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Help Stop The Proposed CA Tax On Driving

By Andy Caldwell

If California legislators have their way, in effect, every road in our state will become a toll road, including your own driveway. That is because all those Democrats clamoring about the affordability crisis are simultaneously planning on creating a vehicle-miles-traveled tax or VMT.

A VMT would be a new tax that would tax you for every mile you drive. For two-car families, it is estimated that it will cost your family a minimum of four thousand dollars per year in extra taxes. Businesses could expect to pay much more based on their need to rack up more miles than the average commuter/family.

Of course, this tax would be on top of all the other taxes you are already paying, for the privilege of driving on our undersized, potholed-filled streets, highways, and freeways, throughout the state.

Currently, we pay the highest gas taxes in America at the pump, over 70 cents per gallon in state taxes, while people in Alaska, for instance, pay 9 cents per gallon. But on top of that, we pay a federal excise tax, a low carbon fuel tax, plus local taxes.

All in all, we pay over \$1.30 in taxes for every gallon of gas we purchase. That is the highest in the land, resulting in the highest gas prices.

And now they want to double up on these taxes by charging us by the mile too?

The point lost on most consumers? The price per gallon of gas doesn't differ all that much between the states. It is the cost of government (regs, fees, and taxes) that causes our gas prices to be nearly double those of the rest of the country.

These additional charges would include, for instance, Santa Barbara County's countywide tax on all purchases that adds up to \$1 billion over 30 years for transportation projects via Measure A.

And California voters also approved SB1 that added another \$50 billion in fuel taxes over 10 years for CA drivers via a fuel tax and higher vehicle registration fees.

What's worse? These tone-deaf legislators are moving this idea forward just in time for the refinery and pipeline closures in CA that is estimated to cause gas prices to rise to \$8.00 per gallon!

Most of us who watch government foolishly thought that the state would apply a VMT tax only on electric vehicles since they don't pay at the pump. But so far, that is not in the proposal. Nor is there any discussion



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about eliminating the state gas tax and going all in with just the VMT for all vehicles.

Sacramento legislators are getting hammered and rightly so because the current bill is an insult to taxpayers in general, and to all the people forced to commute a long way because of the price of housing and the associated housing shortages near where people work. There is no better example of this on the Central Coast than the Santa Barbara/Goleta and San Luis Obispo job centers. Tens of thousands of people must commute to these communities because they can't afford to live near their work and now CA wants to tax their pain?

Please call Governor Newsom at (916) 445-2841 and urge him to threaten a veto of the VMT bill long before it has a chance to get to his desk.

Andy Caldwell, Executive Director, COLAB

Gov. Newsom Facing Calls To Resign Over Release Of ‘Monster’ Convicted Serial Child Abuser

By Katy Grimes

Thousands of California’s convicted pedophiles have been released from prison

Sacramento Sheriff Jim Cooper slammed California Governor Gavin Newsom’s “elderly parole program” Monday, which is allowing David Funston, a serial child rapist to be released from prison. Funston terrorized Sacramento neighborhoods by luring very young children with candy. He kidnapped, brutalized and raped children as young as age 3, then would toss them to the side of the road when he was done.

A judge called him “the monster parents fear the most.”

Thanks to Gov. Gavin Newsom, Funston will be on the streets again.

Now, Gavin Newsom is facing calls to resign his office because his elderly parole program is about to dump another violent convicted child abuser into the community.

David Funston terrorized Sacramento neighborhoods in 1995. Sheriff Cooper said Funston is 64 years old; Cooper is 62, and in no way “elderly.”

California allows “elderly prisoners” out if they are 50, and have served at least 20 years of their sentence to be considered for parole, and considered no longer a threat. This “law” was a gut-and-amend bill passed in 2020 entirely on party lines without a hearing or notice to the public.

Perhaps ironically, today there are **2,790** registered sex offender pedophiles living very near the State Capitol in downtown Sacramento according to MegansLaw.ca.gov. In 2022, there were **201** registered sex offender pedophiles living very near the State Capitol. Newsom’s sex-offender early release program has let out thousands of convicted pedophiles.

There are **2,728** sex offenders living in my own downtown Sacramento neighborhood, and in 2022, there were **194** registered sex offender pedophiles living in my neighborhood, which at the time, we thought was appalling.

No wonder the governor and First Partner moved back to Kentfield in Marin County, where there are only **184** sex offenders living.

Gavin Newsom has emptied the prisons of these violent convicted criminal pedophiles into your neighbor-

hoods. Sheriff Jim Cooper is right to be furious.

How did this happen?

A last minute gut-and-amend bill in 2020 by Assemblyman Phil Ting, Assembly Bill 3234, lowered the age threshold for “elderly parole” from age 60 to 50, creating a loophole that allows violent sex offenders to be eligible for “elderly parole” after serving only 20 years, the Globe reported. Despite the significant societal and fiscal impacts of the bill, AB 3234 was passed entirely on party lines without a hearing or notice to the public.

