

## POLICY WATCH – January 2017

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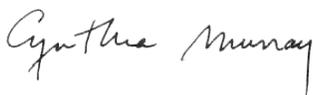


New Year, new challenges! In this issue, we continue to look at what the new administration's effect might be on California and the North Bay. The President is moving rapidly to make changes and many of them could greatly impact California. As public policy advocates, NBLC will be tracking proposals and programs, and working to minimize any damage to transportation, healthcare, education, immigration, trade, housing, and battling climate change. Now is the time to be engaged and work collaboratively with other organizations to protect rights and keep the sixth largest economy thriving.

Also in this issue, we urge action to protect the North Bay's infrastructure from the effect of sea level rise. The closing of Hwy 37 for much of January shows climate change is real and sea level is rising. We need to take steps now to ensure that the vital transportation corridors are functional and plans are in place and funded to anticipate rising seas and increased storm activity. We also urge action on keeping SMART on the right track by moving forward with the Larkspur Landing extension. It is important to keep trust with the voters and to not risk losing the \$41 Million dollars that federally fund that extension.

Please tell the SMART Board to not delay the completion of the southern phase of the railway. You make a difference in how tomorrow will be. Make your voice heard. It matters!

Best,



Cynthia

### California v. Trump

In [California v. Trump](#) by Bob Burnett (Dailykos: [Link](#)), we are reminded that while Trump wants to punish our state for voting heavily for his opponent, Trump needs California, if only because we are the sixth largest economy in the world.

Alexander Nazaryan writes in [California v. Trump: The Fight Begins for Health Care, Immigration and the Future of America](#), (Newsweek: [Link](#)), that

"Californians pays \$452.8 billion in federal income taxes to Washington, eclipsing second-place New York



by \$150 billion. It grows more food than any other state, produces most of the technologies we've become reliant on and, for better or worse, dictates what we watch in the after-dinner hours. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, California has more electricity-generating solar plants than the rest of the nation combined. About 85 percent of American wine comes from California, as does 100 percent of the Kardashian clan, whose members are estimated to be worth a combined \$339 million—that is, about the gross domestic product of Micronesia. Not content with all these riches, California could soon eclipse Wisconsin in the production of cheese.”

Nazaryan continues, “California’s return to greatness didn’t require border walls or trade wars. Instead of rolling back environmental regulations to curry favor with corporate interests, California has passed the toughest green laws in the nation, the first of them championed by Brown’s predecessor, Republican Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. The state’s citizens have voted in measures to increase taxes, legalize marijuana, restrict the rights of gun owners and enact criminal justice reforms. While conservative state legislatures are debating pointless “bathroom bills,” California has passed what some say are the strongest LGBT protections in the entire world. The state hasn’t found a remedy for earthquakes, but a company in Silicon Valley has what appears to be a workable solution. It involves houses that hover.”

Burnett says, “California can have the most impact on the national political environment by demonstrating that the best way to grow good jobs and provide a healthy democratic environment is by a judicious combination of taxes and regulation. The Golden State can serve as a vital alternative to the Republican model: minuscule corporate taxes and zero governmental oversight, which has turned states like Louisiana into sewer pits with deplorable public health, while failing to create the promised jobs.”

The author points out that many of Trump’s plans will likely bog down in Congress, especially for big ticket items like infrastructure improvements. The Governor’s proposed budget includes funding for improving the state’s infrastructure which is a step in the right direction, and will help mitigate what is happening at the federal level.

Burnett says, “Obviously, corporate tax cuts would benefit all US companies not just those in California. However, threats to “make it in America” could have a major impact on California technology companies such as Hewlett-Packard and Apple. Both corporations have a substantial overseas manufacturing presence. If Trump took steps to ensure that final assembly of most products was done in the U.S., his actions could have major consequences for California corporations -- for example, the Apple iPhone contains parts from all over the world and final assembly happens in China and other countries.”

Many North Bay companies also import from other companies and could see an impact on their bottom line. And some products, like certain types of steel or other building materials, are simply not available in the U.S.

