



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

October 1, 2020

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CoCoTax President's Report – October 1, 2020

I want to thank the many people who offered to sign ballot measures. With last minute changes of wording & legislative maneuvers, and coronavirus restrictions, we could not physically get to everyone. Election time with ballot measures is always a mad dash for writing, signing and filings and this year was certainly no exception and hopefully unique in many challenges that we never want to see again.

The November newsletter might be delayed until after the election. However, it is clear that the results will not be counted and posted as quickly as recent years. Controversial mail-in voting (not the same as absentee voting where the voter solicits to vote by mail and has his/her signature on file) is a new method that could present a variety of new challenges.

I recently heard a bit of advice that I will pass along. Would you put \$500 cash in an envelope and mail it to yourself? If not, then you should not mail in your ballot. Instead bring it to a physical drop-off location or the County Elections department (555 Escobar St., Martinez).

It's a good excuse to get out a bit and perhaps patronize a struggling restaurant utilizing outdoor seating, or hopefully eat in. Many restaurants, small businesses and organizations are in dire need of your patronage. Do not compromise your safety; but consider options available to you while supporting the community.

NOVEMBER ELECTION

CoCoTax members already know to be well-informed on ballot measures. The November election presents some complicated propositions and measures. Review our recommendations and perspective on our website. Talk to family and friends and share your concerns about the rising cost of living and increased taxation in Contra Costa, then **Vote NO on Measure X**.

Because of the unprecedented challenges in 2020, CoCoTax sees no justification for raising sales taxes in our county. Therefore, we urge a **NO vote on city measures R (Orinda), V (Concord), U (Richmond) and S (San Pablo)**.

On State Propositions, we take no position on Prop 16, we SUPPORT a **YES on Props 20 and 22**, and **NO** on all others.



Susan L Pricco

President, Contra Costa Taxpayers Association

"Good government at affordable cost"

**Contact
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On Facebook:

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Message from Jack Weir

I'm resigning as Executive Director of CoCoTax effective at the end of the month. My personal circumstances require that I reduce my civic activities and focus on fewer commitments. To that end, as previously announced, I co-founded a new non-profit corporation to develop and provide more comprehensive support for Prop 39 citizen bond oversight committees (CBOC's). The California Association of Bond Oversight Committees (CABOC) is well launched and moving forward. We are partnering with several local taxpayer advocacy organizations (including the San Diego and Alameda County TPA's) and have established a state-wide scope of operations. I expect we will work cooperatively with CoCoTax as well, and I will present our plans and programs to CoCoTax shortly.

The 2020 state ballot makes clear the vital need for stronger opposition to California's ruinous tax-and-spend policies, and irresponsible government at virtually all levels. I remain committed to the CoCoTax mission to promote "good government at affordable cost" and am always available to help however I can.



Jack Weir
Executive Director
Contra Costa Taxpayers Association

OVERREACH BY EXECUTIVE ORDER

The Governor recently signed an Executive Order banning the sale of gasoline-powered vehicles effective 2035, bringing a new level of conversation about government overreach, environmentalism and consumerism. The obvious lean toward electric vehicles is clear, but as taxpayers we ask – how will we provide the power? In Contra Costa, most power comes from PG&E who has struggled to keep our power needs satisfied and is not always able to do so for a variety of reasons. PG&E is a private entity, funded by taxpayers. How will they provide the needed energy? How much more will taxpayers have to pay to maintain enough power for these cars? How much pollution will be created by generating this huge increase in the demand for electricity? This mind-blowing abuse of authority adds up to more expense for your household.

"BAN ON AT-FAULT EVICTIONS" FAILS

On September 29, 2020 the Contra Costa Board of Supervisors considered "an urgency ordinance authorizing a temporary prohibition on certain "at-fault" evictions of residential tenants...and continuing a temporary prohibition on certain evictions of small-business commercial tenants".

See the memo from County Counsel here:

http://64.166.146.245/agenda_publish.cfm?id=&mt=ALL&get_month=9&get_year=2020&dsp=agm&seq=43197&rev=0&ag=1667&ln=87012&nseq=43195&nrev=0&pseq=&prev=#ReturnTo87012

After four hours of public discourse, with a parade of public comments, the Board wisely voted down this ill-conceived proposal by a 4-1 vote. Supervisor Gioia was the sole vote in favor of the ban, with Supervisors Andersen, Mitchoff, Burgis and Glover saying NO.

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CoCoTax Lunchtime Speaker Series

Michael Shellenberger

Why Saving Civilization Requires Saving California.

California is a mess. It has 100,000 people living on the streets, most using hard drugs and suffering mental illness. Its badly managed forests just went up into flames. And it faces the worst financial crisis in a generation. What's going on? In this talk, heretical environmentalist Michael Shellenberger, author of the best-selling *Apocalypse Never: Why Environmental Alarmism Hurts Us All*, describes who is destroying California, who failed to stand up to them, and why we need a new politics to solve our toughest problems and save our civilization.

Environmental Progress - Founder & President

A recent article in Forbes:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/michaelshellenberger/2020/08/24/stop-blaming-climate-change-for-californias-fires-many-forests-including-the-redwoods-need-them/#7ba84d4f70b3>

When you register for the event, you will receive the Zoom call information.

Register here: <https://www.cocotax.org/events>

If you prefer, you can email Denise at denise@cocotax.org to register.

You can find videos of our speakers at [CoCoTax Videos](#)



Michael Shellenberger

"Apocalypse Never: Why Environmental Alarmism Hurts Us All"

PENSION COMMITTEE

We are not forgetting our commitment to research and analyze the pension debt for Contra Costa cities and residents. We remain concerned for the stability of public pensions for those who have performed honorably for years and earned a reasonable pension. However, it is clear that mounting debt as a result of poor policies and decisions is destructive. You can see our CalPERS report on our website: <https://www.cocotax.org/pension-crisis>

We are currently studying CalSTRS, legislatively controlled and also in serious trouble. We have asked CalSTRS to speak to our committee and/or our membership via Zoom, at their convenience. They have declined. We believe that the County pension system, CCCERA is in much better shape, their Public Information Officer also declined to speak with us. So, we will proceed through other avenues.

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