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## BOARD LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

**Friday, March 18, 2015**  
**12:30 p.m., Board Room**

The following agenda items are listed for Committee consideration. In accordance with the Board Operating Guidelines, no official action of the Board will be taken at this meeting; rather, the Committee's purpose shall be to review the listed items and to consider developing recommendations to the Board of Directors.

A copy of the background materials concerning these agenda items, including any material that may have been submitted less than 72 hours before the meeting, is available for inspection on the District's website ([www.ebparks.org](http://www.ebparks.org)), the Headquarters reception desk, and at the meeting.

### AGENDA

<u>STATUS</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>ITEM</u>	<u>STAFF</u>
R	12:30 pm	I. STATE LEGISLATION / ISSUES A. NEW LEGISLATION – <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. AB 1665 – Extending Sunset for East Bay Transportation Measures</li> <li>2. AB 1680 – Drone Interference Enforcement as a Reimbursable State-Mandate</li> <li>3. AB 1713 – Statewide Vote on the Peripheral Canal</li> <li>4. AB 1745 – Supplemental Law Enforcement Services Account</li> <li>5. AB 1968 – East Bay Regional Park District Recreation Vehicle Spot Bill</li> <li>6. AB 2249 – Protecting Historic California State Park Trademarks</li> <li>7. AB 2480 – Include Watersheds as Part of the State Water System</li> <li>8. SB 807 and SB 810 – Drones: Liability and Fire Protection Interference</li> <li>9. SB 1386 – Include Natural and Working Lands in Greenhouse Gas Reduction Efforts</li> </ol>	Doyle/Pfuehler
D		B. ISSUES <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Park Bond Update, Including Spot Bill AB 2444</li> <li>2. Endowment Legislation</li> <li>3. Other Issues</li> </ol>	Doyle/Pfuehler
		II. FEDERAL LEGISLATION / ISSUES A. NEW LEGISLATION – N/A	Doyle/Pfuehler
D		B. ISSUES <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Federal Issues for D.C. Update</li> <li>2. Other Issues</li> </ol>	Doyle/Pfuehler
R		III. CONSIDERATION OF MEASURE CC RENEWAL	Doyle/Pfuehler
R		IV. CONSIDERATION OF SAN FRANCISCO BAY RESTORATION AUTHORITY MEASURE AA AND RESOLUTION 12 REGARDING PROJECT LABOR AGREEMENTS	Doyle/Pfuehler
		V. PUBLIC COMMENTS	
		VI. ARTICLES	

- (R) Recommendation for Future Board Consideration
- (I) Information
- (D) Discussion

**Legislative Committee Members**

Diane Burgis (Chair); Whitney Dotson; Dennis Waespi  
Ayn Wieskamp, Alternate  
Erich Pfuehler, Staff Coordinator

June 17, 2015

December 16, 2016

**Distribution/Agenda**

**District:**

Sharon Clay  
David Zuckerman  
Ira Bletz  
Connie Swisher  
Mimi Waluch  
Kristina Kelchner  
Xiaoning Huang – Local 2428

**Public:**

Norman LaForce  
Peter Rauch  
Bruce Beyaert  
Afton Crooks  
Stana Hearne  
Judi Bank  
Michael Kelley  
Rick Rickard

**Distribution/Full Packet**

**District:**

Board Members  
Robert Doyle  
AGMs  
Erich Pfuehler  
Jeff Rasmussen  
Anne Kassebaum  
Mark Ragatz  
Sean Dougan  
Mona Koh  
Yolande Barial Knight  
Mark Pearson – Local 2428  
Eri Suzuki – Local 2428  
Tyrone Davis – POA  
Lobby/Receptionist

**Public:**

Pat O'Brien  
Doug Houston  
Dr. George Manross  
Satinder Malhi  
Bruce Kern  
Elissa Robinson (via e-mail)

TO: Board Legislative Committee  
(Chair Diane Burgis, John Sutter, Dennis Waespi and  
Alternate Doug Siden)

FROM: Robert E. Doyle, General Manager  
Erich Pfuehler, Government Affairs Manager

SUBJECT: Board Legislative Committee Meeting  
WHEN: Friday, March 18, 2016 - 1 p.m.  
Lunch will be served

WHERE: Board Room, Peralta Oaks

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**Items to be discussed:**

I. STATE LEGISLATION / ISSUES

A. NEW LEGISLATION

**1. AB 1665 (Bonilla D-Concord) – Extending Sunset for East Bay Transportation Measures**

In 2013, AB 210 amended the revenue and taxation code to allow Alameda and Contra Costa counties each the ability to impose a new, one-half cent (0.5%) sales tax for countywide transportation programs above the State's 9.5% maximum. This authority expires if the voters have not approved the new tax by December 21, 2020. Measure BB was passed by Alameda County in 2014 under his authority. The Contra Costa County Transportation Authority (CCTA) oversees the County's "countywide transportation program" and would administer the tax proceeds from any Measure J augmentation. This legislation shifts the authority granted in AB 210 from the County to CCTA. CCTA believes without this legislation, they would not have independent authority to administer or place a Measure J augmentation tax measure on the ballot.