In 2022, we found out that more than 7,000 sex offenders convicted of “lewd or lascivious acts with a child under 14 years of age” were released the same year they were convicted, the DailyMail.com reported in an excellent exposé. “The most common offense in the database was ‘lewd or lascivious acts with a child under 14 years of age’, committed 19,441 times. Despite its severity, the average time served for this crime was just two years and 11 months.”

But this goes back even further than just Assemblyman Ting’s wicked bill.

In 2017 California legislators passed the Elderly Parole Program for the claimed purpose of reviewing the parole suitability of inmates who are 60 years of age or older and who have served a minimum of 25 years on their sentence. But apparently that wasn’t a good enough *gimme*, because by 2020, AB 3234 by Asm. Ting amended Penal Code section 3055 and allowed every person who is over 50 years old who has served more than 20 years in prison to get a parole

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Why Government Keeps Running Out Of Your Money

By Andy Caldwell

Two years after San Luis Obispo County Supervisors declared that road maintenance was no longer a priority, the SLO County Association of Governments wants to raise sales taxes to help maintain roads.

Talk about mixed signals!

The City of Santa Barbara is also planning to raise taxes. It is considering raising the bed tax at hotels and motels, and worse, charging people tens of thousands of dollars more when they sell their house via a property transfer tax. How is that going to make housing more affordable?

Santa Barbara County is the worst. The supervisors there are also considering raising the sales tax. However, what the supes really want the money for is to backfill the cost of services to illegal aliens because President Trump has cut off the proverbial spigot. That is, don't let their \$500 million road, building, and parks, maintenance deficit fool you into thinking they would use the new tax dollars for anything important to most taxpayers.

Let's discuss the *real* reason why *all* these government entities keep running out of your money. Virtually all local governments are spending over half of all tax dollars on themselves in the form of salaries, benefits, and pensions. Moreover, these personnel costs have been skyrocketing with respect to inflation and population growth.

The Santa Barbara Bloat

Former County Supervisor **Mike Stoker**, who now heads up the Santa Barbara County Taxpayer Advocacy Center, gives us an example as it relates to the County of Santa Barbara, the most bloated of all local governments. Between the year 2000 and today, Santa Barbara County's population grew from 399,347 to 441,000—a modest and manageable increase of 10.43%.

Stoker notes, "In a world of responsible governance, one might expect the budget to grow at a similar pace, perhaps *slightly* higher to account for inflation".

Instead, the county budget has *exploded*.

In 2000, the county operated on approximately \$475 million. Today, that figure has ballooned to a staggering \$1.69 billion. That is a 355.69% increase in spending to serve a population that grew by only 10%.

In that same time period, the *average* fully loaded cost



(salary, benefits, and pensions) of each county employee more than doubled to \$177,700! Here is the overall trend going back just five years

What Else Has Doubled?

The County charges various fees for "services." Some of the highest fees are charged to new construction for so-called traffic impacts (this is on top of all the taxes paid by citizens and businesses to maintain roads). These fees have risen in a proportionate manner as have county salaries, i.e., they have *doubled*.

Coincidence?

I don't think so.

The fact is that while traffic fees go into a fund to maintain or expand roads, the county reserves the money that was formerly used to pay for roads for their own inurement.

For example, in the year 2000, the traffic impact fee charged in "Goleta" (before it was incorporated) for a 24-hour, 2,000 square foot convenience store was \$460,000. Today, that same fee is \$1 million in area surrounding Goleta.

To see the current, *shocking* fee schedule, here is the link:

The truth is, the exorbitant cost of living in California for fuel, water, electricity, housing, and commerce is driven by the ever-increasing cost of government, not the goods themselves. Serving constituents is no longer the highest priority of government. Taxpayers are essentially ignored, except when they want to take advantage of us once more.

Andy Caldwell, Executive Director, COLAB

California's One-Party Rule Could End With A Steve Hilton Win

By James Hirsen

The once-Golden State has been pummeled with sky-high taxes, faded dreams of home ownership, soaring crime rates, a crumbling infrastructure, and an absentee governor who is consumed with national ambitions.

As California's 2026 gubernatorial race draws near, one candidate in particular recently took the lead in the polls: Steve Hilton, a business consultant, restaurateur, and former advisor to British Prime Minister David Cameron.

Hilton has garnered national attention for his common-sense approach to revitalizing the Golden State.

Resonating with the state's battered populace, Hilton has been focusing on working folks, as opposed to Sacramento insiders and coastal elites. And he has zeroed-in on what voters truly care about: Good jobs, affordable homes, safe neighborhoods, and effective schools.

He received an assist with his candidacy from three issues currently in the news: California's proposed punitive billionaire wealth tax, the state's Commercial Drivers License scandal, and the recently uncovered corruption and incompetence that has driven away businesses, families, and untold opportunities.

Some info on the state's proposed 2026 Billionaire Tax Act.

Pushed by unions and primarily cheered on by the democratic socialist senator from Vermont, Bernie Sanders, the proposed ballot measure would slap a one-time 5% tax on the net worth of any individual whose assets are valued at \$1 billion or more and who was residing in California on January 1, 2026.

In anticipation of the passage of the proposed ballot measure, California is already seeing jobs disappear, wealth flee, and its tax base shrink.

