

"Inconvenient Truth" - A HOAX

The global-warming issue headed by Al Gore's book is based upon bad and faulty science. "Greenhouse warming in the tropics should register at increasingly high rates as one moves from the earth's surface up into the atmosphere, peaking at about six miles above the earth's surface," states esteemed professor S. Fred Singer. At that point, the level should be greater than at the surface by about a factor of three, according to all the computer models. In reality, however, there is no increase at all. In fact, the data from balloon-born radiosondes show the very opposite; a slight decrease in warming over the equator.

In the past few years there has been increasing concern about global climate change on the part of media, politicians and the public. It has been stimu-

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Your Health at Risk

Governor Schwarzenegger called the State legislature into two special sessions in mid-September to address health care coverage and extension of term limits and redistricting of assembly and State senatorial districts. The legislature failed to agree on the health issue by the August recess, so once again the public's health is at risk as the Governor and legislators try to work out a compromise for health care for all Californians, and to specifically address the health needs of some 6 million uninsured, especially children, in the State.

The insurance package being discussed has the following elements.

- a) State to mandate that everyone have a health insurance policy.
- b) Tax employers payrolls in order to pay for employee insurance. Employers pay a penalty charge for the state-

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Assessor's Revolving Door

Personnel have been going in and out (mostly out) of the County Assessor's Office recently. Something peculiar has been happening there. The office is under the direction of Bruce Dear, who was elected Assessor in 1990. His office includes an assistant assessor, a key chief appraiser and a number of staff appraisers. For some 20 years, the chief appraiser position, customarily a long-term position, was held by Warren Burns, but beginning in 1990 the chief appraiser position has revolved through six others including Darrel Holmes, Charles Mather, Mary Solseng, Kristin Spears, Mark Newell and the present occupant. Some have remained only a few months or less than two years.

In addition, a number of assessor's staff

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Hiding Term Limits

The California Legislature is obscuring its goal to extend term limits of its top players with a reapportionment measure that that claims to provide more open and fair elections and more candidate competition.

The proposed measure, to appear on the 2008 ballot, will be touted as term limit reform by limiting legislators to 12 years in office (in either house) rather than the present 14 year tenure limits of 6 years in the Assembly and 8 years in the Senate. This would allow the present key players an extended term in office before being "termed-out"—and to collect a larger retirement, benefits and other goodies.

The Governor wants a reapportionment change to ensure more competitive elections rather than continuing the present career political class elections that enables entrenched legislators to remain in office

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lated by the idea that human activities may influence global climate adversely, and that therefore corrective action is required by governments. Recent evidence suggests that this concern is misplaced.

*S. Fred Singer, professor emeritus of environmental studies at the University of Virginia, is a distinguished research professor at George Mason University. He was founding dean of the School of Environmental and Planetary Sciences at the University of Miami, and the founding director of the U.S. National Advisory Committee on Oceans and Atmosphere. Dr. Singer has written or edited over a dozen books including, most recently, **Unstoppable Global Warming: Every 1500 Years**. The following excerpts are adapted from his lecture at Hillsdale College, June 30, 2007, during a semester entitled "Economics and the Environment."*

Human activities are not influencing the global climate in a perceptible way. **Geological record shows a persistent 1500 year cycle of warming and cooling extending back at least one million years.** A convenient proxy for temperature is the ratio of the heavy isotope of Oxygen-18 to the most common form, Oxygen-16.

A paper published in *Nature* in 2001 describes the Oxygen-18 data (reflecting temperature) from a stalagmite in a cave in Oman, covering a period of over 3000 years. It shows corresponding Carbon-14 data which are directly related to the intensity of cosmic rays striking the earth's atmosphere. There is a remarkably detailed correlation, almost on a year-to-year basis. The causal connection is quite clear! Since the stalagmite temperature cannot affect the sun, *it is the sun that affects climate.*

If this reasoning is correct, **human-caused increases in the CO2 level are quite insignificant to climate change. Natural causes of climate change, for their part, cannot be controlled by man. They are unstoppable.**

Attempts by governments to control greenhouse-gas emissions are pointless and unwise. Nevertheless, we have state governors calling for CO2 emission limits on cars, city mayors calling for mandatory CO2 controls, and the Supreme Court declaring CO2 a pollutant that may have to be regulated, and every industrialized nation (excepting the U.S. and Australia) signed on to the Kyoto Protocol; and we

have ongoing international demands for even more stringent controls in 2012.