Staff Recommendation: Support

**2. AB 1680 (Rodriguez D-Chino) – Drone Interference Enforcement as a Reimbursable State-Mandate**

Assembly Member Rodriguez's bill clarifies that if a drone interferes at the scene of an emergency, its operator has committed a misdemeanor. In doing so, it creates a state-mandated local enforcement program which is reimbursable by the state.

Staff Recommendation: Support

**3. AB 1713 (Eggman D-Stockton) – Statewide Vote on the Peripheral Canal**

This bill would prohibit the construction of a peripheral canal unless expressly authorized by a ballot approved by the voters. The 1982 Prop. 9 statewide measure on the peripheral canal was defeated 62.7% to 37.3%. AB 1713 would also require the Legislative Analyst's Office to complete a prescribed economic feasibility analysis prior to a vote authorizing the construction of a peripheral canal. This is largely a statement bill and faces strong opposition from Southern California water interests, as well as Zone 7. Assembly Member Eggman serves on the Appropriations Committee.

Staff Recommendation: Watch

#### **4. AB 1745 (Hadley R-Torrance) – Supplemental Law Enforcement Services Account**

The Citizens Option for Public Safety (COPS) program was originally adopted in 1996 (AB 3229 – Brulte) with funding from the state general fund. COPS provides funding for:

- Front-line law enforcement (city police, county sheriffs and police protection districts);
- County jails;
- District attorneys for prosecution; and
- Local juvenile justice programs.

State COPS funding is allocated by the State Controller to each county for deposit by the county auditor in a Supplemental Law Enforcement Services Account (SLESA). The county auditor allocates the funds to cities. To date, Special Districts with law enforcement personnel, like the Park District, have not received allocations from the county SLESAs. While AB 1745 primarily focuses on ensuring local agency's receiving SLESA funds include drug interdiction and anti-gang efforts in their programming, it opens the door for some community service districts, including Kensington Police Protection and Community Services District in Contra Costa County, to receive SLESA funds. The Park District Public Safety Division has regularly suggested legislative staff look for opportunities for the District to receive SLESA funds. This bill may present an opportunity.

Staff Recommendation: Watch, work to include EBRPD as eligible for SLESA funds

#### **5. AB 1968 (Steinorth R-Rancho Cucamonga) – East Bay Regional Park District Recreation Vehicle Spot Bill**

This bill specifically mentions the Park District and calls out existing law prohibiting the District's Board of Directors from interfering with the control of a vehicular recreation area and/or trail controlled by a municipality or county. District staff and Advocate Houston are working to determine the intent of this bill, but it could be a spot bill regarding Tesla.

Staff Recommendation: Watch

#### **6. AB 2249 (Cooley D-Rancho Cordova) – Protecting Historic California State Park Trademarks**

Assemblymember Cooley's bill is in response to the U.S. National Park Service's dispute with its concessionaire at Yosemite National Park. The current concessionaire has operated at the Park since 1993, but after losing its bid to renew its contract, claimed the names of several landmarks – which have existed for many decades longer than the current contract – as its intellectual property. Unable to resolve the dispute, the National Park Service has re-named several historic landmarks.

On March 1, the Ahwahnee Hotel became the "Majestic Yosemite Hotel," Curry Village became "Half Dome Village," the Wawona Hotel became "Big Trees Lodge" and Badger Pass Ski Area became the "Yosemite Ski and Snowboard Area."

AB 2249 ensures nothing of the same occurs in a California state park. To keep concessionaires from co-opting state landmarks, this bill adds to state law a prohibition on concessionaires claiming ownership of a name associated with a California state park and declares such a claim disqualifies any bidders from future contracts if they attempt such trademark claims.

Staff Recommendation: Support

## **7. AB 2480 (Bloom D-Santa Monica) – Include Watersheds as Part of the State Water System**

This bill would make it state policy that source watersheds are recognized and defined as integral components of California's water system. The bill would also declare their maintenance and repair as eligible for financing on an equivalent basis with other water collection and treatment infrastructure. This recognition could help agencies that manage watersheds, such as the Park District, to qualify for more water-centric grant programs, such as the Prop. 1 water bond.

Staff Recommendation: Support

## **8. SB 807 and SB 810 (Gaines R-El Dorado) – Drones: Liability and Fire Protection Interference**

If a drone interferes with the performance of an emergency service, SB 807 would limit the exposure to civil liability of an emergency responder for damages to an unmanned aircraft or unmanned aircraft system.

