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In my 35 years of serving as a county government watchdog, I have seen the Gaviota coast and prime ag lands throughout the county preserved at all cost by county supervisors, even when it didn't make sense. The California Coastal Act and the Williamson Act (which serves to preserve the viability of prime ag lands) both technically permit development benefiting coastal dependent industry and agriculture. However, the county has denied common sense projects in both these areas because they consider the same sacrosanct due to their no growth agenda outside of existing urban areas.

However, we could surely see both the Gaviota coast and prime lands sacrificed to the gods of green energy by local high priests masquerading as County supervisors. I have teamed up with former county planning commissioner **Roy Reed** to share the details of the most current horrible example of a solution in search of a problem.

As Californians find themselves inundated in layer upon layer of green energy initiatives, the state finds itself awash in an embarrassment of riches – simply put, during daylight hours when untold acres of solar electricity generation hits peak production the state must pay its neighbors to absorb that excess power only to find itself caught short during evening hours when demand peaks. Without safe and accessible means of storing generated solar electricity there is no way to match peak output with peak demand.

Meeting peak evening electricity demand often requires supplementation by fossil-fuel-fired "peaker plants" to generate adequate power. In a more sensible state there would be adequate capacity for pumped hydroelectric power, such as in PG&E's Big Creek or Los Angeles DWP's Castaic Power Plant where water, pumps, and gravity are used to store energy without pollution.

Unfortunately California hasn't built any new pumped hydro facilities in decades leaving the state with but one power storage option – battery farms, along with all their potential hazards and concerns. Add to that excess power storage puzzle, the distribution question: can solar facilities be built conveniently close to the power distribution grid, or do they require miles of expensive transmission lines? That is the perplexing situation much of the state now faces.

A Utility Grade Solar Ordinance

Santa Barbara County, undaunted by those facts and under the direction of its green-leaning Supervisors **Laura Capps**, **Joan Hartmann**, and their obedient minion, **Roy Lee**, has, nonetheless, leapt into the fray, and has directed Plan-

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Steve Hilton Will Stop The ‘Bullshit’ Train In Its Tracks... ‘If Only They Had Laid Any...’

By Katy Grimes

The privately owned Brightline train in Florida is actually up and running, completed in 2023, costing \$6 billion

“HERE is the monument to 16 years of failed one party rule. \$200 billion over budget, 30 years late – this is not a ‘bullet train’, it’s a bullshit train,” says gubernatorial candidate Steve Hilton. “As governor I will stop it in its tracks. If only they had laid any...”

If only they had laid any tracks... let that sink in. No operational high-speed tracks laid on the corridor yet – 18 years later.

California’s High-Speed Rail boondoggle is now estimated to cost taxpayers \$231 billion, up from its original \$33.5 billion price tag in 2008 when voters passed Proposition 1A.

The 2008 ballot promise was that this sexy new train was supposed to whisk us from San Francisco to Los Angeles in 2.5 hours in 2020, for only \$33 billion.

Now, as Hilton reports, the latest scheme is that the train will take us from San Francisco to Merced on the regular train tracks, then from Merced to Bakersfield on high speed rail (whenever they finish it), then from Bakersfield to LA in a bus, which will take 2.5 hours, which will now be finished by 2030 for \$231 billion.

Governor Gavin Newsom claims that “This is the only High Speed Rail of its kind anywhere in the United States of America.”

He’s right about that. The Brightline train in Florida is actually up and running, completed in 2023, traveling from Miami to Orlando, with extensions, with top speeds of 125 mph on dedicated segments. It’s privately operated, successful in ridership, and often called “higher-speed rail” rather than true HSR. There are train stations in Miami, Aventura, Fort Lauderdale, Boca Raton, West Palm Beach, and Orlando at the Orlando International Airport. It takes 3.5 hours Miami to Orlando, and 2 hours West Palm Beach to Orlando.

The total cost for the full Miami to Orlando train system: Approximately \$6 billion (including infrastructure, stations, maintenance facilities, track upgrades, grade crossing safety improvements, and rolling stock). This was privately financed (with some public support like tax-exempt bonds and station contributions, according to CNBC.

California’s train to nowhere has received \$23 billion

in combined state + federal funding commitments through late 2024 (mostly state bonds from Prop 1A, cap-and-trade, and earlier federal grants), but actual expenditures lag behind due to ongoing construction, according to the *HSRA 2025 Supplemental Project Update Report*.

Much of the spending has gone to the Initial Operating Segment (Merced–Bakersfield) in the Central Valley, where civil construction is advanced (e.g. 80 miles of guideway ready for track-laying as of 2026), plus environmental work, right-of-way acquisition, and blended corridor upgrades.

But there is no operational train yet, 18 years later and more than \$23 BILLION spent. That’s \$23,000,000,000 – nine zeros, and nothing to show for it.

“Our country has never seen a fiscal disaster of this magnitude,” California Rep. Kevin Kiley recently said on X.

Well, to be fair, Gov. Gavin Newsom has blown more than **\$37 billion** on homelessness since 2019, according to the California Legislative Analyst’s Office 2025-2026 budget overview.

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America's Transition From Pilgrims To Pirates

By *Andy Caldwell*

I am doing a three-part series in recognition of our nation's 250th Anniversary. These three articles are, in my opinion, some of the most important information I have sought to convey in my 35 years as a journalist. I hope you will consider them carefully.

An Orgy of "Self"

Whereas our nation's motto is still "In God We Trust," in reality, we have fallen away from that truth. Our nation has become nearly entirely secularized as humanism (having a human-centered world view), narcissism (being self-centered), hedonism (living for the pleasure of self), nihilism (the rejection of moral and religious principles), and materialism (the value of material possessions over spiritual values) have wrought devastation by way of an orgy of self which has waged war against the spirit and soul of America.

Future Forebodings

There are two great works written nearly a century ago that speak to the underpinnings of Western Civilization that make for a stable and prosperous society. First, the British anthropologist from Oxford, **J.D. Unwin**, studied some 86 societies and civilizations in his book "Sex and Culture." Unwin determined that society and culture either flourished or collapsed by way of sexual mores that served to either promote or destroy the social, familial, moral, and rational foundations of civilization, respectively. That is, when chastity, life-long monogamy, belief in God, and rational thinking disappeared from society, within three generations the culture collapsed.

Next, Harvard Sociologist **Carle Zimmerman's** "Family and Civilization" concluded that the monogamous nuclear family construct alone is the cornerstone of advanced civilizations. Zimmerman listed several signs of societal collapse that have always followed people divorcing, foregoing marriage in the first place, and child rearing altogether, along with numerous forms of debauchery, all of which indicated that as the nuclear family disintegrated, the civilization collapsed.