Burnett says, “After jobs, the Trump policies having most impact on California are immigration, climate change, and health care. Trump’s immigration policies will be hotly contested by most Californians. However, Trump’s plan to build a wall along the southern border isn’t going to affect Hispanic immigration; last year more Chinese immigrants came into California than did Mexican immigrants.” And let’s not forget that this massive expenditure on a wall that doesn’t address current immigration trends will be paid for by the U.S. taxpayers. Mexico has stated definitively they will not pay for the wall.

The deportation of undocumented immigrants would have a detrimental effect on California's agricultural sector, and the North Bay vineyards could be impacted in terms of labor and increased costs. Burnett points out that, "Ironically, California's farmers, typically Republicans, were strong advocates of the "pathway to citizenship" initiative that Trump's GOP has abandoned."

Given the size of California's Latino population, Trump's anti-immigrant actions would be hotly opposed. Burnett says, "The Golden State's population of 39 million includes 15 million Hispanics (the largest group). There are an estimated 2.67 million undocumented immigrants in California. There are roughly 250,000 "Dreamers" in California." Protecting the Dreamers, who know no other home, is of utmost importance.

Burnett says, "California public officials have pledged to protect undocumented immigrants. However, Trump has promised to punish those who oppose his initiative; for example, by penalizing sanctuary cities which include Los Angeles, San Francisco, Sacramento, and Oakland. Theoretically, this could have a major financial impact on the Golden State." In addition to building a wall, Trump has threatened to block Muslims from entering the U.S. and to create a Muslim registry. Nazaryan says, "Trump called Syrian refugees 'a great Trojan horse'; California welcomed more Syrian refugees in fiscal year 2016 than any other state." Turning our backs on refugees fleeing the terrorists is anathema to American values. And bad for the economy, too, as immigrants have been an economic engine in the U.S.

Nazaryan says, "Trump also wants coal plants churning out black smoke and has even complained that environmental regulations eroded the quality of his beloved hairspray. Not only is hairspray passé in most of California, but the state was a major participant in 2015's climate change accord in Paris, which has most of the industrialized world working to curb greenhouse gas emissions. California expects to get half of its energy from renewable sources by 2030, with billions of public and private dollars going to wind and solar projects around the state."

Governor Brown in his State of the State speech said, "We've got the scientists, we've got the lawyers, and we're ready to fight. We're ready to defend. California is no stranger to this fight." In alluding to a potential diminution of the federal government's role in collecting atmospheric data (regarding climate change), Brown said, "If Trump turns off the satellites, California will launch its own damn satellite. We're going to collect that data." Trump has already begun to reverse the previous administration's actions. With California being the number one U.S. tourism destination, there is huge support for protecting the state's environmental assets. Look for this to be a growing battle between the state and federal governments.

If Trump follows through on ending the Affordable Care Act, it will be a big challenge to California. Nazaryan says, "California is the nation's most enthusiastic participant in the Obamacare exchanges and expanded Medicaid coverage, with an estimated 5.2 million residents benefiting from some version of the ACA. Getting rid of the health law could cost the state as many as 334,000 jobs, according to a recent report by the Commonwealth Fund." There is a move by Trump to shift Medicaid funding and other federal programs to the states through block grants, which are rigid funding streams that don't swell with enrollment numbers or worsening economic conditions. The remaining obligations would have to be met by the state itself.

Burnett says, "As strong as the California economy is, the Golden State each year depends upon the federal government for approximately \$96 billion -- 36 percent of our budget. (By the way, California is "a giver" not "a taker;" we contribute more than \$300 billion in federal taxes.) Of the \$96 billion, \$69 billion

goes for health and human services, primarily insurance coverage for the poor, children, and seniors. Trump could impact this directly by repealing Obamacare or indirectly by withholding federal funding, on the basis that California is not in compliance with US Immigration and Customs Enforcement policies.”