SB 810 would make it unlawful to knowingly, intentionally or recklessly operate an unmanned aircraft or unmanned aircraft system in a manner that prevents or delays the extinguishment of a fire or in any way interferes with the efforts of firefighters to control, contain or extinguish a fire. SB 810 would additionally make a violation punishable by imprisonment in a county jail not to exceed 6 months and/or by a fine not to exceed \$5,000.

Staff Recommendation: Support

## **9. SB 1386 (Wolk D-Davis) – Include Natural and Working Lands in Greenhouse Gas Reduction Efforts**

This bill would declare it to be the policy of the state that the protection and management of natural and working lands are a key strategy in meeting the state's greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction goals. This bill would also require all relevant state agencies, departments, boards and commissions to consider this policy when revising, adopting or establishing policies, regulations, expenditures and grant criteria relating to the protection and management of natural and working lands.

This bill is a good place holder as the legislature debates the Second Investment Plan for the 40% of Cap and Trade dollars which are reapportioned every three years. The draft plan submitted to the governor from the Air Resources Board and other agencies, does recognize the role natural and working lands play in GHG reduction efforts. The final allocations will, however, be determined by the legislature with the Governor's approval as part of the budget process.

Staff Recommendation: Support

## **B. ISSUES**

### **1. Park Bond Update, Including Spot Bill AB 2444**

Advocate Houston will provide a verbal update about the status of a possible state park bond and/or inclusion of park interests in any broader infrastructure bond.

### **2. Endowment Legislation**

Advocate Houston will provide a verbal update about possible legislation addressing endowments and public resource agencies.

### **3. Other Issues**

## II. FEDERAL LEGISLATION / ISSUES

### A. NEW LEGISLATION – N/A

### B. ISSUES

#### 1. Update about Federal Issues for D.C. Meetings

Government Affairs Manager Pfoehler will provide a verbal update about issues related to upcoming meetings in Washington D.C.

#### 2. Other Issues

## III. CONSIDERATION OF MEASURE CC RENEWAL

General Manager Robert E. Doyle will lead a discussion about the possible renewal of Measure CC in 2016.

## IV. CONSIDERATION OF SAN FRANCISCO BAY RESTORATION AUTHORITY MEASURE AA AND RESOLUTION 12 REGARDING PROJECT LABOR AGREEMENTS

At the December 15, 2015 Board Meeting, the Board authorized the General Manager to Negotiate and Execute an Agreement with the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority to “Reimburse Certain Election Costs Imposed by the Nine County Registrars.” The Board did not, however, vote to support the Authority’s Measure AA which is scheduled to appear on the June 2016 ballot. Related to the question of possibly supporting Measure AA is the Authority’s recent consideration of “Resolution 12.” This resolution would require Authority grantees of Measure AA funds to enter into Project Labor Agreements (PLA) with the local Building Trades Council for any construction project exceeding \$100,000 to be funded in whole or in part by the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority Parcel Tax for Bay Restoration and Shoreline Protection.

Requiring the District to enter into a PLA for shoreline projects could negatively impact the District’s – as well as any other grantee’s – ability to obtain funding from other entities at the federal and state levels that may not fund projects with PLAs. For example, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) may refuse to provide federal funds if the District were forced to impose a PLA as a requirement for project construction. Alternatively, if the District instead refused to agree to the PLA, the District could potentially be forfeiting substantial Authority funding.

In addition, requiring the District to enter into a PLA as a condition of receiving Authority funding under Measure AA fundamentally removes the authority of each agency’s governing body, effectively removing their local control over their own projects.

The current draft of Resolution 12 includes a provision that appears to provide the possibility of a very narrow exemption to grantees from the PLA requirement, only if a PLA is unachievable despite “all reasonable efforts” to secure one, and only if the Governing Board takes additional action to grant the exemption. “All reasonable efforts” is not defined and highly subjective. In addition, the final decision whether to grant any exemption still rests with the Authority’s Governing Board – a Board whose members change on a regular basis – not the District’s Board of Directors. This underscores the clear lack of local control any grantee would have over its own local project, if they were to accept Authority funding.

Staff believes this provision is ambiguous and it is unclear whether the District would be able to obtain an exemption from the PLA requirement if sought, and therefore poses substantial risk to the District’s ability to obtain maximum funding. This same risk would be faced by all agencies considering pursuing funding from the Authority. Consequently, staff recommends a position of “Oppose” on the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority Governing Board’s Agenda Resolution 12.