Billionaires are hard at work restructuring assets and pondering exit strategies.

Tech giants who, not so incidentally, are largely responsible for building up California's economy are now packing up in droves.

The proposed ballot measure is being peddled to voters through the use of old fashioned class envy and newfangled propaganda.

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Hilton's reaction to the idea of a billionaire wealth tax? A flat-out "No."

Instead of confiscatory gimmicks that punish success and hurt everyone within reach, Hilton proposes actual relief: No state income tax on earnings under \$100,000, a flat 7.5% rate on anything above the amount, and the protection of Proposition 13 with no new property tax hikes.

Hilton plans to cut state spending back to pre-pandemic levels, which would end the 50% explosion that occurred in bureaucracy. This is the same bureaucracy that spent \$24 billion on homelessness with zero results, wasted \$30 billion on high-speed rail that failed to materialize, and engaged in endless give-aways to unions.

Hilton's pro-growth policies will keep talent and capital in California and put a damper on exits to Texas, Florida, and other more inviting alternatives.

Regarding the Commercial Drivers License (CDL)

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Engineered Addiction To A Psychological Narcotic

By Andy Caldwell

Former Facebook president **Sean Parker** stated that the Facebook site “was made to consume as much of your time and conscious attention as possible to exploit the vulnerability (the craving of social validation) in human psychology.”

That is a nice way to say the business model is based upon the vulnerability of humans to become addicted. Unfortunately, the vulnerabilities exploited by social media didn't just end up being a time suck for people in need of attention and affirmation. Consequently, **Mark Zuckerberg** and company are on trial in Los Angeles in a landmark trial having to do with their companies' success at *specifically engineering* addiction via the use of algorithms, infinite scroll, chatbots, and autoplay that have been proven to be harmful, especially to children and teens the world over.

The damage of the addiction includes anxiety, depression, eating disorders, dissociation from reality, self-harm, hyper-sexuality, higher rates of aggression, sleep deprivation, hallucinations, and diminished functioning such as emotional control, stability, calmness, and resilience in nearly a third of the next generation. That is, not to mention, the number of children and teens that were lured into sexual exploitation-trafficking and pornography addictions via the internet.

Multiple studies, including The Global Mind Project published in the *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities* last summer, determined that kids who receive smartphones before age 13 face skyrocketing suicide risks. Girls were especially affected, with 48% of those who got phones at age 5-6 reporting suicidal thoughts, compared to 28% who got their phones at age 13.

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The bottom line?

The younger children are when they first own a smart phone, the worse their mental health becomes by early adulthood.

The Global Mind Project drew data from nearly two million participants across 163 countries with the core analysis focusing on over 100,000 individuals between ages 18-24 yrs old, Generation Z, the first group to grow up with smart phones and social media from early childhood.

The study found that the AI-powered systems strategically exploited behavioral data and psychological vulnerabilities, potentially constraining children's agency by eroding autonomy, diminishing decision-making capacity, and encouraging social comparison.

Of course, some of these problems are not limited to

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Trump Already Blamed For Future Cancer From Venezuelan Oil

By Steve Milloy

Venezuelan oil has been refined by one of the largest U.S. refineries operated by Chevron in Pascagoula, Miss. since the 1990s. That refinery may get the opportunity to process even more Venezuelan oil courtesy of the recently assumed guardianship of the Venezuelan oil industry by President Donald Trump.

But instead of appreciating the economic activity that tends to improve the health and standard of living of local communities, green activists have enlisted the New York Times to attack the facility as a health threat.

In her video story, “Chevron’s Oil Deals in Venezuela Could Worsen Pollution in Mississippi,” reporter Hiroko Tabuchi claimed, “Studies have found that exposure to pollutants from refineries can lead to acute short-term health effects like irritation, shortness of breath, even nausea.” Then she ominously added: “And in the long-term, they’ve been linked to cancer.”

As Tabuchi said this, the video showed the cover page of a 2025 study published in a journal called Environment Research Letters about detecting air pollution and its effects in Pascagoula.

But the video didn’t mention any other studies. Just the one, which doesn’t actually link refinery emissions to cancer. We’ll get to its claims later, but let’s first address the scariest claim made by Tabuchi, the one about cancer.

There is a published study that looked for a relationship between cancer and refinery workers, including at Pascagoula. Among 2,382 workers who worked at the Pascagoula refinery from 1963-1993, the workers had more than 30 percent less cancer than expected in the general population.

Bear in mind that these workers had much higher exposure to refinery emissions than local residents, then and now. Also, most of those exposures occurred before federal and state occupational and environmental regulations had been implemented. If refinery emissions caused cancer, one would have expected those cancers to show up already in the data. But they haven’t.

If you look at the most recent government report of cancer incidence in Jackson County, Miss. – where the Pascagoula refinery is located – there is no up-

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ward trend in the most recent five-year cancer rate.

There is simply no basis for scaring the public about cancer caused by refinery emissions.

What about the claims of irritation, shortness of breath and nausea?