Some advocates of these anti-warming policies are really not quite so serious about them, as one feature of Kyoto is to allow "emission trading" among polluters and among countries that have satisfied Kyoto. This "clean development mechanism" sets up certificates of emission quotas that can be traded (unused) for payment by over-quota users who then can continue to pollute. No reduction in global-warming there. This has become a huge financial racket that may make the UN "Oil for Food" scandal in Iran seem minor by comparison.

Thousands of people benefit from the global-warming scare—at the expense of the ordinary consumer. Environmental organizations such as Greenpeace, the Sierra Club and the Environmental Defense Fund have raked in billions of dollars. Multi-billion dollar government subsidies for useless mitigation schemes are large and growing. Emission trading programs soon will top \$100 billion a year with large fees paid to brokers and those who operate scams. In fact, many have discovered they can benefit from climate scares and have formed entrenched interests.

Another calming voice about climate change is Bjorn Lomborg, the free-thinking Dane who was drummed out of membership in Greenpeace because of his book *The Skeptical Environmentalist* (2001). He is now back with *Cool It*, a book with useful facts and commonsense.

Lomborg believes that global-warming is happening, that man may have some cause, and that national governments need to act. Yet he typifies Al Gore as bordering on hysteria, that pseudo global-warming has been distorted and hyped, and that the Kyoto Protocol and other carbon-reduction schemes are a terrible waste of money. Like Dr. Singer, Lomborg believes that mankind's efforts to slow warming can have only a miniscule effect and that when careful scientific analysis of the global effect is considered, leaving out all the hype and hysteria, that there are some upsides to planet warming and so-called "disasters."

Take rising sea levels—probably a foot over this century. Levels have already risen a foot since 1860, and the world has coped. More people may die from heat, but significantly more people will *not* die from cold. Glaciers will melt, but melting will provide extra water for some of the world's poorest people. More frigid regions such as Canada, Northern Europe, Russia and Mongolia will be clear gainers, especially in agricultural production.

The nations of the world face many difficult problems—poverty, disease, lack of sanitation and clean water, security problems

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Placer County Catches the Plague

Back in the Light Ages when we in America elected responsible representatives who remained responsible even after they were elected, fiscal restraint was alive and well. Gradually, we entered the Dark Ages in which those in charge of redistributing the people's money became less responsive to those from whom money was extracted and more responsive to groups, institutions and other entities who benefit from government largess.

The descent into the Dark Ages began in liberal states and local governments—at that time California was not among them—and spread, slowly at first, to Washington, D.C., then like an epidemic, successively to more conservative entities.

Placer county was among the last to fall to the disease in which elected officials and their appointees avoid the wrath of recipients of government contributions and favors by restricting spending to income and avoid the wrath of taxpayers and ratepayers by raising taxes and rates of their giveaway programs.

"What process," recent readers of *Tax Talk* may ask, "defines this Black Plague?" The answer, exceeded only by frivolous spending, is borrowing to pay for any government expense incurred by any cause except emergencies such as war and unforeseen disasters.

Government borrowing is not equally malignant. It comes in several degrees of iniquity. Least repulsive is raising money by issuing bonds that require the approval of two-thirds of the voters. Next abominable are processes of issuing bonds that require the approval of less than two-thirds of the voters. The most malevolent is the process of raising money by issuing Certificates of Participation (COP's).

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Your Health...

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mandated program.

c) Provide some subsidy to poorer individuals to help pay for insurance coverage.

d) Plan state/federal operated insurance coverage and same option for private coverage that individuals may select.

The consensus among health care proponents is that a single-payer program is desirable, based upon the national health care proposal of then First Lady, Hillary Clinton, in 1992-93.

In mid-September, presidential candidate Clinton unveiled a national health care proposal quite similar to her first attempt, but allowing for some personal/private insurance selection by individuals. Underlying all these proposals is the shadow of mandated health insurance and government-run health care—socialized medicine.