With regard to PLAs being mandated for projects estimated at the extremely low construction cost threshold of \$100,000, there is no opportunity provided for each Governing Body to determine its own criteria as to when implementing a PLA makes sense. For example, the Contra Costa Water District (CCWD) has implemented PLAs on a project-by-project basis, considering criteria including: large projects (over \$25M), and multi-year projects with critical delivery schedules, where labor stability is required for timely completion. The CCWD surveyed 12 major water districts and agencies in Northern California for PLA agreements. CCWD is the only water district or water agency of the 12 surveyed that has implemented a PLA (San Francisco, Sacramento, and San Jose were not included in this survey).

The District has 22 projects totaling over \$100 million included in the Authority's list of those which could be eligible for funding if Measure AA passes. Every District project is estimated to cost at least \$500,000, so under Resolution 12 a PLA would be needed for each one to receive Authority funds. A more reasonable threshold would be that of \$5 million, as the bulk of District projects (11) are estimated to cost between \$1.5 million and \$5 million. There are seven projects with cost estimates between \$5 million and \$15 million. There are only two projects with estimates under \$1 million, so even if the threshold were raised to \$1 million, PLAs would be needed for all but two of the District's 22 proposed projects.

Staff Recommendation: Oppose San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority's Resolution 12 as currently composed. Support Measure AA if the Resolution 12 issue is resolved satisfactorily.

## V. PUBLIC COMMENTS

## VI. ARTICLES



## Pleasanton Weekly.com

Updated: Fri, Dec 11, 2015, 7:45 am

Uploaded: Mon, Dec 7, 2015, 8:47 am

# Cook-Kallio to run against Assemblywoman Baker in 2016 election

Says Baker's record in Sacramento 'does not match her lip service in the community'

by Jeb Bing / Pleasanton Weekly



State Assembly candidate Cheryl Cook-Kallio. (Photo by Jeb Bing.)

Former Pleasanton City Councilwoman Cheryl Cook-Kallio said Tuesday that she will seek the nomination for the 16th State Assembly seat in the state's June 7 primary.

If nominated, Cook-Kallio, a Democrat, would run against Republican incumbent Assemblywoman Catharine Baker in the General Election on Nov. 8. Baker, who was elected to the Assembly last year, is expected seek the nomination for re-election in the June 2016 primary.

Cook-Kallio's decision was not unexpected. A public school teacher for more than 35 years, she served on the Pleasanton Council for eight years, being termed out in 2014. She said friends had

Article available by going to:

<http://www.pleasantonweekly.com/news/2015/12/07/cook-kallio-to-run-against-assemblywoman-baker-in-2016-election>

urged her to seek another elected office, with many urging her to run for the Pleasanton school board.

She decided against that opportunity in the November 2014 school board election, and also was sidelined by Democrats who chose former Mayor Tim Sbranti as its candidate for the 16th District Assembly seat that year.

Cook-Kallio also sought election as Pleasanton's mayor in 2012, which she lost to fellow Councilman Jerry Thorne.

In an interview with the Pleasanton Weekly, Cook-Kallio said that when looking at issues that matter most to the community, Baker's record in Sacramento "does not match her lip service in the community."

"I won't sit idly writing op-eds about the traffic gridlock that spills off the freeways and clogs city streets," she said. "I will take action. I will get BART to Livermore and the subsequent ACE Train connection by introducing legislation to create a joint powers agreement between Dublin, Livermore and Pleasanton and the transportation agency to ensure this connection happens."

She said Baker claims to be pro-choice but a look at her votes in Sacramento on reproductive health, women's health and rights, sex education and access to affordable health care tell a different story.

"Her voting record on women's health issues earned her one of the lowest scores in the legislature when evaluated by PPAC, a women's health advocacy organization," Cook-Kallio said.

With years of experience teaching students in the classroom, Cook-Kallio said she understands the needs of students.

"I have the first-hand experience needed to ensure all California students leave our schools with a well-rounded education, a strong foundation and the skills necessary to be successful in the 21st century," she explained.

Cheryl Cook-Kallio recently retired after more than 39 years as a classroom teacher. She holds a bachelor's degree in History from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, three teaching credentials from San Jose State University and a Master's degree in History with an emphasis on the U.S. Constitution, also from San Jose State.

She plans to officially launch her campaign in January.

Article available by going to:

<http://www.pleasantonweekly.com/news/2015/12/07/cook-kallio-to-run-against-assemblywoman-baker-in-2016-election>



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## San Francisco Chronicle

# Prospect of taxes sours budget support, poll finds

By Melody Gutierrez

January 27, 2016

SACRAMENTO — The prospect of new taxes has California voters feeling significantly less supportive of the governor's budget proposal than they were a year ago when no taxes were discussed, according to a Public Policy Institute of California survey released Wednesday.

Forty-eight percent of those polled supported the governor's budget, a drop from the 75 percent in high marks given to the 2015 spending proposal. This year's level of support was similar to that of the 2012 budget, which included tax proposals.