The study that Tabuchi spotlighted is an activist-conducted study in which residents from a fence-line community next to the refinery made self-reported health claims. The claims were not verified by the researchers who were busy trying to measure air quality. But as the study authors reported about their air quality measurements, they wasted their time: “Uncalibrated data... is difficult to contextualize because it lacks inherent quantitative monitoring.

While the New York Times reports that a group of locals called Cherokee Concerned Citizens (CCC) is concerned about the refinery’s increased processing, the story is more complex.

CCC is also involved in the discredited and so-called “environmental justice” movement. It collaborates with several national green groups including Earthjustice, Anthropocene Alliance, and Buy-In Community Planning, which is actually an organization looking to have the residents bought out by companies like Chevron. Finally, CCC has been around since 2013 agitating against local industrial facilities.

Tabuchi mentioned none of this background in her video. As it turns out, her story attempting to blame Trump’s actions with respect to Venezuela was just a news hook for promoting a baseless, stale green agenda.

Steve Milloy is a biostatistician and lawyer. He posts on X at @JunkScience

Gavin Newsom's Hobson's Choice

By Andy Caldwell

The very liberal *Washington Post* had this to say in a recent editorial:

“Environmental Protection Agency Administrator **Lee Zeldin** announced the largest deregulatory action in U.S. history. It's about time.

“Congress passed the Clean Air Act in 1963 to regulate local pollution around the country, and regulators did that for decades. Then, in 2009, the EPA decided it would treat greenhouse gases like other pollutants, despite their damage being global rather than local.

“That declaration, called the “endangerment finding,” has been used by bureaucrats ever since to dramatically expand the federal government's power over cars. Now, the EPA will rescind it.

“The U.S. share of global greenhouse gas emissions has been trending downward since the end of World War II, and the 2009 policy change didn't meaningfully alter its trajectory. Despite the obsession with gas-powered vehicles, light and medium-duty cars and trucks combined to generate just 1.8 percent global greenhouse gas emissions in 2022.

“These emissions continue to rise because the atmosphere does not care which country the gases come from. The EPA has no power over China and India, which are increasing their emissions even as they talk a big game at climate conferences.

“In 2022, the Supreme Court ruled that bureaucrats couldn't make new rules of ‘vast economic and political significance’ without Congress directly giving away its power.

“More than 20 years ago, the EPA admitted that the Clean Air Act did not directly give them this power, and the estimated \$1 trillion cost is undeniably significant.”

Two Key Takeaways

The endangerment finding cost our economy \$1 trillion in higher costs to industry, car makers, and, of course, consumers, while accomplishing absolutely nothing. And that \$1 trillion estimate doesn't come close to calculating all the costs, including the loss of jobs in the coal, oil, and gas industries, among others.

And never, in the history of mankind, did we consider carbon dioxide a pollutant.

In fact, every living thing on our planet would die without it.

Of course, all the above is lost on the political and activist classes here in CA, including Santa Barbara County.

Santa Barbara County has spent millions on its “Climate Action” plan, including the installation of solar panels, electric vehicles, charging stations, and soon to come: a battery storage energy system behind the county admin building in Santa Barbara at the corner of Anacapa and Anapamu Streets.

And what do they have to show for their efforts to lower emissions in the county?

Well, I witnessed the shortest briefing ever on that very subject a few weeks ago. That is because the news wasn't just bad, it was downright catastrophic for those who believe we have little to no time to save our planet.

Specifically, a report to county supervisors on the lack of progress to reduce emissions during the study period of 2018-2023 demonstrated that this entire program was a colossal waste of time, energy, and money.

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“Experts” Are Destroying Local Government

By Frank Vernuccio, Jr.

The trend of placing discredited ideology above practical governance is deeply disturbing. The occupants of many state houses and city halls have placed their concepts of intellectual goals over the needs of their constituents.

This is most clearly seen in the rise of hard-left oriented candidates to leadership positions. They have taken a magic mushroom journey to a never-never land where keeping the streets safe, the garbage collected, and producing students who can read and do math has been replaced by a devotion to an elitist concept that has universally failed wherever it has been implemented. The collapse of the USSR, the bankruptcy of oil rich Venezuela, the contrast between East and West Germany and North and South Korea all appear to have been ignored.

How did American local politics descend to this situation? Part of the answer is the alteration in who has moved to the forefront. Rather than local residents or hard-nosed veterans of local services, so-called experts whose experience lies more in academia than in the more relevant fields of law enforcement, sanitation, and other mundane areas have increasingly taken over.

The New York Post Editorial Board recently provided a salient example. “[Supreme Court] Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson thinks ‘nonpartisan experts’ should be controlling key parts of the federal government while the president and other ‘people who don’t know anything’ sit on the sidelines letting ‘PhD.s’ make the important decisions.” While Brown was remarking about Washington, the same perspective pervades state and local government as well.

Practicality is not on the agenda.

What would ever compel anyone to support district attorneys and state attorneys generals who placed the interests of criminals above the protection and rights of their victims? If your frame of reference is not protecting the citizenry but payback for ancient misdeeds, then current crimes are not relevant.