Wherever national health insurance has been tried, rationizing and long lines have followed. Single payer systems are now being abandoned by many of the countries that have tried them. Recently, Germany and Spain began selling state-owned hospitals to for-profit companies to raise money and increase efficiency, and in June the Canadian Supreme Court struck down two provincial laws in Quebec banning private health care and private insurance. Canadian Chief Justice Beverly McLachlin commented, "The evidence in this case shows that delays in the public health care system are widespread, and that, in some serious cases, patients die as a result of waiting lists for public health care."

This writer has had personal experience with public socialized health care in Great Britain, France, Canada and New Zealand, and can attest to delays, long waits and inefficiencies in all those public health care States. For instance, in New Zealand the local hospital had used up its antibiotic medicine quota for the month and refused to provide a prescription to obtain it at a private pharmacy. Red tape in the extreme.

Here in California, and the rest of the U.S., government-based health care proponents refuse to note the mistakes by others and act accordingly, but rather repeat failed or failing programs.

What will cure America's (and California's) health care problems is the free market. A patient can easily walk into a store and buy a bottle of aspirin, an over-the-counter drug, for less than \$10. To get



a prescription drug, the patient must get a doctors appointment, wait an hour at the doctor's office, and then wait in line at the pharmacy to get the drug. This process will probably cost an insurance company about \$100 and the patient about \$30 in co-payment. This is true even if the patient gets regular sinus injections and take the same drugs every year. If the patient could buy these repeat drugs over-the-counter, the change would save money and time for both patient and insurance companies.

Also, if people could buy their own health care and insurance pre-tax, they would have the incentive to shop around for the cheapest services. They would most likely be more interested than their employers are in the quality of the insurance. If patients could buy pharmaceuticals from whatever source they, not the government, deemed safe, competition would drive down drug costs. A free market would provide better health care services at competitive lower cost and save everyone's time and money.

We may only hope that the Governor's special session of the legislature results in another stalemate. Your health is at risk.

- Wally Reemelin
Excerpts, *The Freeman*

The real reason we can't have the Ten Commandments in a courthouse: You cannot post, "Thou Shalt Not Steal," "Thou Shalt Not Commit Adultery" and "Thou Shall Not Lie" in a building full of lawyers, judges and politicians. It creates a hostile work environment.



"I can't understand why anyone would get upset about opening up a can of worms."

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Freely Given

The capitalist economic system for most of its history has been both admired and criticized. Its capacity for making productivity possible in human communities is unparalleled.

Even the late American Marxist Robert Heilbroner, famous for his book *The Worldly Philosophers*, acknowledged this after the fall of the Soviet Union. He wrote in the *New Yorker* magazine that “Ludwig von Mises . . . had written of the ‘impossibility’ of socialism, arguing that no Central Planning Board could ever gather the enormous amount of information needed to create a workable economic system. . . . It turns out, of course, that Mises was right.” Mises, of course, was one of the most consistent, uncompromising defenders of pure, laissez-faire capitalism.

Yet, even after the demise of the Soviet system of socialism—the only system that ever aspired to be a fully consistent version of that kind of political economy, with full collective ownership of the means of production (including, as Heilbroner himself noted in his book *Marxism, For and Against*, human labor)—many people continue to criticize the fully free-market system of capitalism. Libertarianism, the broader political equivalent of it, also gets this criticism, namely, that it provides no safety net for people in dire straits, those who are helpless, indigent, needy, or unprepared to deal with market processes.

This is the usual mantra of the critics. The more extreme among them, of course, don’t like anything about capitalism, wanting some kind of dreamlike, fully

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Term Limits...

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without any real candidate challenges.

But it is a partisan choice. We can keep the same old baddies by extending their terms with this measure but the redistricting *may* break up the choke-hold many current legislators have in their present districts.

State senate President Don Perata is a prime example of a reason to continue the present term limit provisions as he will be termed-out in 2008 at the end of his present third term in office. Perata, who has been investigated by the FBI for influence-peddling and recently received the Golden Pig Award from from U.S. Term Limits for “recognition of the outsized hubris of the most relentlessly, shamelessly grasping and corrupt career politician.”