This month, Gov. Jerry Brown renewed calls for the Legislature to find a way to fund the state's transportation needs, saying new taxes will be needed to pay for \$77 billion in postponed infrastructure projects, such as fixing roads, highways and bridges. Lawmakers are also debating a tax on health care insurers to fund Medi-Cal.

"We found in follow-up questions that voters would rather have seen state bonds or surplus funds applied to fixing the roads rather than themselves being asked to pay higher taxes or fees," said PPIC President Mark Baldassare.

Brown's record \$122.6 billion general fund spending plan for 2016-17 includes increases for education and aid to the poor, such as \$380 million for an income tax credit for low-wage working families. Brown proposed putting an additional \$2 billion of surplus money into the state's rainy-day fund to bring the balance to \$8 billion.

Of those surveyed, 31 percent said they prefer to fund transportation projects with only surplus funds, 24 percent said the state should issue state bonds, 17 percent preferred

increasing vehicle registration fees, and 13 percent leaned toward increasing the state gasoline tax.

Support for the proposed budget was split on party lines: 64 percent of Democrats supported it while 68 percent of Republicans opposed it.

With the state anticipating \$7 billion in surplus funds, the poll found support evenly divided at 48 percent for building a reserve or restoring social service programs previously cut during the recession. Among Republicans, however, 71 percent prefer to pay down debt and build a reserve, while 58 percent of Democrats say the state should use the money to restore social services.

Californians wrongly believe that prisons account for the biggest chunk of general fund spending in the state budget, with only 15 percent of those surveyed correctly identifying K-12 education as receiving the largest share. Most people (42 percent) incorrectly named prisons and corrections or health and human services (28 percent).

K-12 education accounts for 41.8 percent of the state's general fund, which is funded primarily by personal income taxes, sales taxes and corporate taxes. Health and human services makes up 27.5 percent, higher education is 11.9 percent, and prisons are 8.7 percent.

The PPIC surveyed 1,704 adults in California between Jan. 10 and 19 in English and Spanish depending on the respondent's preference. The survey has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.5 percent.

*Melody Gutierrez is a San Francisco Chronicle staff writer. E-mail: [mgutierrez@sfchronicle.com](mailto:mgutierrez@sfchronicle.com). Twitter: @MelodyGutierrez*



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## CONTRA COSTA TIMES

# Antioch councilwoman announces candidacy for county supervisor's seat

*By Rowena Coetsee*

[rcoetsee@bayareanewsgroup.com](mailto:rcoetsee@bayareanewsgroup.com)

POSTED: 02/01/2016 05:14:16 PM PST | UPDATED: ABOUT A MONTH AGO

Antioch resident Monica Wilson, 47, announced her candidacy for the District 3 seat on Monday, joining four others who also are stumping for the position.

Elected to the Antioch City Council in 2012, Wilson said she wants to apply her experience in business development on a larger scale instead of running again for a city office when her term expires in November.

"I've enjoyed my time on the council but it's a good opportunity to ... help grow not only (Antioch) but help this section of the county be that much more successful," she said.

Wilson currently works for the Work Force Development Board of Contra Costa County where she helps businesses find employees with the skills they need.

While on the council, she says she's put in a plug for young people who need jobs by suggesting that a businessman contact her employer to find candidates, and said she is exploring ways that the Work Force Development Board can collaborate with cities to give youths experience working in the public sector.

Wilson, who lost her job and fought to keep her home during the recession, says she wants to help the county better serve East Contra Costa families that are struggling financially in the areas of health care, education and providing jobs that pay a living wage.

Antioch Mayor Wade Harper also is running for 3rd District supervisor along with Oakley residents Diane Burgis, Doug Hardcastle and Pittsburg resident Odessa Lefrancois.

Reach Rowena Coetsee at 925-779-7141. Follow her at [Twitter.com/RowenaCoetsee](https://twitter.com/RowenaCoetsee)



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## CONTRA COSTA TIMES

# Bonilla endorses Torlakson to succeed her in Assembly's District 14

*By Sam Richards*

[srichards@bayareanewsgroup.com](mailto:srichards@bayareanewsgroup.com)

POSTED: 02/01/2016 10:03:34 AM PST | UPDATED: ABOUT A MONTH AGO

PITTSBURG -- State Assemblywoman Susan Bonilla on Monday said she has endorsed Mae Cendana Torlakson to succeed her as representative for District 14, which covers Concord, Pleasant Hill, Martinez, Clayton, Benicia and Vallejo.

Bonilla, a former Contra Costa County supervisor, is being termed out of the Assembly.

Torlakson, a Pittsburg resident, is serving her third term on the Ambrose Recreation and Park District board based in Bay Point. She declared her candidacy for the Assembly in July, as did Concord Mayor and fellow Democrat Tim Grayson.