Burnett cautions, “If the Trump Administration threatened to withhold some of the \$96 billion, the Golden State would have to make tough choices: comply with Trump policies to keep the \$ flowing, cut services, or increase taxes to offset loss of Federal funds. It's possible that Californians could raise their own taxes to thwart the Trump Administration. But probably not income taxes. Californians could repeal the notorious Proposition 13, which would raise \$ billions in property taxes. In addition, the Golden State favors carbon taxes; a variety of these taxes (for example, taxing transport of fossil fuels such as coal) could erase much of the \$ billion potential deficit. Another possibility is a "tourism" tax.”

Trump's abandonment of the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade agreement and desire to renegotiate NAFTA are also concerns to Californian businesses. For example, Nazaryan says, “California also needs China, which is a close economic partner: A trade war could cost the state an estimated \$20 billion in exports alone.”

Nazaryan says, “California’s best weapon if war does come might be one beloved by Trump: the lawsuit. The man who would likely do the suing is a relatively unknown Los Angeles congressman: Xavier Becerra. With Harris leaving for the Senate, the state attorney general’s seat was open. Brown chose Becerra, effectively making him the top law enforcement officer in the nation’s largest state. Becerra, who is of Mexican heritage, wasted no time in letting his constituents know where he stood on the results of the presidential election. ‘If you want to take on a forward-leading state that is prepared to defend its rights and interests, then come at us,’ Becerra said, ‘believe with this nomination I have a chance to let California know I got their back.’”

Burnett concludes, “The battle is joined: the Trump resistance begins in California.”

## Keep SMART Going to Larkspur Landing!



SMART train service will begin in a few months and we couldn't be more excited! The start of the new passenger rail service has seen its challenges but the big day is almost here. The latest challenge is to delay the extension of the SMART route to Larkspur Landing. There is a group looking to hold up the completion of the railway to SMART's southern terminal that must not prevail. Please write or call SMART to let them know that you voted for SMART to go to Larkspur Landing and you want construction to begin right away so train service can begin by the end of 2018!

The promise to the voters of Marin and Sonoma Counties was a 70 mile SMART train route from Larkspur Landing to Cloverdale. The voters were especially keen on having SMART connect to the ferry as they wanted a transit system with multimodal capability, including train, bike, pedestrian and ferry modes. NBLC is proud that SMART is upholding the trust of the voters and keeping its promise to go to Larkspur Ferry, and appreciates the hard work that was needed to secure the funding to do that phase. Getting this leg of the train service in place will have North Bay commuters going to San Francisco as well as open

up new opportunities for businesses in the North Bay to attract workers from San Francisco to our region. There is an increasing amount of job openings in our region the connectivity with San Francisco will help companies hire people for hard-to-fill positions. We look forward to the day that the train will also complete the phase to go to Cloverdale.

NBLC is aware that there will be some impact on street traffic along the train's railway as the train starts running its regular schedule. Those impacts are mitigated by things like having trainsets that fit within city blocks and synchronizing traffic lights. Traffic will also be reduced as commuters opt to take the train to work rather than drive. NBLC is pleased that the cities and counties along the railway are working collaboratively to create "quiet zones" so that SMART will no longer be required to blow its horns at crossings and other designated areas.

Having a transportation alternative that allows people to commute to work in a more environmentally-friendly way and be more productive with less stress, is a great new option for North Bay workers. NBLC is a big champion of SMART and the upwards of 20,000 employees that our organization represents are eager to get out of their cars.

SMART will also aid in making the North Bay more economically competitive. We are seeing an increasing concern of employers about attracting and retaining employees who are tired of the long commute times. Having an alternative to Highway 101 will be a blessing. The big storms of January pointed out that being able to commute and not worry about flooded roadways and car accidents is another reason to welcome the advent of SMART service.

Restoring train service to the North Bay and utilizing the public rail right-of-way is great addition to the economic ecosystem in our region. And for companies watching their triple bottom line, SMART's green transportation solution will give you another way to meet those goals, too! All aboard!

## Sea Level Rising – Highway 37 Closing!

Sea level is rising and the North Bay is seeing the collateral damage right now. Highway 37 was flooded and closed for much of January. This is a major North Bay artery for commuters, goods movement and tourists. It is unacceptable that Caltrans has no plan, or even a plan to make a plan, to fix this highway. It is time for all the elected officials of the North Bay and transportation agency heads to show leadership and devise a way to address how Highway 37 will be raised and widened where needed.



