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NEWSLETTER OF THE SCV CONGRESS OF REPUBLICANS • SUMMER 2008



LOOKING AHEAD

REGULAR MEETINGS
 Regular membership meetings are held at 6:30 p.m. on the first Thursday of the month. Meeting updates and details are posted at www.scvcr.org.

THURSDAY, JUNE 19
 June Social with guest speaker, **Los Angeles County District Attorney Steve Cooley**, Canyon Theater, Newhall, 6:30 p.m. (a board of directors meeting will be held prior to the event at 6 p.m.)

FRIDAY, JULY 4
Fourth of July Parade, Downtown Newhall.

SUNDAY, SEPT. 21
Annual Barbecue Fundraiser, home of Richard and Marian Sandnes; details to follow.

SUNDAY, OCT. 26
Republican Rally with speakers, music and refreshments; details to follow.

It's Beginning to Heat Up

As summer gets under way, things are beginning to heat up everywhere. Your Board of Directors has been setting up a powerful, fun and informative year's worth of events for you. Here is the list as it stands.
March opened the year with the **Kennedy Social**, with former Assemblyman **Dr. Keith Richman** as guest speaker. A

longtime friend and supporter of the SCVCR, Keith spoke on education and a variety of political topics that are important to our community.
April saw the **City Council** election. Congratulations to both **Bob Kellar** and **Laurie Ender**. Our City Council has worked hard for Santa Clarita, and you can see evidence of it
 See **PRESIDENT** on Page 7



PRESIDENT'S REPORT
 By Jo Kruszewski

Strickland Pays a Visit



Former Assemblyman **Tony Strickland** (right) speaks to guests during the SCV Congress of Republicans' May Social at the Repertory East Playhouse in Newhall on May 1. **More photos on Page 5**

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

If you'd like to help a local grassroots organization further the Republican Party and its philosophy, and help elect Republicans to public office, the Santa Clarita Valley Congress of Republicans would like to hear from you.

We believe that the power of the Republican Party and Republican politics resides in the grassroots volunteers, those dedicated individuals and the local organizations they form to educate and influence the citizenry of their communities.

Annual membership in the SCVCR costs only \$25, which entitles you to participate in our monthly meetings and includes a one-year subscription to Synopsis. We also hold special events throughout the year. Won't you join us?

To make a difference, mail the completed application and a check for \$25 to:

SCV Congress of Republicans
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APPLICATION

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ ZIP _____
 Phone _____
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 Occupation _____
 As a registered Republican voter, I agree with the purposes and the objectives of the California Congress of Republicans and the SCV Congress of Republicans, the chapter to which I hereby apply for membership.
 Signature _____
 Date _____

The Top-10 List of Dem Tax Increases

In Sacramento, we are at a time of the year where we are forced to make tough, but necessary decisions in terms of dealing with the state budget. Unfortunately, my Democratic colleagues are only interested in one thing, taxing hard working Californians.

Rather than working with Republicans to cut wasteful spending and help the state live within its means, the liberal majority in Sacramento refuses to cut back on their unhealthy addiction to runaway spending, despite California's \$16 billion budget deficit.

If Democrats have their way, get ready to pay higher taxes on the car you drive, the gas you pump, the home you and your family live in, the health care you rely on, anything you purchase on the Internet, and even the plastic bags you use to carry groceries at the store.

Here are the "Top 10" tax increases proposed by Democrats so far this year:

10. The iTunes Tax

Assembly Bill 1956 (Calderon) would require state tax officials to begin imposing sales taxes on music, movies and software purchases made online, such as on iTunes. Democrats have also talked about taxing all items purchased on the Internet (\$500 million tax increase).

9. The Plastic Bag Tax

Assembly Bill 2829 (Davis) would impose a new plastic bag tax, at a still-unspecified level, on the plastic bags used by grocery stores and other retailers to package purchases.

8. Making It Easier for Politicians to Raise Taxes

Senate Constitutional Amendment 18 (Torlakson) would make it easier for local politicians to raise taxes, by allowing educational finance districts to impose special taxes by a majority vote.

7. Increasing the Car Tax

Assembly Bill 2388 (Feuer) would raise the car tax based on the weight of the vehicle and the amount of carbon dioxide emissions it emits, to a still-unspecified level.