Torlakson is married to Tom Torlakson, who served as 11th District assemblyman (East Contra Costa) from 1996 to 2000 and as a state senator from 2000 to 2008, and who also has been an Antioch City Councilman and a county supervisor. He is currently the state superintendent of public instruction.

Mae Torlakson is also chairwoman of the Friends of the Great California Delta Trail.



## San Francisco Chronicle

# California's \$400 billion debt worries analysts

By [Melody Gutierrez](#)

February 6, 2016 Updated: February 6, 2016 2:53pm



Photo: Paul Chinn, The Chronicle

Gov. Jerry Brown delivers the annual State of the State address at the State Capitol in Sacramento, Calif. on Thursday, Jan. 21, 2016.

**SACRAMENTO** — California has come a long way to dig itself out of budget deficits, but the state remains on shaky ground due to nearly \$400 billion in unfunded liabilities and debt from public pensions, retiree health care and bonds, financial analysts say.

“Yes, the state’s budget is balanced if you are looking at what they are required to spend cash on this year, but not when you look at their expenses,” said Gabe Petek, a credit analyst with Standard & Poor’s.

The high debt and unfunded liabilities have resulted in the state’s rating lagging behind other states, Petek says. California saw its bond rating rise last year from A+ to AA-, the highest level the state has had in 14 years. Good bond ratings are a sign of a strong budget and financial management and allow states to pay lower interest rates when selling bonds.

“Compared to other states, though, California has one of the lower ratings,” Petek said.

And the reason is clear, he said. It’s California’s debt and liabilities that are concerning financial analysts, particularly the state’s rapidly growing unfunded retiree health care costs, which grew more than 80 percent over the past decade. California has promised \$74 billion more in health and dental benefits to current and retired state workers than the state has put aside.

### **Major liabilities**

Without changes, the state estimates that unfunded liability would grow to \$300 billion by 2047.

“These liabilities are so massive that it is tempting to ignore them,” Gov. Jerry Brown said last month in his State of the State speech. “We can’t possibly pay them off in a year or two or even 10. And there is little satisfaction in the notion of chipping away at an obligation for three decades to pay for something that has already been promised. Yet, it is our moral obligation to do so — particularly before we make new commitments.”

H.D. Palmer, spokesman for the Department of Finance, said the governor is focused this year on reining in retiree health care costs. The retirement plan is one of the most generous in the nation, covering 100 percent of retirees’ medical costs if they worked for the state for 20 years. Currently, the state pays only for the cost of providing care to retired workers, and does not put money aside for those who will retire in the future.

“The pay-as-you-go model is clearly not going to be sustainable over the long haul, particularly with a workforce that is aging,” Palmer said. “Roughly 1,000 people turn 65

in California each day, a number of those are state workers. What does that mean for the state in terms of long-term fiscal planning?”

Last year, the state successfully negotiated with the professional engineers union to have those workers contribute half of 1 percent to their retiree health benefits in 2017 and 2018 and 1 percent of their salary in 2019. The state will match those contributions.

### **Pension debt**

Engineers, however, will see their contributions offset by a 5 percent raise this summer and a 2 percent raise in 2017.

The engineers union also agreed to increase the amount of time it takes to earn full retiree health benefits from 20 years to 25 years and decrease the coverage the state pays for from 100 percent of premiums to 80 percent. Those changes affect only new employees.

Palmer said the changes along with the prefunding of retiree health will be a model as the state begins negotiations with other unions this spring.

State Sen. John Moorlach, R-Costa Mesa (Orange County) said he's skeptical that the state's model for funding retiree health benefits is the right move. Moorlach said offering raises to employees to offset their contribution to their retiree health benefits puts more pressure on the pension system, which pays retirees based on their salaries.

“As we say in accounting, it's missing the sizzle of the deal,” said Moorlach, a certified public accountant and financial planner.

Moorlach said he's concerned with the state's pension debt — the teachers retirement system alone faces a \$72.7 billion unfunded liability. The most recent estimate in 2014 for the California Public Employees' Retirement System shows a \$43.2 billion unfunded liability.

### **Bond debt**

Bond debt also has risen substantially in California, with the state's reliance on borrowing for infrastructure resulting in 1 of every 2 dollars spent on those projects going to pay interest, according to the Department of Finance.

Bonds are approved by voters and generally used to pay for infrastructure, such as building schools and roads.

From 1974 to 1999, California voters approved \$38.4 billion of general obligation bonds. Since 2000, voters approved more than \$103.2 billion. The state is paying on \$86.8 billion in bond debt with another \$32.3 billion expected to be issued in the coming years.

In November, voters will be asked to approve a \$9 billion school construction bond.

The state has \$77 billion in deferred maintenance needed to fix roads, highways and bridges, which Brown said is likely to require a new tax or fee.