Flippant Folly and Worthless Living

Let us now consider the British Empire, the source of our lineage and a predictor of our fate, which declined shortly after World War I, having missed similar warnings. British pastor **John Stuart Holden** wrote in his book "The Confidence of Faith," during World War I, that British society "is marked by flippant folly and



vain, empty, and worthless living." Because Britain's national mission in the world (starting with the family) "was to resist evil, protect the weak, and to establish righteousness, that mission could not be accomplished until Britain's soul was recovered. Nothing but God's indwelling control can ensure unquenched hope, maintain unflinching inspiration, inspire undimmed faith, and create unsullied holiness."

Ditto for America!

Avoiding the Coming Catastrophe

I have likened all this to sailing through life with a broken compass. We no longer understand our calling, nor do we accept our responsibilities, including self-control, required to fulfill our destiny. In the "Pirates of the Caribbean" movies, Captain Jack Sparrow possesses what could be considered the modern-day compass; it does not point to true north or to a just cause, instead it points to what Jack wants most. That may work for a pirate's life, but it spells disaster for the rest of society.

This reminds me of a piece I wrote, "When Prophets Visited Harvard." **Alexander Solzhenitsyn** and **Charlton Heston** respectively warned America about the coming catastrophe to our society and culture that came by way of forgetting God and with the commensurate duties to God and neighbor, along with the ensuing culture war which served to prevent us from separating truth from falsehood and right from wrong. Unless we turn this ship around and remember what has been forgotten and agree with Solzhenitsyn's plea to "live not by lies," our impending destination will be far off from that of our pilgrim and puritan forefathers.

Andy Caldwell, Executive Director, COLAB

Congress, White House Act To Shore Up America's Position In Critical Minerals

By Bonner Cohen, Ph. D.

In its tense geopolitical rivalry with the People's Republic of China, the United States has been working at distinct, self-imposed disadvantage. Despite favorable geology and a resurgent industrial base, it is far behind the PRC when it comes to the extraction and processing of critical minerals.

Case in point: the Iron Range in northeastern Minnesota. The area is home to the world's largest untapped deposits of copper and nickel, along with substantial reserves of cobalt. Yet these resources – with their wide array of commercial and military applications – are off-limits to American industry.

The riches are housed in what geologists call the Duluth Complex beneath the Superior National Forest near the federally designated Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. In 2023, the Biden administration placed a 20-year moratorium on mining in 225,500 acres in the Superior National Forest, effectively locking up the resources, to the delight of the hardened men in Beijing.

China is a global leader in the processing and refining of nickel, copper, and cobalt. What it doesn't mine domestically, it gets from mines in controls abroad, in places like South America and Central Africa. Its ever-tightening grip on the global supply chain for these and other critical minerals, such as rare earths, is part of Beijing's larger strategy of supplanting the U.S. as the world's dominant power.

But a ray of sunshine broke through on April 16, when the Senate – by a vote of 50-49 – lifted the moratorium. The move came after the House – by a 214-208 vote – had approved nixing the Biden moratorium earlier in the year. Congress's action was made possible by the Congressional Review Act (CRA), which allows regulations implemented late in the previous administration to be overturned by a simple majority vote in both chambers. It also prohibits a future administration from reimposing the same regulation once it has been rescinded by the CRA. Thus, with President Trump's expected signature on the legislation, the moratorium will be gone.

The importance of the minerals stored in the Iron Range cannot be understated.

Nickel is used to produce stainless steel by enhancing resistance to corrosion. Nickel alloys are essential in aerospace and defense industries due to

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their exceptional strength and resistance to high temperatures. It is also a key component in electronics and batteries, where it improves storage capacity.

Copper is the third-most used metal globally, where it is found in home appliances, transportation equipment, electronic products, electrical grids, building construction materials, among other applications.

Cobalt is used in passenger and military aerospace high-performance jet engines, gas turbines, in the production of hard alloys for tools and cutting instruments, and in the manufacture of catalysts for petroleum refining and chemical processes.

The vote was good news for Twin Metals Minnesota, a subsidiary of Chilean mining company Antofagasta, which now will push ahead with the project. But the company still faces formidable hurdles, including litigation by environmental groups and a daunting permitting process that includes obtaining permits from the not exactly Trump-friendly State of Minnesota. The company is braced for a permitting process that could take years.

In the United States, "it takes 80% longer to permit projects than elsewhere in the world," Charles Crain, managing vice president for policy at the National Manufacturers Association, said at a Capitol Hill press conference earlier this year.

(Continued on page 18)

How The American Family Met Its Demise

By Andy Caldwell

I last wrote a piece sequencing America's transition from a nation of faith-seeking, family-oriented pilgrims to self-seeking, nihilistic pirates. This transition has happened in other societies, and it has always been marked via the demise of the nuclear family construct by way of divorce, foregoing marriage in the first place, and childlessness, as observed by the renowned British anthropologist, **J.D. Unwin**, in his study of some 86 societies and civilizations. The transition is also marked by a loss of faith in, and duty to, God, along with the loss of rational thinking skills.

Many times, this transition has occurred because of relative success in the world that caused societies and cultures to drift away from their moorings and suffer shipwreck. Suffice it to say, what people refer to today as progress is really a renewed form of cultural suicide. Regarding America, this all began in the 1960s.

In this piece, we will view events and values through a lens primarily focused on women, highlighting the impact on intact families and the nuclear family structure that once served to create stability and prosperity in our culture in every meaning of the word.

Next week, we will take a look through a lens focused on men.

1) The pill and abortion served to "liberate" women from pregnancy initially, and childbearing ultimately. The fact that the women's liberation movement considered the *de facto* antithesis of maternal instinct liberating, speaks volumes. Meanwhile, it also deleteriously affected child-rearing. Because "a woman's place" was no longer "in the home," the purpose and value of home life was upended. The raising of children by way of nurturing and the inculcation of values became subordinated to the opposite value of leaving the home to find "meaning" in work.

2) The Equal Pay Act of 1963 gave women in the workplace the right to equal pay for equal work. Whereas, that sounds fair on the surface, the previous thinking was that men were heads of households and they needed higher pay because they had to support their wives and families at home. The subsequent lowering of pay for men now forced mothers out of the home into the workplace while displacing their extremely vulnerable children into preschools, which offer all the nurture of an orphanage, and after that, modern society created the phenomenon of latchkey kids.



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3) The welfare system created in the 1960s financially rewarded mothers to have no man in the home even if they were married. What is worse, having a baby out of wedlock created a revenue stream for unemployed single women.