See TOP-10 LIST on Page 4

Opinion

By Cameron Smyth
State Assemblyman

Santa Clarita Valley Congress of Republicans

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The newsletter of the
**Santa Clarita Valley
Congress of Republicans**

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Legislators Miss a Golden Opportunity

Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 5 voted May 29 to cut back Caltrans' ability to contract out the services of engineering companies when necessary. In doing so, the subcommittee voted to reduce Caltrans' flexibility to hire experienced and professional private-sector engineers to expedite the delivery of vital transportation and infrastructure projects.

"Putting the brakes on transportation projects is a disservice to the motorists who are stuck in traffic day after day and to the voters who approved billions of dollars in road and

highway bonds in 2006," said Sen. **George Runner**, R-Antelope Valley. "Sacramento should promote the use of qualified private sector engineers to ensure progress on transportation projects as quickly as possible."

According to a 2007 report by non-partisan and former Legislative Analyst **William Hamm**, private-sector engineers save the state money. Unlike state employees, once their specific project ends, private engineers no longer collect a paycheck. Additionally, taxpayers do not have to foot the bill for hiring and training state per-

sonnel, or the costs associated with a lifetime of fringe benefits.

"The budget subcommittee missed a golden opportunity to help speed project delivery and save taxpayer dollars," said **Brent Felker**, chair of the Infrastructure Delivery Council, a Consulting Engineers and Land Surveyors of California affiliate.

"Private engineers have a proven track record of lower costs, professional and timely project delivery, and extremely high satisfaction ratings on the projects they deliver," Felker added.

President

From Page 1

everywhere you go. Keep up the good work.

May saw us at the **Repertory East Playhouse** in downtown Newhall, courtesy of **Jeff Brown**. It was a pleasure seeing **Tony Strickland** again and listening to him speak on issues that are close to both him and us – health care, illegal immigration, gas prices, etc.

June 19 sees the SCVCR members and friends joined by the 38th members and friends at the **Canyon Theater Guild** in downtown Newhall. We will have a short SCVCR Board of Directors meeting at 6 p.m., followed by our joint **June Social** from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Our guest speaker will be **District Attorney Steve Cooley**. Come join us for an evening of information, friendship and some refreshments.

Our **July 4th** parade entry is in the works. We are planning a joint venture with the other Republican clubs in the Santa Clarita Valley. As soon as we receive notification of the theme, work will kick into high gear. As always, this is a fun day, so we look forward to seeing you all there.

Our **August Social** is still being firmed up, and you will be receiving information on this via invitation and email.

September 21 is our **Annual Fund Raiser BBQ**. Once again, **Dick and Marian Sandnes** are opening their home to our club for this event. It has been extremely successful for us in the past, and this year I am told that new exciting

aspects will make it even more of the place to be than ever before.

October 26 invites you, family, friends, neighbors – everyone. We are having a **Republican Rally**. We are lining up our speakers – local, district, state and federal – at this time. There will be balloons, handouts, refreshments, speakers, music and a lot of fun and information.

November 4 is what this is all about: **ELECTION DAY 2008**. We want to see everyone out voting. Our members need to help spread the word to get out and vote. Never consider that your vote does not count in the vast sea of numbers. We have seen an election won by just a relatively few votes; yours does count, tremendously, so be sure to cast it.

December is our **holiday brunch** and 2009 Officer and Board of Directors nominations. These are both in the works, and we'll have information later on.

January 2009 is the **Installation of Officers and Board of Directors**. This also is in the planning stages, and we'll have information to follow.

As you can see, your Board is working hard to bring information, fun and friendship to you each month. Please remember – our Socials are events open and encouraged for not only our membership, but their family and friends as well.

Please mark your calendars and spread the word – **we are looking forward to seeing all of you.**

Jo Kruszewski is president of the Santa Clarita Valley Congress of Republicans.

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Pelosi Premium

From Page 4

Reliable Sources of Energy

- Encourage more production of environmentally-safe energy to increase the use of our vast domestic supply, reduce emissions, and keep coal-dependent communities strong; and

- Expand emissions-free nuclear power, including long term nuclear waste storage solutions and recycling spent fuel by:

- Provide production and investment tax credits for all new base-load electricity projects such as advanced nuclear power and clean coal; and
- Allow immediate expensing for new renewable or zero emission power.

3. **Cutting Red Tape and Increase the Supply of American-Made Fuel and Energy**

- Expedite permitting for enhanced oil recovery projects, including CO2 delivery and injection, as well as permitting for new refining capacity;

- Improve environmental review and permitting to encourage the deployment of technologies which increase the efficiency of existing power plants; and

- End ill-advised policies that have led to the proliferation of unique gasoline and diesel fuel formulations known as "boutique fuels," which have fragmented our motor fuels distribution system, choked off supply, and exacerbated the already-painful Pelosi Premium.