Reporter Bob Gammon in the *East Bay Express* report, *Living Large: How State Senator Don Perata Uses Campaign Cash to Finance His Lavish Lifestyle* writes, “Over the past 10 years, Perata has spent more than \$1 million of campaign cash on parties and high-end lifestyle expenditures. This includes frequently lavish restaurants in the Bay Area where his 10 year tabs total \$119,517, and hosting country club events owned by top contributors at a cost of \$121,746 for the past four.”

The “Gut Term Limits” initiative to pass this legislation is supported by a \$250,000 contribution by the California Teachers Association and the Los Angeles casinos. P.A.C. has also contributed \$250,000, with the California Hospital Association ponying up \$100,000—all of this to buy favors with the legislative leadership. Assembly Speaker Fabian Nuñez, also in need of passage of the initiative to retain his post, says

lawmakers never consider the impact on legislation or donations to either the initiative or other political campaign. “If it’s good public policy to vote against, we don’t think twice about it.”

If voters believe this, I have a bridge in Brooklyn I’d like to give them a chance to buy on the cheap. Derek Cressman of the Popular Institute is more candid. “Big labor unions are giving money to these term limits efforts in an effort to curry favor with the legislative leadership.”

Well funded business and labor interests will continue to employ all the smoke and mirrors available if they wish to prevail against the public assessment of the legislature by the recent field poll showing that only 33% of voters approve the legislature’s performance. New legislative arrogance appears almost daily. In July, two democratic lawmakers legally collected more than \$35,000 in “travel and living expenses” they both missed because they were *at home*. In August, state senators for both parties were collecting expense money of \$162 a day *even though the legislature was not in session*. Legislators receive a base salary of \$116,208 a year.

The key is what Governor Schwarzenegger will do. In the 2003 recall campaign he brandished a broom on the Capitol steps promising to sweep the place clean. Now he is courting favor with Nuñez and Perata with the hope of passing universal healthcare and a reform redistricting package that would set up a so-called independent commission *approved by legislative leaders* to establish district boundaries. If the Governor strikes a deal, he will end any pretense of being a reformer. Voters beware—cut this deal off at the ballot box.

- Wally Reemelin

Revolving Door...

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have bailed out—early retirement, resigning to work elsewhere—like a crew taking life boats to leave a sinking ship. Why is all this happening?

The League has talked to former employees of the Assessor’s Office. Some have contacted The League with their concerns. Among the complaints, “mismanagement by the Assessor,” “don’t want to hear your opinion,” “don’t trust staff to do the job,” “property owner’s always right/don’t want complaints from property owners,” and on complicated properties, to staff, “don’t need to know how to evaluate property, just do it.”

Apparently, Assessor’s Office policy is

not listening to experienced staff and on the other hand *directing some inexperienced personnel to assess complicated commercial properties*. This is something of a disfunction and costly to taxpayers with lost county revenue, plus the cost of recruiting new staff members. The size of the Assessor’s Office has dramatically increased since 1990, and out of proportion to the number of properties in Placer County. The property evaluations have increased many fold, but the actual number of properties at a much lower scale. In 1989, there were 58 staff positions. That number has risen to 85 members, a 46% increase. Last year, the request for one additional staff member was denied by the County Supervisors.

Modern accounting and tabulating equipment have simplified and speed up the assessment procedures. Most new housing in developments are of three or four floor plans spread throughout the site, and these can readily be grouped together in the assessment procedure. An on-site property inspection by an experienced appraiser is important, but is not required of each property of a 6,000 parcel residential development where ambiance and amenities are about the same and house plans are repeated or merely flopped over, none of which really affects the property evaluation. So, a sampling appraisal is considered and used.

The League is informed that a complaint

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November 6th Election Issues

Readers: Note the “new look” of Tax Talk. More pages, more print, faster delivery to you.
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A number of Placer County agencies are holding, or considering, mail in ballot elections under Prop 218, similar to the method used by the infamous Mosquito Abatement District’s Spring rip-off of Placer County voters. **North Tahoe Fire District** is currently conducting such a vote on an assessment increase. The details are obscure as well as the amount, since Tahoe did not respond to County Clerk Jim McCauley’s request for information. He has no part in the issue.