4) The women's liberation movement not only encouraged women to forego child rearing, it also encouraged single women to begin families on their own and to pursue equality with men in the marketplace as a source of fulfillment. Thereby, stay-at-home wives and mothers began to be looked down upon as old-fashioned and oppressed.

5) The combination of the pill, abortion and the women's liberation movement coincided with the free sex movement and shacking up. Sexuality triumphed over self-control and chastity. Per Unwin, when any society forsook pre-nuptial chastity, a form of human entropy evolved, that is, a gradual dissent into disorder. Why was this so important? Because it opened a Pandora's box that served to weaken the bonds of life-long absolute monogamy and fidelity.

6) No-fault divorce laws made divorce easy and quick, and courts favored mothers for primary custody, thereby leaving a significant number of children in a fatherless home, which is the leading indicator of nearly every modern social ill in our society today, including criminal behavior, suicide, homelessness, and drug and alcohol abuse.

7) God was declared dead; God-given maternal instinct was put on life support, and the results are in.

Andy Caldwell, Executive Director, COLAB

It's Time For America To Turn The Page On Its Nuclear Fears

By Linnea Lueken

A disappointing study came out in the U.K., polling Britons on what they think about nuclear energy. In general, UK voters believe nuclear power is good for the national energy mix but are undecided on whether there should be more of it. The interesting part of the polling comes when results are broken down by gender.

Only 30% of women support the use of nuclear power, compared to 74% of men. Most shocking, 69% of women said they *do not* believe nuclear has low carbon dioxide emissions, compared to 32% of men.

Carbon dioxide emissions do not make my list of concerns when it comes to energy generation, but it is a good demonstration of how little people — especially women in the U.K. apparently— know about nuclear energy. It should go without saying that nuclear power produces no carbon dioxide emissions.

I have little confidence that the public of the United States is much more informed.

Today, nuclear makes up around 18% of U.S. electricity, and 9% of primary energy consumption.

But nuclear has hardly seen any new construction, just three new reactors over the course of decades. Part of that is driven by public fear. Close calls like that at 3 Mile Island and catastrophes like Fukushima and, more pointedly, Chernobyl gave many concern.

That concern was concentrated and sustained by Hollywood disaster movies and an active campaign by anti-nuke activists expanding their opposition to atomic weapons. But that fear is misplaced. Advanced nuclear reactors make events like Chernobyl a thing of the past.

Some are also worried about nuclear waste disposal, but the image of barrels of oozing, bubbling green sludge is just not the reality. Spent nuclear fuel is stored with ample radiation shielding. By far the best place to store nuclear fuel is deep underground, like this site in New Mexico. It has been monitored continuously for water, soil and air contamination since 1999, and nothing has ever been detected. Nor has nuclear fuel ever disappeared or been stolen from storage.

We also should utilize nuclear waste recycling, which reduces the amount of end-waste that needs storage.



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You can thank President Jimmy Carter for America not taking advantage of that technology, even though countries like France make successful use of it.

Nuclear power can be expensive, but a huge chunk of that expense has historically come from regulation — the average nuclear plant pays around \$60 million in regulatory costs, fees and liabilities every year. This is changing under the Trump administration, thankfully. In 2025, President Donald Trump signed executive orders cutting regulations hindering licensing and construction of new nuclear.

The cost of building and operating a nuclear power plant over its lifetime is less than wind, solar photovoltaic and solar thermal plants because of the significant added costs of power that is weather dependent. Plus, nuclear generation costs have already come down 40 percent since 2012, and that's without massive subsidies on the scale that wind and solar receive.

We're going to build more datacenters. Data from the internet and businesses needs to be processed and stored *somewhere*, and there is more of it every day.

(Continued on page 18)

The Fall Of Man In American Culture

By Andy Caldwell

I have been tracing America's transition from a world of faithful pilgrims to nihilistic pirates, that is, discussing that which has caused cultures and civilizations to either flourish or meet their demise throughout modern history. It was British Anthropologist **J.D. Unwin** who studied the fall of some 86 cultures and civilizations throughout history, only to find that the longevity, health, and well-being of culture was largely determined by their attitudes, customs, and mores having to do with sexuality, faith, and marriage.

Another brilliant scholar, **Carle Zimmerman**, a Harvard sociologist, studied the role of family in the rise and fall of civilization, determining that the one thing that advanced civilizations had in common was the nuclear family construct. That is, tribal and clan-type family constructs never amounted to much and, on the opposite end, when men and women became so narcissistic and hedonistic that nuclear marriages fell by the wayside, the culture soon met its demise.

I previously focused on the unraveling of the home and family by way of events and values that began in the 1960s with a focus on women and mothers. Now, let's turn our attention to men.

1) The feminist movement was a two-edged sword. As it sought to liberate women, it did so at the expense of men while it attacked so-called toxic masculinity. Along the way, it eviscerated the vital role of men as fathers, heads of households, providers, and protectors. Specifically, society at large, encouraged men to get in touch with their "feminine side" as they abandoned their traditional roles in family and society in deference to the ability of women to supplant them as equals.

2) The attack on men, became a war on boys. Even though nearly all scientific literature indicates that boys and girls mature at different rates and are stimulated by different things, mothers in the home and teachers in schools began to push back against the things that little boys are made of, including boundless rambunctious energy. In the 1960s, with the dispensing of drugs like Ritalin, hyperactive young boys were diagnosed as having attention deficit disorders at twice the rate of girls and were deleteriously drugged accordingly.

3) Traditionally, one key God-given role of women in society was to domesticate men by way of withholding sex apart from marriage, and sometimes, in marriage. The free sex movement and the commensurate loss



of the fear of God, made possible by way of the pill and abortion, served to throw chastity out the window, and men became somewhat free to roam before, during, and after marriage, *sans* any personal moral constraints. Now at full throttle, the hook-up culture has replaced courtship, and porn addiction among men is epidemic.

4) Subsequent to number 3, no-fault divorce facilitated awarding primary custody to mothers which means the fathers ended up spending more time with their second family rather than their first. The destructive and disruptive impact of this resulted in successive generations of boys who were raised without their natural fathers in the home to guide, mentor, and discipline them, that is, if a man was present at all. This has proved a disaster for society as nearly every social ill including drug and alcohol abuse, criminality, homelessness, and the like can be traced to boys who were essentially abandoned by their fathers.

5) There has been a massive loss of 7.5 million jobs among men, such as those found in manufacturing, logging, mining, and the steel industry. These sectors virtually vanished, including by way of environmental regulations, thereby destroying head of household jobs for men without a college education. The resultant wage loss put pressure on spouses to find work at the expense of family life.

