion Group. (Details same as 10/21.)
- Nov 8  
Tuesday      VOTE at local elections including PCC Districts 2, 4 and 6. Polls open from 7 a.m. – 8 p.m.
- Nov 11  
Friday  
10 a.m.      San Gabriel Valley Democratic Women's Club meeting at Pasadena Highlands, 1575 E. Washington Blvd., Pasadena. Chris Holden to speak.
- Nov 18  
Friday      Friday Morning Discussion Group. (Details same as 10/21.)



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