Similarly, **Foresthill Fire District** is *considering* such an assessment election. Voters should beware of such tactics of not using the County Elections Office for tax issues. The League recommends a **NO** vote on such elections.

Loomis Fire District is also issuing a mail-in ballot assessment, but it will be conducted through the County Elections Department. CED will mail out, receive and count the ballots—no underhanded tactics there. **Loomis Union School District** will request a vote on a bond measure, through normal CED procedures and participation.

- Wally Reemelin

LEAGUE RECOMMENDATIONS NOVEMBER 6, 2007 ELECTION

LOOMIS FIRE DISTRICT - Needs a new board. Fresh ideas and more competency are required.	VOTER CHOICE
LOOMIS UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT - \$17.7 million bonds. Better than in 2006, but still needs to cut off more fat.	NO
LOOMIS/OPHIR SCHOOL CONSOLIDATION - Will achieve lower costs and better management.	YES

A Hoax...

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arising from terrorism and proliferation of nuclear weapons. We must not divert so much of our resources on hyped hysteria of the “non-problem.” of man-made warming and direct our attention at these real problems.

- Wally Reemelin

For a free, full text of Dr. Singer’s remarks write to Imprimus, c/o Hillsdale College, 33 E. College Street, Hillsdale, MI 49242. - Ed.

Given...

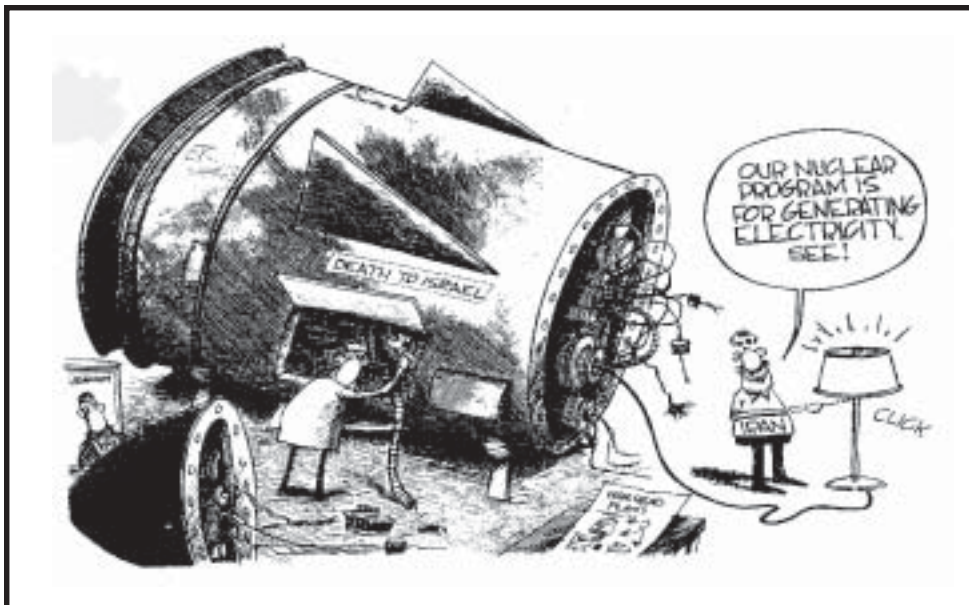
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egalitarian system where the wealth is nearly evenly distributed, even if this means the complete destruction of productivity. Better that we are all equal and poor than that we are unequal and most of us quite well off, with some even extraordinarily wealthy.

Never mind this last alternative—it’s a loser for sure, and only dreamers who would attempt to remake human nature support it. But what about those who find fault with full, laissez-faire capitalism because of its refusal to allow government to provide for those in dire straits and such? Don’t they have a point? Yes, they do, but they draw inferences from it that do not follow. It is possible in a fully capitalist system for some to be left out. There can be innocent hard-luck cases, no doubt about that. What does not follow is that government ought to do something for such people.

Instead, free men and women would have to resolve to lend a hand where needed. And it’s rank cynicism to deny that they would—after all, it is precisely in semicapitalist systems that charity and philanthropy thrive today. Furthermore, to think that such help would not be forthcoming undermines the very idea that it is used to support: that democratic governments can step in and do the job.