Jordan Peterson said it best, "If you think tough men are dangerous, wait until you see what weak men are capable of."

Andy Caldwell, Executive Director, COLAB

Iran's Proxy War Has Crossed Oceans And Is Now Knocking On America's Door

By Ammon Blair

The Al-Saadi case shows how Tehran's proxies exploit cartel corridors, criminal networks, and migration pipelines

Published May 26, 2026 5:00am EDT By Ammon Blair Fox News

Americans still debate Iran through an outdated lens. We speak of war as something that starts with bombs, troop deployments, or congressional declarations. Yet Iran has waged asymmetric war against the United States and the West since 1979 — through terrorism, proxy forces, illicit finance, ideological movements, cyber operations, criminal partnerships, and gray-zone tactics deliberately kept below the threshold of conventional conflict.

The real danger is not merely Iran's capabilities. It is our refusal to recognize the nature of the fight.

Many Americans view conflict with Iran as something happening "over there" — in Gaza, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, the Red Sea, or the Strait of Hormuz. In reality, Iran's infrastructure has embedded itself much closer to home: across Latin America, inside cartel corridors, through illicit financial networks, migration pipelines, and the operational seams inside the United States itself.

This did not happen by accident. It was built deliberately over decades via proxies, criminal convergence, ideological networks, covert finance, and tradecraft designed to obscure attribution. In fact, just two days after I testified before Congress warning about the convergence between cartel infrastructure, Iranian-backed proxies, and gray-zone warfare, the Department of Justice unsealed charges against an Iraqi national tied to exactly the kind of hybrid threat architecture I described.

Prosecutors charged Mohammad Baqer Saad Dawood Al-Saadi, a senior commander in Kata'ib Hizballah (KH)—an Iranian-backed Iraqi militia tied to the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) — with

directing attacks on Jewish, Israeli, and American targets across Europe and North America, including a plot against a Manhattan synagogue.

The most revealing aspect of the case was not simply the attacks themselves. It was the operational model behind them.

Al-Saadi allegedly sought to coordinate through Mexican cartel-linked smuggling networks and criminal facilitators across the Western Hemisphere. The attacks were branded under a new front group, Harakat Ashab al-Yamin al-Islamiya (HAYI), designed to appear independent while advancing KH, Hezbollah, and IRGC goals.

This layered structure provides operational security, plausible deniability, and strategic distance from the violence itself — hallmarks of Iranian tradecraft. Iran has refined this operational model for decades. In 1983, Iranian cleric and intelligence operative Mohsen Rabbani arrived in Argentina under commercial and religious cover tied to halal meat certification. He became imam of a Buenos Aires mosque while serving as Iran's cultural attaché. Using mosques, cultural centers, charities, front companies, and diaspora networks, he helped build Iranian and Hezbollah infrastructure across Latin America. The Tri-Border Area (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay) became a hub for Hezbollah financiers, smugglers, traffickers, and money launderers operating alongside criminal networks. This ecosystem enabled the 1992 Israeli Embassy bombing in Buenos Aires and the 1994 AMIA bombing that killed 85 people. Argentine prosecutor Alberto Nisman's investigation found Iran directed the attacks while Hezbollah executed them through layered proxies — mirroring today's tactics.

These are not isolated terrorism cases. They reflect a resilient asymmetric architecture built to operate below the threshold that would trigger conventional war. Iran does not see threats as separate silos — Houthis in the Red Sea, militias in Iraq and Syria, Hezbollah in

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The IEA's Energy Fantasy Meets The Iran War

By Trisha Curtis

Energy pundits are claiming that the Iran war, like COVID, has fundamentally changed the energy paradigm. IEA's head, Fatih Birol, crystallized this view in a recent Guardian interview, declaring that the genie cannot go back in the bottle, oil markets are fundamentally transformed, "the vase is broken," and "nobody regrets renewables." He also advised the UK against bringing on additional oil, insisting that more exploration will not solve the current crisis.

The IEA, as in the COVID crisis, seems to be projecting rather than analyzing. The U.S. is experiencing higher prices at the pump but no shortages, and natural gas prices are actually falling. America is the most resilient economy in the face of energy volatility precisely because we are the world's largest oil and gas producer, with nearly 14 mbd of oil production, 135 billion cubic feet per day of natural gas production and 18 mbd of refinery capacity. Yes, U.S. consumers feel global oil prices, but more money stays here, and more money is earned here as exports rise. That is energy dominance.

If the UK boosted its own oil and gas production, it would strengthen domestic energy security, lower natural gas prices, and directly reduce the cost of living for British families.

Advising the UK not to drill is the antithesis of what the IEA was created to do. Renewables, contrary to Birol's commentary, are regrettable. UK power generation is in outright decline; it is chock-full of costly wind and solar (the latter particularly absurd in a country famous for rain), while natural gas and coal generation have collapsed. British electricity bills are among the highest in the world. London needs only look across the Channel to Germany, an industrial economy in disarray, with vast solar buildouts, vanishing coal power, and electricity prices near \$0.45 per

kWh.

Energy is more than turning the lights on; a nation must be able to build and make things to defend itself, and that requires energy-dense fuels, dispatchable power, and cheap, reliable process heat.

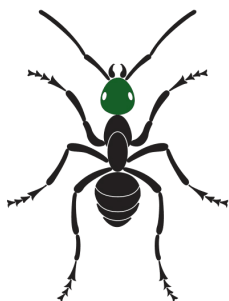
Remember: during COVID, Birol and the IEA publicly led "*the calls to put clean energy at the heart of the economic response*" (World Energy Outlook October 2020). This was not analysis or real intelligence; this was a political preference. The IEA followed this "position" with Net Zero 2050 projections demanding a 25 mbd cut to oil demand by 2030, and joined many others, including a few major oil companies, in claiming oil, gas, and coal had all conveniently peaked in 2019.

Someone should also remind the IEA that global coal consumption is at an all-time high, led by China, which burned 92 of the world's 165 exajoules in 2024. China generates over 10,000 TWh of electricity, more than 5,800 TWh of it from coal alone, a figure exceeding the entire power generation of any other nation.

Traditional fuels should be embraced, not apologized for and rejected. Global oil and gas consumption keeps rising because these fuels are energy dense. The world consumes more than 100 mbd of oil, mostly for transportation, and no amount of wind and solar can substitute for it.

The UK and Europe are energy-starved by choice, not by geology. Norway shares the same offshore oilfields as Britain and chooses to develop them, preserving its security and prosperity. Europe is rich in natural resources. Refusing to produce your own oil and gas while hoping wind and solar fill the gap is not a strategy - it is an economic death sentence.