All these debts and liabilities should concern taxpayers, said Autumn Carter, executive director of California Common Sense, a Mountain View nonpartisan policy group that does fiscal and budget analysis. When the next recession hits, Carter said, the state's payments on pensions, retiree health and bond debt will put pressure on social services and other programs.

“There is nothing that says we have to fall into financial ruin,” Carter said. “There is still time to turn it around. We can still attack debt and tackle the cost growth associated with pensions and retiree health care, but we have to be willing to do it.”

*Melody Gutierrez is a San Francisco Chronicle staff writer. E-mail: [mgutierrez@sfchronicle.com](mailto:mgutierrez@sfchronicle.com) Twitter: @MelodyGutierrez*



## DAILY REPUBLIC

### Fairfield

# Parcel tax in all 9 Bay Area counties would fund SF Bay restoration plan



A group is proposing a parcel tax in the nine Bay Area counties to fund shoreline projects that would protect and restore San Francisco Bay. The Suisun Marsh is home to many wintering and migrating waterfowl which could benefit from the tax the group is proposing.

By **Kevin W. Green** From page A3 | February 10, 2016

FAIRFIELD — An effort to generate about \$500 million in special funding for restoration of the San Francisco Bay is moving ahead with plans to place a \$12 parcel tax on the June ballot in all nine Bay Area counties.

The San Francisco Bay Clean Water, Pollution Prevention, and Habitat Restoration Program – known as the Clean and Healthy Bay Ballot Measure – would provide approximately \$25 million per year for 20 years, according to a San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority press release.

The agency voted unanimously last month to place the special parcel tax on the June 7 ballot in the nine Bay Area counties, including Solano County.

If passed, the tax would fund shoreline projects that would protect and restore San Francisco Bay by reducing trash, pollution and harmful toxins; improving water quality; restoring habitat for fish, birds

Available by going to:

<http://www.dailyrepublic.com/news/fairfield/parcel-tax-in-all-9-bay-area-counties-would-fund-sf-bay-restoration-plan/>

and wildlife; protecting communities from floods; and increasing shoreline access for public enjoyment, the release said.

Projects would be prioritized based on their positive impact on the San Francisco Bay as a whole, with provisions to ensure they would be funded in each of the Bay Area's nine counties, the Bay Restoration Authority said in its press release.

Half of the funds would be allocated geographically among the North Bay, the East Bay, the South Bay and the West Bay proportional to the size of their populations, and the remainder would be allocated without regard to county, the Bay Restoration Authority said.

Proceeds would be used to support the programs set forth in the measure and would be spent for projects in the nine counties comprising the authority, with administrative expenditures limited to no more than 5 percent of the measure's revenue, the agency's release said.

Bay Restoration Authority chairman and San Mateo County Supervisor Dave Pine said in the release that for nearly a decade concerned environmentalists, business leaders and local officials have been working to develop a regional funding measure that will allow the agency to carry out the wetlands restoration that's necessary to ensure a clean and healthy bay that enhances the quality of life or future generations.

Pine described the parcel tax as "a critically important investment in our region's future."

Audubon California has come out in support of the measure, saying it's expected that the tax money will leverage additional state and federal funding for bay restoration.

"In a state that offers so many natural treasures, San Francisco Bay stands apart for both its beauty and its importance to birds and wildlife," Brigid McCormack, executive director of Audubon California, said in an agency press release.

"This ballot measure offers residents the opportunity to not only restore what has been lost over time, but to also invest in the future," McCormack said.

Save the Bay, the Bay Area Council and the Silicon Valley Leadership Group – along with Audubon California – are part of a coalition of environmental and business groups that support the measure, according to the Audubon California release. A number of Bay Area Audubon chapters have also stated their support for the measure, the release said.

More than a million shorebirds and waterfowl use San Francisco Bay habitat at the height of migration, and the area includes 12 spots designated as Important Bird Areas due to the high number of rare and endangered bird species as well as the sheer number of birds supported by the bay and surrounding wetlands, the release said.

Restoring San Francisco Bay's wetlands will also protect shoreline communities from rising waters attributable to climate change, according to the release.

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The Bay Restoration Authority, a regional government agency created by the California Legislature in 2008, is governed by a board of local elected officials.

Other current members in addition to Pine are San Francisco City and County Supervisor Scott Wiener, Contra Costa County Supervisor John Gioia, Napa County Supervisor Keith Caldwell, Mountain View Mayor Patricia Showalter and East Bay Regional Park District Director John Sutter.

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## San Francisco Chronicle

# Fight brews over federal wildfire funding after devastating year

By Kurtis Alexander

February 11, 2016 Updated: February 11, 2016 3:33pm



Firefighters with the Marin County Fire Department's Tamalpais Fire Crew monitor a backfire as they battle the Valley Fire on September 13, 2015 near Middletown, California.