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Revolving Door...

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regarding activities of the Assessor's Office has been forwarded to the Grand Jury. One of its members has been auditing the meetings of the Assessment Appeals Board, as well, to observe the Assessor's competency.

This is the first of two or more articles on the Assessor's Office. The League will interview the Assessor next for his response to these events and allegations.

- Wally Reemelin

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That's because such governments are a reflection of the population, if they are truly democratic. Which means if the people are mean and heartless, their government would be so in spades.

But even beyond these replies to the critics of capitalism, once the principles of a fully free society are compromised in the legal system, all hell breaks loose. Even if government might effectively lend its hand to people in dire straits, as soon as it does so nearly all in society insist that their agenda deserves support, too. There is no way to hold back this logic: a legal system that allows favoritism for the most extraordinarily needy will be unable to resist yielding to the pleas of all others, who would mount massive lobbying efforts to achieve this. All of it is all too evident in current welfare states across the globe, producing financial crises and more poverty everywhere than what a fully capitalist system would.

The bottom line is that a fully free society is really the best idea for human community life, and that even the hard-luck cases are more likely to benefit from it than they would from societies with governmental interference.

- Tibor R. Machan
Hoover Digest

What's On Your Mind?

Maybe you'd like to comment on an article you've read in this, or any local, newspaper. Perhaps there's an issue you think needs discussion. If it's something that affects Placer County taxpayers *The League wants to Know!* Send us your thoughts, views, articles, letters or comments and *Speak out!*

Placer Plague...

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Using COP's instead of issuing bonds has the disadvantages of (1) having the certificate holders hold a lien, not only on the construction being financed, but also on the land which belonged to the taxpayers prior to the financing and (2) being more expensive than bonds because the "loans" are not backed by the full faith and credit of the issuing authority. The advantage is that politicians do not need to get the taxpayer's approval to issue COP's. The catch is that the politicians have the advantage and the taxpayers have the disadvantages.

Auburn was among the first Placer County entities to issue a \$2.5 million COP. After learning the bond to buy the first Civic Center building, what is now City Hall, did not include what is now the police station, the City Council opted for a COP issued in September, 1990. That lot of politicians and bureaucrats were afraid to go back to the voters after the bond for what was believed to finance the entire Civic Center purchase was approved by fewer than a dozen votes.

The pestilence needed a decade to move across town to the Fulweiler Street dome. However, the curse is intensified with COP's of \$12 million and \$11 million issued respectively for the Taj Mahal at DeWitt Center and for the Juvenile Detention Center and \$30 million discussed for

additional South Placer facilities. This would total more than \$50 million to be paid from the General Fund in future budgets, reducing the money available for public safety and public works. But, our County Executive Officer tries to assure us, "everyone had to tighten their belts," accentuating fiscal irresponsibility with poor grammar.

The scourge has moved to Ferguson Road near Raleys Market, where Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) is building a new structure. PCWA is issuing \$33.6 million in COP's. However, PCWA directors will not even have to juggle their future budgets to pay for this debt. \$20 million will be extracted from future connection fees, the rest rolled into the second rate increase this year, leaving ratepayers no alternative—except at the ballot box.

- Dan Sokol



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Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger (R): Governor's Office, The Capitol, Sacramento, CA 95814. Phone (916) 445-2841, Fax 445-4633.

U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer (D): Hart Senate Office Building, Room 112, Washington, D.C., 20510-0505. Phone (415) 403-0100, Email: senator@boxer.senate.gov.

U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein (D): Hart Senate Office Building, Room 331, Washington, D.C., 20510-0505. Phone (415) 393-0707, Email: senator@feinstein.senate.gov.

U.S. Representative John Doolittle (R): U.S. House of Representatives, 2410 Rayburn House Office Building #2410, Washington, D.C. 20515-0504, (202) 225-2511, Fax (202) 225-5444, www.house.gov/doolittle.

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Assemblyman Roger Niello (R): District 5, State Capitol Room 2016, (916) 319-2005, 4811 Chippendale Drive, Suite 501, Sacramento, CA 95841, (916) 349-1995

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