A private developer has proposed a plan to do improvements to part of Hwy 37, which unfortunately doesn't include the part that has been flooded. Perhaps that proposal could be expanded to include the flooded part, too.

Regardless, if the state and regional agencies can't solve it, please proceed now to let someone else fix Highway 37. How many hours' delay to people getting to and from work, deliveries being made, and

visitors getting to their destinations must be endured before action is taken? These storms prove that the need is now. And with sea level rising, it will only get worse!

## The North Bay Can Carpool Now!



Are you looking for ways to reduce employee stress? Reduce parking demand? Recruit and retain good talent?

Carpooling can help! [The Spare the Air Employer Program](#) provides assistance to help your employees start carpooling to work. At our on-site *Carpool Now!* events, employees will learn about their carpool options and connect with co-workers to form carpools.

Successful *Carpool Now!* events require a minimum of 300 employees at the worksite and executive support. If your company meets these simple criteria and can share employee commute data, provide an event location and send out invitations, we'll do the rest! The *Carpool Now!* team will facilitate the event, design communications, manage RSVPs, provide a catered lunch and door prizes, and conduct personalized follow-up. Contact [EmployersCarpoolNow@ororkeinc.com](mailto:EmployersCarpoolNow@ororkeinc.com) to get started.

## Members in the News

### College Of Marin Launches Navigate Platform

College of Marin (COM) launched a new platform aimed at making the course registration process more user-friendly. The platform will help enrolled students determine their educational goals, define how to reach them, and keep them on track with reminders and opportunities.

### W. Bradley Electric's Leslie Murphy Joins Bank of Marin Board of Directors

The Board of Directors of Bank of Marin Bancorp (BMRC), parent company of Bank of Marin, (collectively, the "Company"), today announced the appointment of Leslie Murphy to its Boards of Directors (collectively, the "Board"), effective January 20, 2017.

### College of Marin Trustees Approve New Facility for the Community at IVC

A nine-year search for a suitable location to house a combined community-based facility and Rotary site in Novato came to a close last Tuesday evening at College of Marin's (COM) Board of Trustees meeting.

### SolarCraft Awarded 2016 Best Solar Energy Contractor in California by Global Energy News

The 2016 Clean Energy Awards have been designed to reward and recognize those who are working diligently to support the development and implementation of clean energy solutions.

### Redwood Credit Union Accepting Donations for Sonoma County Flood Relief

Redwood Credit Union (RCU) is now accepting contributions to assist relief efforts and those directly impacted by the recent storm flooding in Sonoma County. RCU's Flood Relief Fund was created by the RCU Community Fund, Inc. in partnership with the Santa Rosa Press Democrat, and Sonoma County Supervisors Lynda Hopkins and James Gore.

### SOMO Village Welcomes Credo High School

Credo High School, a tuition-free, public charter school in Rohnert Park, will relocate to Sonoma Mountain Village with plans to become the world's first One Planet Living School.

### PG&E Launches \$500 Rebate for Electric Vehicle Drivers

Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) today announced the launch of the Clean Fuel Rebate for residential, electric customers who are electric vehicle (EV) drivers.

## Midstate Construction Completes San Francisco Renovation

Owner Veritas Investments, Inc. and general contractor Midstate Construction Corporation recently completed renovation of 540 Leavenworth in San Francisco, CA.

## Dominican University's Dr. Ching-Hua Wang named as Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at Sacramento State University

Ching has made a tremendous difference during her almost five years at Dominican.

Read more online at [www.northbayleadership.org/news](http://www.northbayleadership.org/news)



### Who We Are

Over twenty years ago, business leaders founded the North Bay Leadership Council on a simple premise: We can accomplish more by working together. Today, the Council includes 47 leading employers in the North Bay. Our members represent a wide variety of businesses, non-profits and educational institutions, with a workforce in excess of 25,000. As business and civic leaders, our goal is to promote sound public policy, innovation and sustainability to make our region a better place to live and work. For more information: Call

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[www.northbayleadership.org](http://www.northbayleadership.org)