(Continued on page 14)



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Newsom's Budget Houdini Act: All Smoke, Mirrors, And Wishful Thinking

By Drew Allen

Gavin Newsom has once again pulled off a dazzling feat of financial gymnastics.

In his May 14 revised budget for fiscal year 2026-27, California's governor stood tall and declared victory: no deficit this year, no deficit next year, and the dreaded structural deficit magically erased through July 2028.

With general fund spending at \$246.6 billion and a total state budget of \$349.4 billion, Newsom insists he's protecting health care, education, and all the vital services while somehow blending progressive dreams with rock-solid fiscal discipline.

Such bold claims deserve a proper reality check.

In January, the administration was staring at a \$2.9 billion deficit for 2026-27. Then—presto!—the May revision waved a wand and added \$16.5 billion in new general fund revenue projections over three years. Personal income taxes delivered \$13.6 billion of that windfall, thanks mostly to a juicy 2025 capital gains spike that poured an extra \$11.9 billion into the coffers through April. Spending got trimmed by \$1.8 billion from the original plan, and reserves are swelling to nearly \$30 billion, including \$15.1 billion tucked away in the rainy-day fund.

On paper, it looks downright impressive. But here's the catch: Newsom's triumphant declaration that the structural deficit is "solved" relies completely on the bet that this flood of volatile revenue—mostly from high-earner capital gains and tech billionaires' stock options—will keep gushing forever. That's not reform. That's optimistic crystal-ball gazing.

Imagine your neighbor gets one fat bonus check and immediately declares the family finances fixed for the next decade. They buy the shiny new truck, book the Disney cruise, and start eating out every night. When that bonus doesn't show up again, reality hits like a ton of bricks. California is running the exact same playbook. Capital gains can make up 25% of personal income tax revenue in boom years and only half that in lean ones. The nonpartisan Legislative Analyst's Office warns that a market dip or tech slowdown could wipe out tens of billions—possibly \$100 billion—in revenue.

Even with all the rosy assumptions, the office still sees ongoing deficits averaging about \$10 billion

a year after 2028—\$10.3 billion in 2028-29, and \$9.6 billion in 2029-30. Reserves will get drained, and debt will climb toward \$30 billion. The real problem—spending that races ahead of reliable revenue—was never fixed. It was covered up with this year's lucky money.

Newsom's magic act relies on three favorite tricks.

The first is aggressive revenue optimism. The budget assumes capital gains will stay red-hot with no real backup plan for a downturn. It's like planning your entire household budget around your teenager's summer job paying big bucks every month forever, then signing a fat mortgage on that hope.

The second is raiding reserves, deferrals, and borrowing. The plan pulls roughly \$20 billion from reserves and suspended deposits, adds \$4 billion in new borrowing, and creates a \$9.7 billion surplus holding account. Picture raiding your 401(k) and the kids' college fund, delaying the mortgage, and shuffling credit cards just to look solvent. It balances today but piles up expensive IOUs for tomorrow.

The third is modest spending "restraint" that's mostly theater. The \$1.8 billion cut includes some Medi-Cal tweaks, but overall spending stays huge with record school funding and about \$300 million to backfill Obamacare. It's like canceling Netflix while still hitting restaurants five nights a week, buying the new truck, and maxing out the credit cards—then bragging about your ironclad budget discipline.

Crime policies pile on even more budgetary headaches. Proposition 47 turned theft under \$950 and many drug cases into misdemeanors, creating a classic catch-and-release revolving door. Arrest them in the morning, release them by afternoon, and repeat tomorrow.

That drives up spending on police overtime, court backlogs, prosecutors, public defenders, probation officers, and local jails—tens to hundreds of millions extra every year. Stores get hammered by theft, raise prices, and sometimes cut hours or close, shrinking sales tax revenue.

Voters tried to fix some of it with Proposition 36 in 2024, but the changes are still rolling out unevenly

(Continued on page 14)

Democrats vs. America?

By Frank V. Vernuccio, Jr.

Author Dan Perkins appears on this week's Vernuccio-Novak Report/American Political Zone. His latest work, co-authored by Sheriff Richard Mack, is summarized by the authors here:

The Democrat Murder of America

Demagoguery in the First Degree

This book is co-authored by Dan Perkins and Sheriff Richard Mack, with editorial support. Although our professional backgrounds differ, we share a deep respect for the United States and are committed to protecting its principles of Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness for all. Our sole intention is to safeguard these freedoms for ourselves, our families, and our fellow citizens.

To achieve our goal, we believe it is necessary to identify the true sources of opposition. We will present evidence that the Democratic Party has promoted hostility and violence since its early years. Their stated aim is the dismantling of the nation and its replacement with a system that gives them greater power and control over citizens.

We are not saying that every member of the Democrat party is evil or is complicit in the secret agendas of the party. In fact, *we firmly believe that many people, perhaps even **most** people, have been sucked unknowingly into the Party's deceptions, and it is really for you that we write this.* We are also not saying that the Republican Party is above reproach, because they surely are not. BUT...

The Democrat party has used surrogates to do their dirty work of destroying property and taking the lives of many innocent people. They use crime to disrupt American society and do it for one reason only: They hate America and are driven to change it regardless of the cost in property, human life, and your freedoms. When one group of people is no longer useful to their objectives, they will toss them out like trash and find somebody else. We recently saw how over the 8 years of Obama and 4 years of Biden, they literally got away with murder and rape of Americans.

Over the last 20 years, we have seen how the Democrats have become more violent and will turn on a dime if somebody isn't giving them what they want. They have abused the power of the elected office to accomplish their own secret agendas and have mowed down anyone who got in the way. Look at how

Biden weaponized the many branches of the government against Trump to keep him from running for president again. And when that failed, they used two surrogate assassins, and now a third, to try and kill him. Yet despite all their efforts, Trump won a major victory with the support of Americans who love this country.

In this book, we will identify some individuals and institutions involved in trying to destroy America. We will provide details of their misdeeds, as far as we have been able to discern. If our anger at times comes through, so be it. This book is designed to tell the truth. We are not concerned about who might be upset by that. If a police investigation says either of us has accidentally fallen down an elevator shaft and landed on some bullets, you'll know why.

We know that many Democratic leaders and candidates will challenge the premises of this book because they will realize that the content is factual. We hope that as you read this book, you will learn new things and make new connections. We fully expect that some of what you read will make you angry. We hope you can channel that anger into action to bring about change in our country, and that you will join us in making America free again for all people.

We hope that, as you find this book valuable, you'll suggest it to your local, state, and national political committees for distribution to their membership. It's intended for concerned citizens of all political parties and the public. Please contact us for volume discount pricing.