Was there any thought process behind the veritable *jihad* against affordable, clean-burning gas power and equally affordable nonpolluting nuclear power? Betsey Mc Caughey writes that “Your electricity bill reveals a stark political divide: Red-state residents pay less, while blue states gouge their citizens and businesses with exorbitant electric rates. But even worse are the bald-faced lies of



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blue-state politicians who defend the gouging. Instead of admitting that expensive electricity is a choice they’re deliberately making — your budget be damned — they constantly claim wind and solar power are ‘affordable’ and ‘reliable.’”

What is the logic behind inviting in vast numbers of dependent, needy individuals into a jurisdiction, and then preventing them from leaving by declaring a “Sanctuary” city/state? If the expert is bored by local concerns, he will turn his attention to other matters, ignoring the inconvenient fact that his salary is paid by people who need their local concerns addressed.

Socialists know that Promising “free stuff” will gain votes during a campaign. However, any governor, mayor, or official promising it must be aware that the subsequent need to jack up tax rates will zero that out in short order, to the detriment of the locals who voted for them.

Traffic issues are salient examples. The goal of sharply reducing automobile use, a keystone of the leftist devotion to an extremist view of climate change, has led to a variety of irrational policies. New York City has sought to impose fees and other strategies aimed at reducing the use of private vehicles. Unfortunately for commuters, there has been no provision of adequate alternative means of travel. Indicative of the mostly youthful voters who support socialist policies, the alternatives that have been emplaced are geared towards that age group. Bikes, scooters, and so forth have been advocated, a solution only adequate for a microscopically small minority.

The “experts,” unfortunately, have no expertise in the areas they have placed in charge of!

Frank V. Vernuccio, Jr., J.D., editor-in-chief, New York Analysis of Policy & Government and, co-host of the popular WVOX weekly radio show, “The Vernuccio/Novak Report”

Here's What Gavin Newsom Doesn't Want You To Know About Him

By *Thomes G. Del Beccaro*

“Gavin Newsom is running for President. You can expect him to declare for the presidency by December of this year.

He already has a book coming: “Young Man in a Hurry: A Memoir of Discovery.”

At age 58, that might seem like false advertising.

The book purports to be a tell-all — coming clean, as it were, clearing the deck before opposition researchers (Democrat and Republican) can dig up dirt on their own.

But there's one thing Newsom doesn't want you to know about: his dismal record as governor.

Yes, California is among the wealthiest states. It's also among the poorest.

The Public Policy Institute of California noted that “in 2023, 31.1% of Californians were either at or near poverty.” California is also worst in homelessness, and in unemployment.

Worse yet, according to the U.S. News and World Report, California ranks 50th in opportunity among the states. California also ranks 50th in that all-important presidential election category of “affordability.”

All that despite California arguably being the most blessed piece of real estate on earth.

So, what's an ambitious politician without a good record to do?

Knowing he won't be able to sell the nation's voters on his record as governor, Newsom now wants voters to buy a tale of rags-to-riches.

Like many of his spin jobs, however, it's a tall tale, tailor-made for a White House run, but at a far remove from reality.

As California Post recently noted, Newsom's “signature aesthetic originates from a desperate attempt to reinvent himself.”

Newsom maintains he invented his debonair persona in response to a difficult high school experience with bullies.

His memoir is an attempt to give his past a makeover — this time, to cover up failures that are all his own.

Unfortunately for Newsom, we live in the digital age — and nothing disappears.

For example, Newsom claims he had a poor upbringing.

But in 1991, Newsom made his first appearance in a photo in San Francisco Chronicle, posing with Bill Getty, from the billionaire oil family. The article was entitled “Children of the Rich.”

Importantly, that picture is from the same time frame — high school — that Newsom claims was so rough for him.

However bad it may have been for Newsom, it certainly wasn't bad for very long.

After all, it was Newsom's Getty connection that allowed the future governor to enter the wine business that built his personal fortune.

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Howard Jarvis
Taxpayers Association
established in 1978

Democrats Move To Make Colorado The First State To Legalize Prostitution. What Could Go Wrong?

By Tyler O'Neil

Colorado Democrats have filed a bill that could make it the first state to decriminalize prostitution, and critics warn that the bill would make the Centennial State the “Wild West” for purchasing sex and lead to an increase in human trafficking.

“We have a billion-dollar budget shortfall here in Colorado, and so there’s a lot of talk about budget and affordability and cost of living,” Jarvis Caldwell, the Republican minority leader in the state House of Representatives, told The Daily Signal in an interview Wednesday.

“This isn’t the Republicans’ idea of making things more affordable, by making it easier to sell yourself for sex,” he quipped.

While some rural areas have legalized prostitution in Nevada, the entire state has not done so. Similarly, Maine decriminalized the selling of sex, but not the buying.

Caldwell noted that Colorado had the 10th highest rate of human trafficking in the United States (both in the raw number of cases and as a per capita rate) in 2023, according to the Colorado-based Common Sense Institute. He also cited a 2012 study from the London School of Economics, finding that foreign countries that legalized or decriminalized prostitution had higher rates of human trafficking.