4. Encouraging Greater Energy Efficiency by Offering Conservation Tax Incentives

- Support technologies to help increase energy efficiency in all sectors of the American economy, including removing bureaucratic regulatory barriers that prevent businesses from upgrading their facilities with newer, more efficient energy technologies, by:

- Making home energy efficiency upgrades tax deductible;

- Providing incentives for home builders and homeowners to make their homes more energy efficient;

- Offering investment expensing for industrial and commercial building efficiency upgrades;

- Extending the residential and business solar and fuel cell investment tax credits, with enhancements to the residential solar credit;

- Extending the fiber-optic distributed sunlight investment tax credit; and

- Increasing the energy efficiency of

government-owned buildings.

McKeon has been out-in-front on the issue and has asked Speaker Pelosi to finally reveal the "common sense" plan she promised America in 2006 before taking office as Speaker of the House.



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McKeon Bill to Resolve Mining Issue

Rep. Howard P. "Buck" McKeon (R-Santa Clarita) announced that he has introduced the **Soledad Canyon Mine Act** (H.R. 5887), legislation that incorporates an agreement reached by the **City of Santa Clarita, Victorville** and **CEMEX** to settle a dispute regarding a large-scale mine proposed to operate in Soledad Canyon.

"Years ago, I made a promise to carry legislation to resolve the mining issue between the City of Santa Clarita and CEMEX if an agreement could be reached," McKeon said. "I am pleased to report that with the help of our friends from the City of Victorville, we have reached that agreement."

McKeon's legislative proposal, introduced April 24, would cancel two 10-year Soledad Canyon mining contracts that CEMEX has with the **U.S. Bureau of Land Management** (BLM), thereby ending the possibility of mining at the Soledad Canyon site.

"Santa Clarita has been rated one of the best places to live in the country, and quality of life has always been paramount here," Santa Clarita Mayor **Bob Kellar** said.

"Enacting this legislation would be a major accomplishment for residents of Santa Clarita and Los Angeles County, safeguarding our cherished quality of life and preserving open space for generations to come," Kellar added.

The legislation would also fully and fairly compensate CEMEX for having its contracts with BLM cancelled by providing the company with land near Victorville that is comparable in value to the company's investment in the cancelled contracts.

"CEMEX continues to recognize the increasing need for aggregate products as California grows and makes significant additional investments in its infrastructure," said **Steve Wise**, regional president of CEMEX's Pacific region.

"Our company is committed to fulfilling the state's need for building materials," Wise said. "In the context of this longstanding dispute, we appreciate that Congressman McKeon has crafted an equitable solution that recognizes our financial interests and also balances the community's needs in Santa Clarita."

The agreement would also augment the City of Victorville's strong economic development plan for their community.

"Congressman Buck McKeon has brokered a win-win agreement for all. The City of Victorville is pleased to participate in this agreement that protects community interests and provides for future economic development," Victorville Councilman **Mike Rothschild** said.

In 1990, CEMEX leased the rights to mine Soledad Canyon for sand and gravel from the U.S. Bureau of Land Management. The City of Santa Clarita and CEMEX announced a truce in February 2007 and agreed to seek a legislative solution that would result in an acceptable outcome for all parties. The Soledad Canyon Mine Act is the product of this close cooperation and the desire for a mutually agreeable solution.

McKeon went on to say, "With all the major players on board, we have a strong team to take this legislative proposal back to Washington and begin the uphill process of working it through the Congress."

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Gas Prices Sky High Under Dem Congress

During a press conference on May 28, Rep. **Howard P. "Buck" McKeon** (R-Santa Clarita) discussed Democrat inaction on the skyrocketing cost of gasoline and the arduous toll the increase is taking on Californians. While visiting the **Chevron gas station and Auto Spa** in Valencia, McKeon also highlighted the Republican energy plan. The current average price for regular unleaded is an astounding \$3.94 per gallon.

"From the time Democrats first took control of Congress, gas prices have risen more than 60 percent," McKeon said. "The '**Pelosi Premium**' is hitting Americans hard, diminishing their family budgets and forcing them to scale back everything from summer travel to basic necessities. Current gas prices are at record highs, and projections for the future appear to only get worse as long as we stay on the same course. Despite all that, we've heard of no solutions from Democrat leadership, nor have we seen any indication that they will change our current course of action.

Americans are feeling the squeeze from every direction and are looking to Congress for answers."