This book may offend many of you. That may be necessary. We hope the truth herein will awaken all of you – Democrats, Republicans, and all Americans – to our awful and catastrophic situation: The utter destruction, even the intentional murder of America. We know and realize that it is not all of you, but the truth is, it's just far too many who want to destroy America. Our purpose is to expose the truth, reverse the trend, and stop the killing. We ourselves are both shocked and dismayed by what's happening in our nation, and we want to unite us all in saving our country. We honor the few who have stood against the onslaught of lies and dishonesty, such as Bill Maher and Senator Fetterman, who have become the voice of reason amid the treachery and treason of the liberal Democrat mob.

(Continued on page 12)

Democrats vs. America? *Cont.*

(Continued from page 11)

You may have heard the term ‘demagogue’ batted around. It’s an old term dating back to the Founders’ days and not used as much anymore. The definition may surprise you: A demagogue is a political leader who seeks support by appealing to the *desires* and *prejudices* of ordinary people rather than by using rational argument. Was there ever a time when that term was more applicable?

If you place one hundred red fire ants and one hundred large black ants into a jar, nothing happens at first. But if someone violently shakes that jar and dumps it onto the ground, the ants turn on each other until all lie dead. The red ants believe the black ants are the enemy, and the black ants believe the red ants are the enemy—when in truth, the real enemy is the one who shook the jar.

We believe America is now divided across many lines—liberal versus conservative, Black versus White, and others—because of deliberate, organized efforts to create societal polarization. We argue that powerful interests are behind this division and ask readers to consider who is responsible for “shaking the jar” and benefiting from the chaos.

Crime has long been a central issue and a weapon in American society and politics, shaping public opinion, influencing policy, and impacting the course of elections. As the United States approaches the 2026 mid-terms, the intersection of crime trends, public safety policy, and political strategy becomes especially significant. We want to put particular emphasis on how these issues intersect with the platforms and public personas of politicians running for office.

One purpose of this book is to help Republicans talk to Democratic and independent voters. The crime issue in America directly impacts all of us, regardless of party affiliation; It affects our families and our communities. As America is becoming a more violent and dissonant country, we all just want to be safe. But the truth is, leaders of the Democrat party are more interested in scoring political points than keeping you safe. They’ve abandoned common sense for virtue-signaling; they’ve decided that pandering to their activist base is more important than protecting law-abiding citizens. And all of us —immigrant and native-born alike— are paying the price.

Though she will reach her 250th year in 2026, America is not dying of old age. She is being intentionally and methodically murdered from within. Abraham Lincoln warned, “America will never be destroyed from the outside. If we falter and lose our freedoms, it will be because we destroyed ourselves.”

If We the People fail to recognize what is happening, the burial of our beloved nation will arrive sooner than we dare imagine. We must face the truth—however painful—and take bold yet peaceful steps to preserve our liberty.

“Are we disposed to be of the number of those who, having eyes, see not, and having ears, hear not the things which so nearly concern their temporal salvation?” Then came his resolve: “For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost, I am willing to know the whole truth; to know the worst, and to provide for it.”

~ Patrick Henry, 1775

(Continued on page 13)



Howard Jarvis
Taxpayers Association
— established in 1978 —

Democrats vs. America? *Cont.*

(Continued from page 12)

The evidence is unmistakable and deeply troubling: America’s liberals, championed by the Democrat Party, have demonstrated, time and again, that they do not care about corruption, they do not care about violence, they do not care about the truth, they do not care about the Constitution, they do not care about the exploding national debt, they do not care about government weaponization, they do not care about civil rights, they do not care about innocent citizens rotting in prison, and most importantly, they do not care about YOU.

What they do care about is protecting and incentivizing illegal immigration even as cartels, human traffickers, international terrorists, and national security threats exploit the chaos they have engineered. Their objective is simple and staggering: a monopoly on political power and permanent control over the American people, regardless of the cost or the devastation left behind. Even worse, the mainstream media paves the way for this leftist jar shaking.

The more Americans know the truth, the more secure each of us will be in our homes and cities. This book seeks to first expose the truth: to shine a light on the worst so that we may provide the remedy. As the Declaration of Independence proclaims, “Let facts be submitted to a candid world.” Let us finally and fearlessly confront who is shaking the jar—and to what end. We will take a hard look at who controls the ants, who owns the jar, and what their ultimate intentions truly are. This book confronts that question head-on and offers answers every American must understand, because our second objective is to show —clearly and unequivocally— that a peaceful and effective solution still exists. The American people still retain the lawful authority to reclaim their nation.

Understand this: Time is of the essence! We, the people, must rise in righteous indignation and save our country. We must unite in this Holy Cause of Liberty! May God be with us. Remember that it’s the Democrats who shook the jar.

Dan Perkins and Sheriff Richard Mack

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”

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Newsom's Budget Houdini Act: All Smoke, Mirrors, And Wishful Thinking *Cont.*

(Continued from page 10)

across counties. Many catch-and-release habits linger, so the budget stays stuck with unpredictable, expensive chaos.

In both cases—a catch-and-release revolving door and re-criminalizing of theft—the budget is strained. Taxpayers pay the price for soft-on-crime policies and hard-on-crime policies that lead to incarceration.

Homelessness efforts tell the same sad story. California poured more than \$24 billion into one-time programs, yet street encampments grew by tens of thousands. Now that money is sunsetting without solid replacements, meaning future budgets will have to cough up fresh cash for the same stubborn problem—robbing Peter to pay Paul while taxpayers foot the bill again.

Add in businesses fleeing to Texas and Florida, the nation's highest gas prices, electricity rates nearly double the national average (California sits at around 33-34 cents per kilowatt-hour), and summer blackouts tied to green energy mandates, and you see why the tax base keeps shrinking while costs keep climbing.

In the end, this isn't a structurally balanced budget; it's a "balanced on my watch, suckers" budget built on hopeful projections and clever accounting. Newsom gets the victory lap and a shiny legacy as he heads for the exit. Future governors and everyday Californians get the hangover: drained reserves, rising debt, and tough choices between higher taxes or slashed services.

When the next downturn hits, that beautiful fiscal illusion will vanish faster than one of Houdini's rabbits. Real responsibility means matching real spending to real, dependable revenue, not praying the stock market stays drunk forever, or that more billion-dollar businesses won't flee the state.

Drew Thomas Allen is a Conservative author, columnist, host of 'The Drew Allen Show' Podcast and author of "For Christ and Country: the Martyrdom of Charlie Kirk" and "Clinton Hoax, Obama Coup: The Declassified Story of the Trump–Russia Delusion."