Caldwell argued that legalization involves setting “rules and guidelines” to regulate a practice, while a “full-on decriminalization,” like this bill offers, “just makes it really the Wild West.”

“It’s a no-holds-barred, no one has to worry about it

whatsoever, which is obviously going to drive up demand on the buyer side, and ... if you don’t have enough ‘sex workers’ for the demand side, that’s where you get your human trafficking increase,” Caldwell said.

Decriminalizing Prostitution

The bill, SB26-097, requires the statewide decriminalization of “commercial sexual activity among consenting adults.” It decriminalizes both the selling and the purchasing of sex statewide and preempts cities and localities from criminalizing the world’s oldest profession.

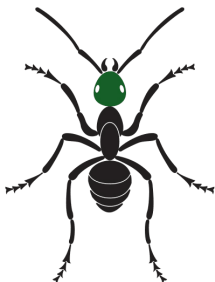
The bill repeals state laws imposing criminal penalties for prostitution, soliciting for prostitution, patronizing a prostitute, and a prostitute displaying herself in public. It preserves two criminal penalties: those for using intimidation or menacing to convince someone to become a prostitute and for pimping.

The American Civil Liberties Union has called for the decriminalization of prostitution, which it calls “sex work,” claiming that criminalizing prostitution makes it harder for prostitutes to access health care and other services and “feeds an out-of-control mass incarceration system.”

The Daily Signal reached out to the bill’s Democrat sponsors in the Senate—Nick Hinrichsen and Lisa Cutter—and the House—Lorena Garcia and Rebekah Stewart—for comment, and they did not respond by publication time.

Concern for the Children

(Continued on page 12)



O'Connor
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“Serving Southern CA since 1952”

Democrats Move To Make Colorado The First State To Legalize Prostitution. What Could Go Wrong? *Cont.*

(Continued from page 11)

Erin Lee, the co-founder and executive director of Protect Kids Colorado, agreed with Caldwell's concerns.

Lee sued her daughter's Fort Collins school for allegedly violating her parental rights by encouraging her daughter to transition behind her back.

"I've been working really hard to fight child sex trafficking because my girl got put on the conveyor belt of gender trafficking and then it opened my eyes to how many child victims there are in this state," Lee told The Daily Signal in an interview Wednesday.

The bill would decriminalize "holding a place of prostitution and window displays, so talk about normalizing this practice on Main Street for children," she said. "It just becomes a normal facet of life for children walking down Main Street to see a place of prostitution, Amsterdam-style." (Amsterdam, the capital city of the Netherlands, is known for its red-light district.)

"Given OnlyFans culture—these kids are already being brought up to think that it's normal to sell yourself and everything is highly sexualized for teenagers—I believe it's a step on the run towards pedophilia," Lee warned.

Macy Petty, a legislative strategist with Concerned Women for America, told The Daily Signal that Colorado legislators seek to "normalize the buying and selling of humans." She warned that the legislation "places prostituted women in dangerous situations, increases the risk of violence and exploitation, and reduces women to commodities for sexual purchase."

Colorado a 'Testing Ground' for Radical Bills

Caldwell, the minority leader, noted that Garcia and Stewart previously sponsored HB25-1312, a bill that would have removed kids from parents' custody if the parents refused to honor the children's transgender identities. While the bill ultimately passed, Democrats substantially amended it following national outrage.

Chase Davis, lead pastor at The Well Church in Boulder and leader of the Christ Over Colorado movement, told The Daily Signal that the Centennial State has "become their testing ground for bills like this."

Davis recalled the HB25-1312 debate last year, in

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which Colorado Democrats compared concerned parents who opposed transgender ideology with the Ku Klux Klan.

Davis warned that many Colorado Democrats "just want to punish Christians." He recalled the saga of Jack Phillips, the Colorado Christian baker who faced discrimination claims when he refused to craft a custom cake to celebrate a same-sex wedding.

"Last year, they compared anyone who doesn't believe in radical gender ideology as equivalent to the KKK," he noted. "They have no interest in partnering with evangelicals—they have nothing but contempt for them."

When asked if he would describe the bill as groundbreaking, Davis said, "It is groundbreaking only in the sense it's going to open portals to hell ... letting out demons in our state."

Tyler O'Neil is senior editor at The Daily Signal and the author of two books: "Making Hate Pay: The Corruption of the Southern Poverty Law Center," and "The Woketopus: The Dark Money Cabal Manipulating the Federal Government."

Here's What Gavin Newsom Doesn't Want You To Know About Him *Cont.*

(Continued from page 10)

Newsom was just 25 years old at the time. At such a young age, Newsom became wealthy in an industry that caters to elite tastes.

Feeling sorry for him yet? Don't.

As the left-of-center Sacramento Bee reported in 2017, "His thirtieth birthday party, given by the Gettys, was Great Gatsby-themed, down to the flappers and Charlestons." (The title of the article: "This millionaire might be California's next governor. How Gavin Newsom got connected.")

There's more.

According to the Bee, "a Getty trust paid Gavin Newsom for investment advice, and Gordon and Ann Getty provided gifts and loans for his home, according to reports and disclosures. They paid about \$233,000 toward his first wedding reception."