After the costliest of wildfire seasons ravaged the West last year, with three catastrophic blazes ripping through Lake County, the U.S. Forest Service may be headed for a showdown with Congress over how to cover the surging bill.

Available by going to:

<http://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/Fight-looms-over-federal-wildfire-funding-after-6824348.php>

President Obama's proposed budget, released this week, calls on legislators to allow the Forest Service to use disaster funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency to pay its firefighting tab.

But under that proposal, the relief from FEMA would begin in the fiscal year that begins Oct. 1. U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, who oversees the Forest Service, supports the idea but says the agency may need help sooner.

Vilsack told a group of California forest managers during a Bay Area visit last weekend that if the agency's wildfire funding runs out this year, as it has in seven of the past 14 years, he won't "raid" other department accounts to fill the gap and will demand Congress pony up.

"I'm not going to authorize the borrowing," Vilsack said at the Forest Service office in Vallejo. "Every time we do it, we let (Congress) off the hook."

Although the president submits the federal budget, Congress is in charge of financing it. With Obama leaving office next year and Vilsack's appointment on the line, the agriculture secretary said it's time to take a stand for the financial future of the Forest Service.

Last year, as a record 10.1 million acres burned nationwide, the Forest Service went \$700 million over its \$2.6 billion wildfire allocation, forcing it to divert funds from watershed protection, habitat restoration and recreation.

"It's (money) for maintaining trails. It's for maintaining roads. It's for making forests places that your family wants to visit," Vilsack told The Chronicle.

Forest Service officials worry that fire management will become even pricier and eat up more of the agency's budget as the climate warms and development continues to infringe on the nation's wildlands.

This fiscal year, fire accounted for nearly 65 percent of the Forest Service's \$5.1 billion budget. Twenty years ago, it was less than 20 percent.

The agency, which oversees 154 forests including nearly 20 in California, works with other federal and state offices to manage wildfires. However, the Forest Service's firefighting apparatus is by far the largest.

The president's proposal for funding the agency, which both Vilsack and the administration unsuccessfully pushed for last year, lays out a framework in which fire is treated like other natural disasters.

The Forest Service would be given slightly less money for fire management each year but would be allowed to tap federal disaster funds, commonly used for hurricanes and floods, to pay for the biggest conflagrations.

In the past, the idea has been thwarted, in part over concerns about other disasters losing funding and the Forest Service becoming less accountable.

This fiscal year, Congress recognized the Forest Service's increasing costs for firefighting and boosted the agency's wildfire funding to \$3.2 billion. That means it would have to be a bad fire season for the agency to run out of money.

Still, it's still less money than was needed last year.

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## San Francisco Chronicle

# Supervisors to decide on putting parks funding boost on ballot

By Lizzie Johnson

February 22, 2016 Updated: February 22, 2016 7:22pm

San Francisco's Recreation and Park Department has for years suffered from maintenance backlogs and funding cuts, but an influx of cash could soon help.

A charter amendment sponsored by Supervisor Mark Farrell would infuse more than \$1 billion into the department over the next 30 years and provide more secure baseline funding. The Board of Supervisors will vote Tuesday on whether to put the measure on the June ballot.

"I want to make sure that the parks my children inherit as they are growing older in San Francisco are just as good, if not better, than the parks we have today," Farrell said. "Our parks are the great equalizer in San Francisco. It's critically important that we make sure this funding measure will increase that quality of life in every corner of our city."

Historically, investment in the Recreation and Park Department has not kept pace with the city's growing budget. Funding has dropped by almost half over the past 15 years, despite the establishment of the Open Space Fund, which was intended to provide more money through a property tax set-aside. Since then, parks funding has fallen from 2.1 percent of the city budget to 1.2 percent.

Had the percentage of the general fund going to the department remained constant at the original percentage, it would be receiving \$89 million this year, rather than \$50

million, concludes a report by the San Francisco Parks Alliance, a nonprofit that supports the city's parks.

The measure, which has six co-sponsors, would be a set-aside and rely on a larger portion of the general fund — not tax revenue. The baseline funding given to the department would increase annually by \$3 million until 2026. After that, the amount would be adjusted based on the city's discretionary revenue.

Rec and Park's maintenance program is operating almost entirely on emergency and individual requests. From 2013 to 2014, only 1 percent of the 15,000 work orders completed were preventative fixes, according to the city controller's report. The rest were emergency repairs.

"This measure will help prevent that from happening again," Rec and Park Director Phil Ginsburg said. "This is not a magic bullet that is going to fix everything overnight, though. What it does do is provide stability to prevent future cuts and will allow us to make small investments each year to begin to tackle some of our deferred maintenance."

*Lizzie Johnson is a San Francisco Chronicle staff writer.*

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