The IEA's Energy Fantasy Meets the Iran War *Cont.*

(Continued from page 9)

Prognosticating in the fog of war is difficult, but energy analysts and the oil and gas industry owe the public the truth to build a more resilient traditional fuel supply chain. The Iran war did not appear out of the blue; markets were complacent for months while tens of thousands of Iranians were being executed.

Energy dynamics will shift because of this war, but not the way the IEA thinks. Shifts will occur in how oil is transported and in the diversification of producers, providers, and fuels. More pipelines will route around the Strait of Hormuz. More coal will be consumed in Asia because of its physical security. And U.S. LNG exports will climb as nations like India hedge away from single-source dependence on Qatar. The lesson is simple: cheap, reliable, and energy-dense fuels are the foundation of prosperity and national defense. Governments ignoring energy realities in favor of politicized green targets do not save the planet; they impoverish their people and weaken their nations.

Editor's Note: *For decades, former presidents have been all talk and no action. Now, Donald Trump is eliminating the threat from Iran once and for all.*

Trisha Curtis, CEO of PetroNerds and Chief Economist at The American Energy Institute

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Supreme Court Fist Pumps For The First Amendment *Cont.*

(Continued from page 1)

ning and Development to craft a Utility Grade Solar Ordinance for the County, which will expand a previous ordinance that limited utility grade solar to a 600-acre footprint in the Cuyama Valley. The new ordinance has just emerged from two Planning Commission hearings with a potential footprint of 16,000 acres doled out at 100 acres per project limited to one 100-acre plot per parcel of 1,000 acres or more, along with permission to build associated battery storage. If fully built out, those 160 projects could potentially produce double the County's current electricity consumption.

On its face, the plan appears workable, but the questions regarding distribution on the power grid remain, compounded by the fact that Santa Barbara County sits at the nexus of the state's two power providers: Southern California Edison in the south county, and PG&E in the north. Which brings us to the next question: how does the County get to its 16,000-acre goal when the southern half, linked to SCE, has little open land suitable for solar other than the Gaviota Coast?

So, is this turning out to be another south-county initiative for which the north county will bear the brunt? Will the disproportionate share of proposed solar be borne by the north county on prime ag lands, those with the best soil and water availability?

Despite assurances to the contrary, solar farms are rarely built on hillsides because of the limited sun exposure. Moreover, prime ag lands are closest to power substations, thereby reducing the cost of the projects, meaning the decision makers had better not overlook the very real fact that there are few power substations located near ag lands that are not immediately adjacent to urban areas.

Moreover, as we saw in Monterey County, battery energy storage system fires can create a toxic plume, endangering communities and contaminating ag lands. Furthermore, consider the required cost of \$500,000 to potentially \$5,000,000 per mile of transmission lines that would be required to move the power from a remote area to an existing substation.

(Continued on page 21)

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Iran's Proxy War Has Crossed Oceans And Is Now Knocking On America's Door *Cont.*

(Continued from page 8)

Latin America, or cartels at the U.S. border. Tehran views them as interconnected fronts in a multi-domain campaign that exploits globalization's infrastructure: smuggling routes, corruption networks, illicit finance, and governance gaps.

Hezbollah networks have long intersected with Latin American narcotics trafficking, sanctions evasion, and money laundering. DEA investigations, such as Project Cassandra, documented these ties. Recent U.S. Treasury and State Department sanctions targeted Iranian shadow banking systems, front companies, shipping networks, and a "shadow fleet" used to move illicit oil and finance proxies. These financial and logistical tools sustain the broader apparatus of proxy warfare and criminal convergence.

The same operational logic applies elsewhere. Houthis disrupt Red Sea shipping with Iranian backing and deniability. Iran pressures energy markets via the Strait of Hormuz through harassment and proxies. In the Western Hemisphere, Iranian influence overlaps with Venezuela's Cartel de los Soles, transnational drug pipelines, and anti-Western networks involving Russia and China.

Not every cartel operative works for Tehran, but hostile actors routinely exploit the same permissive corridors.

This creates a growing mismatch: adversaries wage persistent, sub-threshold irregular warfare through networks, erosion, and exploitation of open societies, while America still thinks in binaries of "war" versus

"peace," "foreign" versus "domestic," or "terrorism" versus "crime."

The southern border is no longer just an immigration or law-enforcement issue. It has become a strategic access point into the U.S. homeland, where transnational networks exploit gaps in ways resembling irregular warfare environments. Inside the country, this expands beyond crime into homeland defense and critical infrastructure concerns.

The Al-Saadi case is not simply another terrorism investigation. It is a warning. Iran's war against the West did not begin with any single operation, and it will not remain overseas simply because Americans refuse to recognize it. Proxy networks, criminal pipelines, migration corridors, maritime logistics, covert finance, and propaganda ecosystems continue adapting to extend reach while maintaining deniability.

Americans must reframe the debate. The threat is hybrid, networked, and already operating inside the strategic seams of the West.

Recognizing the conflict for what it is — a long-running asymmetric campaign already converging on the homeland — is the first step toward effective defense.

Ammon Blair is a senior fellow at the Texas Public Policy Foundation and lives in Austin, Texas. He specializes in border security and immigration policy and Texas issues, with over two decades of experience as a U.S. Border Patrol agent and U.S. Army officer.

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The COLAB Foundation is a public charity formed to procure funding for the Santa Barbara County Coalition of Labor, Agriculture and Business (COLAB) and other select non-profit entities to advance education and science, combat community deterioration and lessen the burden of government.

Of course, the donations to the COLAB Foundation can only be used to educate the public about the work that COLAB and others are doing in our community, but we have been educating people all along!

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Congress, White House Act To Shore Up America's Position In Critical Minerals *Cont.*

(Continued from page 4)

Two bills pending in Congress – the SPEED Act and the PERMIT Act – address permitting delays rooted in federal statutes. The SPEED Act codifies a recent Supreme Court ruling limiting the scope of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), clarifying that the law is purely procedural in nature. The PERMIT Act addresses permitting roadblocks in a section of the Clean Water Act, which allows states to block projects for reasons that have nothing to do with water quality. Similar permitting delays are contained within provisions of the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act.

But reaching a bipartisan legislative fix has stalled over whether streamlining the permitting process should include high-voltage transmission lines connecting wind farms and solar arrays in far-flung rural areas over hundreds of miles to more densely populated, power-hungry urban areas. Democrats favor the bow to green energy, Republicans do not.

“Transmission reform shouldn’t be a way to connect unreliable electricity sources to the grid at the expense of consumers or the reliability and the resilience of the grid,” note Daren Bakst and Paige Lambermont of the Competitive Enterprise Institute.