From Getty, to power broker Willie Brown (who appointed Newsom to a vacant supervisor's seat in San Francisco), to political mentor Governor Jerry Brown, to former Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (distantly related through marriage), Newsom has strolled through life down a gilded brick road.

Don't take my word for it. Consider this title of an op-ed written in 2018, when Newsom was running for governor, despite his total failure on homelessness as San Francisco's mayor.

Marcos Breton — again, from the Bee — wrote an article titled: "The privileged candidate: Why do we let Gavin Newsom get away with this?"

Breton warned that "it may take future social scien-

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Here’s What Gavin Newsom Doesn’t Want You To Know About Him *Cont.*

(Continued from page 13)

tists to explain why current California voters were so willing to give this guy a pass on all the things we know about him.”

And that was *before* he was governor. That was before his infamous dinner at the French Laundry in 2020, where he defied his own coronavirus policies. It was before the “behested payments” to his favored projects, including his wife’s charity.

Newsom has always escaped accountability. The question is why.

Breton called it “privilege”:

“The 50-year-old lieutenant governor and former mayor of San Francisco is the living embodiment of privilege, and people seem to be OK with that. He has white male privilege. Class privilege. Wealth privilege. The privilege of good looks. All creates a Teflon exterior, protecting Newsom’s horrendous lapses of judgment and character, excusing his questionable background.”

Given all that, it would be a terrible lapse in judgment for voters to buy Newsom’s claims of a difficult childhood, or to fall for his pleas for empathy.

Instead, ask about what he doesn’t want you to know.

Tom Del Beccaro is an author, speaker, and the former chairman of the California Republican Party.

Gavin Newsom’s Hobson’s Choice *Cont.*

(Continued from page 8)

The Truth of the Matter

“Staff and consultants have prepared a 2023 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory to track progress toward achieving 50% reduction by 2030 (below 2018 levels). Overall, community wide emissions in 2023 were 1% higher than they were in 2018.”

In other words, zero, zilch, nada progress. In fact, we are going in the opposite direction; emissions increased!

Meanwhile, CA has now lost more than 20% of its gasoline refinery capacity. Expect prices to explode at the pump. Yet, again, however, the rules, regs, and fines, that caused refiners to leave CA at great cost to them (Valero gladly lost \$1 billion to get out as fast as they could) will accomplish nothing for the environment as we begin to import gasoline from half-way around the world (South Korea and India).

The war on oil will now prove to be a war on consumers. The political and activist class couldn’t be happier however, as they have always sought this type of financial leverage on consumers to force them into electric vehicles, which of course they won’t be able to afford either.

Andy Caldwell, Executive Director, COLAB



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Engineered Addiction To A Psychological Narcotic *Cont.*

(Continued from page 6)

social media alone, as other problems arise with gaming, streaming videos, and the like. Witness the 11-year-old child, who, just a week ago was accused of murdering his adoptive father for taking away his Nintendo Switch and being told to go to sleep.

As reported by CNN, Meta and YouTube in the Los Angeles case, are accused of intentionally designing the addictive features that hooked a now 20-year-old woman, **Kaley**, as a child and harmed her mental health. Kaley began using YouTube at the age of six and Instagram at age nine. At one time, she was spending more than 16 hours on the platform at age 16. The addictive features, she claims, led her to develop anxiety, body dysmorphia, and suicidal thoughts; she also experienced bullying and sextortion on Instagram.

The lawsuit is first of more than 1,500 similar lawsuits to go to trial across America. One person in the hearing room clutched a picture of her late 15-year-old son who died after attempting the “choking challenge” he learned about on YouTube.

The CNN report goes on to say that Meta is also standing trial in New Mexico in a case accusing the company of creating a breeding ground for sexual

predators and exposing children to sexually explicit material.

Unfortunately, what this all boils down to is something that the great **A.W. Tozer** warned about, in 1955 no less:

“The Great God Entertainment is ardently worshiped by many, for there are millions who cannot live without amusement. Life without some form of entertainment, for them, is simply intolerable. They look forward to the blessed relief afforded by professional entertainers and other forms of *psychological narcotics*, as a dope addict looks to his daily shun of heroin.

“No one with common human feeling will object to the simple pleasures of life, nor to such harmless forms of entertainment as may help to relax the nerves and refresh the mind exhausted by toil. Such things, if used with discretion, may be a blessing along the way. However, the all-out devotion to entertainment as a major activity for which and by which men live is definitely something else.

“The abuse of a harmless thing is the essence of sin. The growth of the amusement phase of human life, to such fantastic proportions, is a portent, a threat to the souls of modern men. It has been built into a multi-million-dollar racket, with greater power over human

(Continued on page 17)

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Engineered Addiction To A Psychological Narcotic *Cont.*

(Continued from page 16)

minds and human character than any other educational influence on Earth. And the ominous thing is that its power is almost exclusively evil, rotting the inner life, crowding out eternal thoughts which would fill the souls of men, if they were but worthy to entertain them.