House Republicans have unveiled an energy plan that offers meaningful solutions for American families to increase the supply of American energy, improve energy efficiency, and encourage investment in alternative and renewable energy technologies.

"Republicans recognize that hard-working Americans need relief, and that's why we have outlined an ambitious agenda to increase American-made energy, bring down gas prices, and move toward energy independence," McKeon said.

The comprehensive House Republican plan will fund research and development of technologies and innovations which advance the use of renewable and domestically available energy sources, increase energy efficiency, and ease the environmental impacts of energy use.

1. Increasing the Production of American-Made Energy in an Envi-

ronmentally-Safe Way

- Support actions that reduce America's dependence on energy from unstable foreign governments and dictatorships by increasing environmentally-safe production of oil and natural gas in areas such as the arctic coastal plain and in deep ocean energy resources; and

- Promote unconventional fuels such as coal-to-liquids technology and recovering our vast oil shale reserves by;

- Increase access for environmental-ly responsible development of conventional and unconventional domestic oil and natural gas production;

- Provide coal-to-liquids financing and tax incentives;

- Advance the commercialization of the nation's two trillion barrel shale oil resource, 80 percent of which occurs on government-owned land in the West. This is enough to supply all of America's needs for over two centuries.

2. Promoting New, Clean, and

See PELOSI PREMIUM on Page 6

Top-10 List

From Page 2

Assembly Bill 2522 (Arambula) would authorize San Joaquin Valley air quality officials to impose a new \$30 car tax on local drivers, without a vote of the people.

Assembly Bill 2638 (Coto) would impose a new sales tax on the sale of cars in California that get less than 15 miles per gallon.

Senate Bill 1731 (Yee) would authorize San Francisco Bay Area transportation officials to impose a higher car tax on local drivers, without a vote of the people.

Democrats have also proposed restoring the higher car tax imposed by former Governor Davis and repealed by Governor Schwarzenegger upon taking office, a \$6 billion tax increase.

6. Increasing the Gas Tax

Assembly Bill 9xxx (Núñez) would impose a costly new "oil severance" tax on the cost of oil production in California. This will cause gas prices to soar new heights in California as this new tax will be passed along to con-

sumers in the form of higher prices at the pump.

Assembly Bill 2744 (Huffman) would authorize San Francisco Bay Area transportation officials to impose a new gas tax, of as much as 10 cents per gallon, to pay for new government spending.

Assembly Bill 2558 (Feuer) would authorize Los Angeles transportation officials to impose one of two different taxes, subject to a majority vote, to address climate change – an increased gas tax as high as 3 percent, or an increased car tax as high as \$80.

5. Raising Income Taxes

Assembly Bill 2372 (Coto) would impose a new 1 percent tax on Californians earning more than \$1 million per year, raising the state's highest income tax rate to 11.3 percent.

Assembly Bill 2897 (Hancock) would impose a new 10 percent tax rate for individuals earning more than \$136,115 every year (\$272,230 for joint filers) and a new 11 percent tax rate for individuals earning more than \$272,230 per year (\$544,460 for joint filers).

4. Closing So-Called "Tax Loop-

holes"

Democrats and others have pushed closing "tax loopholes," which is an effort to raise taxes on working Californians. These so-called loopholes include taking away the senior citizen tax credit (a \$255 million tax increase) and reducing the child dependent tax credit (\$2.4 billion) – which will hurt middle-class families.

3. New Health Taxes

Democrats have proposed the largest tax increase on businesses in state history, an \$8 billion jobs tax, to pay for government-run health care. In addition, Assembly Bill 2967 (Fuentes) would impose a new .06 percent tax on the gross operating costs of every California hospital, to pay for new government health care programs.

2. Creating a New Tax on California Businesses

Speaker Núñez has talked about creating a new split-roll property tax on California businesses, which would be a \$3 to \$7 billion tax increase on businesses. This would lead to higher prices for consumers and the threat of job losses.

See TOP-10 LIST on Page 5

May Social

AT THE REP – MAY 1, 2008



Top-10 List

From Page 4

1. Taking Away the Home Mortgage Interest Deduction

Democrats have proposed eliminat-

ing the state home mortgage interest deduction, also known as the homeowner's tax, which provides significant tax savings for working families and helps many Californians afford the expensive costs of home ownership. This would be a \$5.3 billion tax hike.

As we work to balance the budget and reduce the deficit, I will stand firm with my Assembly Republican colleagues in defending hard-working taxpayers by rejecting every tax increase proposed by Democrats, period.