From mining for critical minerals to the construction of pipelines, roads, bridges, and tunnels, efforts to upgrade America’s infrastructure continue to be tied up in red tape. Until that changes, realizing the potential of Minnesota’s Iron Range will slide into a distant future.

Bonner R. Cohen is a senior fellow at the National Center for Public Policy Research, where he concentrates on energy, natural resources, and international relations. He also serves as a senior policy adviser with the Heartland Institute, senior policy analyst with the Committee for a Constructive Tomorrow, and as adjunct scholar at the Competitive Enterprise Institute.

It’s Time For America To Turn The Page On Its Nuclear Fears *Cont.*

(Continued from page 6)

With nuclear, particularly small modular reactors (SMR) and other emerging technology, the massive amount of stable energy those datacenters consume ideally could come from off-grid power producers. That should mean your local power bills won’t increase, and there won’t be extra strain on the grid.

Additionally, the land footprint of SMRs is far smaller than solar with battery storage. Siemens Energy estimates the land footprint of a 200-300 MW SMR is about 0.01 square kilometers, about 2.5 acres. The same installed capacity of solar without batteries can take as much as five to eight acres per MW. That is more than 2,000 acres at the high end, and it will not actually produce 300 MW because solar does not work at night. So, solar needs to be overbuilt, and backed up, which takes even more land.

Nuclear plants also last longer. Some nuclear plants have approval to operate up to 80 years. Meanwhile, solar panels have an expected service life of only 25 years and wind turbines much the same, though their mechanical parts generally have to be rebuilt after 10 to 15 years. Replacing them is an entirely new capital investment.

There is no need to be against investment in nuclear energy on environmental grounds, nor economic. There is no single magic bullet energy source, but alongside cheap natural gas and coal, nuclear investment is only going to benefit America over the long term.

Linnea Lueken (llueken@heartland.org) is a research fellow with the Arthur B. Robinson Center on Climate and Environmental Policy at The Heartland Institute. X:

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Steve Hilton Will Stop The ‘Bullshit’ Train In Its Tracks... ‘If Only They Had Laid Any...’ *Cont.*

(Continued from page 2)

Voters were deceived by the original High Speed Rail ballot summary and language in Proposition 1A from 2008, but the state’s lawmakers seem to find that fact inconvenient.

And, the entire project is lacking in private, public and debt funding to complete even the most minor operating segment – nearly 20 years later.

Making matters even worse, Assembly Bill 1608, by Assemblywoman Lori Wilson (D-Suisun City), “would rename and expand the powers of the High-Speed Rail Authority’s Inspector General while creating broad exemptions to withhold audit records, internal documents, and any information that could ‘reveal weaknesses’ in the project.”

“Instead of stopping the massive fraud happening in state programs at your expense, CA Democrats are covering it all up by passing AB 1608 to allow the High Speed Rail project to hide evidence of fraud from the public! I confronted them on the Assembly Floor with the receipts!” Assemblyman Carl DeMaio (R-San Diego) said in the California Assembly last week:

Even as horrific hospice and Medi-Cal fraud is uncovered in California, Democrats in the California Legislature are trying to cover up fraudulent High Speed Rail spending with AB 1608.

AB 1608 bill analysis by the Assembly Transportation Committee committee verifies this:


“Authorizes the IG to hold a report it produces, or a portion of that report, confidential for a period of time if it determines that the report, or a portion of the report would describe or otherwise reveal weaknesses, including those involving information security, physical security, fraud detection controls, or pending litigation that would pose a substantial and articulable risk to the project or to state operations if publicly disclosed.”

Democrats are traveling down a dangerous track. In 2019, thousands of pages of public records were removed from the California High Speed Rail Authority website. Members of the media and anyone

(Continued on page 20)


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Steve Hilton Will Stop The ‘Bullshit’ Train In Its Tracks... ‘If Only They Had Laid Any...’ *Cont.*

(Continued from page 19)

seeking information about rail authority spending are only able to access previously posted documents like detailed information on every project change order, board meeting materials and historical business plans, through a time consuming and unreliable California Public Records Act request according to the Rail Authority website.

The California State Auditor uncovered rail employees, contractors and consultants with wild conflicts of interest. Then-auditor Elaine Howle allowed the title of the audit to speak for itself: “California High-Speed Rail Authority: Its Flawed Decision Making and Poor Contract Management Have Contributed to Billions in Cost Overruns and Delays in the System’s Construction.”

The warnings about this epic swindle of taxpayers have been there since its inception, but this has been done with the complicity of the California Legislature and Governors Jerry Brown and Gavin Newsom.

Senator Tony Strickland (R-Huntington Beach) recently posted to X :

The nonpartisan LAO points out that the CHSRA has arbitrarily changed the scope of the program and costs, ignores specific requirements that the California State Legisla-

ture has imposed on the project, assumes significant changes in state law, and once again, dramatically changes cost estimates. Even if the Authority accounts for these requirements, it still lacks a clear funding plan to complete the project. The San Francisco–Los Angeles line is now estimated at \$231 billion! Overall, the Authority has produced a completely unrealistic business plan. This is why we need to pull the plug on this wasteful spending project because it will go down as the worst public project in world history. Even Lou Thompson, former chair of the CHSRA Peer Review Group, agreed & wrote a critical letter to legislative leadership, stating that this project has reached a dead end.

“When I am governor, I am going to stop this thing in its tracks. OH WAIT. I can’t because they haven’t laid any tracks,” Hilton said. “But I’m going to stop it anyway.”

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." A California native and Navy mom, Katy lives in Sacramento, CA.

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Election Reflections And Recommendations *Cont.*

(Continued from page 15)

This would unquestionably tax the viability of any such project.

Virtue Signaling at its Finest

In the end, this initiative produces far more questions than answers. While the BOS seems hellbent on eliminating gas and oil production (nearly one acre of solar panels are required to produce the same energy as one barrel of oil), it has embarked on a path that will undoubtedly result in the loss of many thousands of acres of productive agricultural lands in pursuit of a goal which may never be realized. And for what? Completely, totally, and redundantly excessive solar capacity? When our state is drowning in the same?

Please do recall that solar only produces four hours per day and battery energy storage systems can only save what has been produced. We're going to sacrifice 16,000 acres of land for four hours of energy? And what about the fact that our region is subject to catastrophic wildfires that would render the solar panels and the requisite battery energy storage system toxic waste?

Mark this down as just another dumb idea in green virtue signaling.

Andy Caldwell, Executive Director, COLAB

Roy Reed, 7th generation SB County landowner, former President of Santa Barbara County Taxpayers Association and current Chair of Santa Barbara County Planning Commission .



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