“The whole thing has grown into a veritable religion which holds its devotees with a strange fascination, and a religion, incidentally, against which it is now dangerous to speak. For centuries, the Church stood solidly against every form of worldly entertainment, recognizing it for what it was, a device for wasting time, a refuge from the disturbing voice of conscience, a scheme to divert attention from moral accountability.”

Time will tell if parents, educators, and legislators will finally determine that engineered addiction is not entertainment.

Andy Caldwell, Executive Director, COLAB


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California's One-Party Rule Could End With A Steve Hilton Win *Cont.*

(Continued from page 5)

scandal, here are some notes on the textbook case of Sacramento prioritizing politics over public safety.

Federal audits have revealed that California's DMV illegally issued more than 17,000 non-domiciled CDLs to foreign drivers, whose legal status did not match their license expiration dates.

These were no minor oversights. The state government put unqualified, oftentimes unvetted drivers in the front seats of 18-wheelers and school buses. The fallout? Deadly crashes, including tragedies in and outside of California.

When the Trump administration's Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy demanded fixes, California officials dragged their feet. This cost the state \$160 million in withheld federal highway funds.

It was not mere incompetence on their part. It was an arrogant insistence on a leftist political agenda. Rules were bent in favor of illegal immigrant drivers, who in many cases were insufficiently screened and lacking in proper instruction, which seriously jeopardized public safety.

Hilton's solution is to enforce California law, revoke illegally issued licenses, and place valid and competent workers behind the commercial wheel.

If elected governor, Hilton is intent on restoring accountability at the DMV, prioritizing legal workers, and ensuring that roads and highways are kept safe.

After eight years of unchecked one-party Democrat rule, the median price of a home is about \$1 million, arrest rates have plummeted, violent crime has risen

precipitously, reading and math scores of public school students have dropped, the state's budget has experienced record deficits,

the cost of living has spiked, the population has declined, and tent cities have continued to line the streets, despite billions having been spent on homelessness.

Hilton additionally plans to enforce laws against shoplifting and open drug markets, empower parents with school choice and charter options, cap hidden housing fees, slash anti-housing regulations so that the American Dream can once again be realized, and deliver abundant energy and water minus the routine blackouts.

His persona is appealing, an outsider with executive experience who is not just another career politician.

Can he end the one-party stranglehold and restore luster to the once-Golden State?

Anything is possible here on the Left Coast.

James Hirszen, J.D., M.A. in Media Psychology, is a New York Times best-selling author, international business attorney, news analyst, cultural commentator, and social media scholar

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Gov. Newsom Facing Calls To Resign Over Release Of 'Monster' Convicted Serial Child Abuser *Cont.*

(Continued from page 3)

hearing. So, serial child molesters, serial rapists, serial murders who are over 50 years old get a parole hearing after only 20 years in custody, because they are ostensibly "elderly."

Democrats knew exactly what they were doing.

Sen. Brian Jones sought to correct this egregious law with SB 445, which would have eliminated the loophole allowing violent sex offenders, who reach their 50th birthday while in prison, from automatically being eligible for early release from prison, had it been passed. But SB 445 "landed flat on its face," according to Sen. Jones, when Democrats in the California Legislature killed it.

"Violent sex offense victims, and the families of victims, should not have to wonder if their attacker will suddenly get out of prison long before they finish their sentence," Senator Jones said when he introduced SB 445. Right now the law is rigged and forces the Board of Parole Hearings to justify why the violent sex offender shouldn't get out of prison early. This is backwards and wrong. Law-abiding Californians, not violent criminals, should be protected by the law.

How did this even happen? What precipitated these evil bills?

- Proposition 47 (2014) downgraded many felonies to misdemeanors.
- Proposition 57 was passed in 2016 enabled early release of "non-violent" crimes, and sex offenses were reclassified under Prop 57.
- Assembly Bill 109, Gov. Jerry Brown's signature 2011 "prison realignment" scheme, shifted detain-

ees from state prisons to local jails, overwhelming county jails.

Proposition 57 reduced prison sentences and reclassified violent crimes as "non-violent." These new laws eroded the Three Strikes law, and have been a disaster for public safety, taking away the tools courts need to rehabilitate drug offenders, opening the door for rampant retail theft, and reclassifying violent crimes and sex crimes as "non-violent."

And remember, State Senator Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco), who is now running for Congress, authored SB 145, which Gov. Newsom signed into law, to protect Sex Offenders who have homosexual sex with minors.

How can this bill be legal when California's age of consent is still 18?

As the Globe explained, SB 145 in effect allows a 24 year old to have sex with a 14 year old, relaxing the penalties for having "non-forcible sodomy, oral copulation, and sexual penetration with a minor."

The offenders would not have to automatically register as sex offenders if the offenders are within 10 years of age of the minor.

Sen. Wiener is the same Senator who holds an annual Halloween Pumpkin Carving Event for children with Celebrity Drag Queen Judges. I wonder how that will play with anyone outside of San Francisco?

Katy Grimes, the Editor in Chief of the California Globe, is a long-time Investigative Journalist covering the California State Capitol, the co-author of California's War Against Donald Trump: Who Wins? Who Loses? and a contributor to "Taxifornia 2016."



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