



Promoting accountable, cost-effective and efficient government and opposing unnecessary taxes and spending



June 5, 2020

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- Jack Weir**  
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CoCoTax President's Report – June 5, 2020

A NEW NORMAL?

No one knows what the future holds, other than it is predicted to be unpredictable. As we approach the second half of 2020, nothing could be clearer to us. With the inevitable continuing barrage of COVID-19 information, protocols and a seemingly endless symphony of requests for financial relief, my sole prediction is that COVID-19 will become the scapegoat for years of poor fiscal management. As the requests for bailouts pour in, COVID-19 will take the blame. But will it be the fiscal salvation of states, pensions or businesses? If I was a gambler, my money would not be on any of that. Any financial benefits seen, or to be seen, have consequences. To think otherwise, would be naïve. There are a few businesses notable for their profitability during the pandemic, but the real awards should go to those who have creatively maneuvered their business or service to safely navigate and operate during the emergency, and to those who have tolerated serious challenges in their ability to wait it out.

I will let you in on some timely priorities on which CoCoTax is focusing:

1. We will begin a series of Videoconferences to keep taxpayers informed and educated (See Upcoming Speakers).
2. Set up of a 501(c)(3) arm for educational purposes.
3. And the big elephant in the room is the November election. In a nutshell, **County ballot measure filing deadlines are just about a month away.** [Candidate and Measure Filing](#)

We are mindful that, should regional measures be submitted, they will probably be filed in Alameda County, which has earlier deadlines and some State ballot measures have already been qualified. [Eligible Statewide Initiative Measures](#)

To all those who have donated to our **Spring Appeal**, we are deeply grateful for your financial and emotional support. This is part of our ability to be able to reach out by videoconference and conduct business.

COVID-19

To view the current Order from the Health Department, fresh off the presses June 5, 2020: <https://cchealth.org/press-releases/2020/0605-Reopen-Outdoor-Dining-Pools-Religious-Services.php>



**Susan L Pricco**  
President  
Contra Costa Taxpayers Association  
*"Good government at affordable cost"*

Bond Oversight Committees News

On the occasion of **Margaret Eychener's** term on the Citizens Bond Oversight Committee of the Contra Costa Community College district, CoCoTax acknowledges Margaret's long and faithful work for our county's taxpayers.

CoCoTax also provides taxpayer advocates on many other CBOC's in our county, overseeing in excess of \$1 billion in Prop 39 school bonds. Margaret will be replaced on the College Oversight Committee by **Steve Mick**. Steve recently served many years on the San Ramon Valley USD CBOC.

Thank you, Margaret and Steve!"

Contact CoCoTax

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### Message from Executive Director Jack Weir

It's astonishing how quickly our whole civic context has changed so dramatically! While coping with the restrictions associated with the COVID pandemic, our nation and local communities are besieged by a confusing combination of peaceful protesters and terrorist anarchists. That the looters and arsonists were motivated by any spontaneous thought is debunked by pictures of pallets of bricks staged along protest routes.

The tragic death in Minneapolis of one man has now accumulated to dozens across the nation, and voices of reason are shouted down by activists of various movements. Once again, racial division rears its ugly head, a sad disappointment for those who lived through the Civil Rights Era.

As Sue points out above, we are faced with a deluge of bad legislation, and our governor has decided to rule by executive fiat. Even his own legislature is now calling for more participative government.

Virtually all government agencies in California are now confronted with severe drops in revenue, and we can expect a flurry of tax and fee increases. Municipal bankruptcy is probably the only viable solution for those agencies that offer defined benefit plans and have run up monstrous unfunded pension and health care debt. But even that approach will require the political will to alter compensation plans, a move that will surely arouse fierce opposition from public employee unions."



**Jack Weir**  
Executive Director  
Contra Costa  
Taxpayers Association

### Landlord/Tenant Matters

SB 939 (Weiner, Gonzalez) still remains in committee. This bill provides for a moratorium on commercial evictions.

AB 828 (Ting) proposes a moratorium on foreclosures and evictions.

View the May 2020 ordinance of the Contra Costa Board of Supervisors on Modified Eviction/Rent Freeze here:

<https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/67175/Board-of-Supervisors-Extends-a-Modified-Eviction-Protection--Rent-Freeze-Ordinance-News-Release-5262020>

CoCoTax **OPPOSES** the inappropriately named "Rental Affordability Act". This is clear to us that it is another drastic step in rent control and will appear on the November ballot.

SB 1420 (Caballero, Gonzalez) Per CAA, will help landlords recover rent lost to the COVID-19 crisis — while also guarding tenants against mountains of rent debt.

CoCoTax will begin a **Landlord/Tenant Committee** and seeking volunteers to serve on it. The committee would watchdog, research, and investigate those issues, including The Family Home Protection and Fairness in Property Tax Act of 2020, and others.

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**TRANSIT MATTERS**

SB 1349 (Glazer) passed on reconsideration of the Senate Governance and Finance Committee. Opposed by CoCoTax and others, this bill opens the door to allowing increases in local (county, city, etc.) taxes, and exempts a large number of transportation (BART, CCTA) taxes from the cap. CoCoTax continues to work with our committee of taxpayer advocacy and other associations, keeping a critical eye on the MTC and regional measures.

**OTHER MATTERS**

CoCoTax OPPOSES AB 1860. Per the Legislative Counsel’s Digest, *“This bill would authorize a local government to impose, extend, or increase a sales and use tax or transactions and use tax in accordance with specified law or a parcel tax, as defined, for the purposes of funding homeless housing and services...”*

AB 398 Imposes a “head count” tax on business with over 500 employees at a tax of \$275 each.



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