

# PRIORITY FOCUS



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Issue #17-2008**

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## BUDGET ACTION DAY SCHEDULED FOR WEDNESDAY, MAY 21

The League is holding a special one day event on May 21, following the release of the May Budget Revise, to bring city officials to Sacramento to lobby their legislators and administration officials on the impact of the budget on cities. The session is designed so city officials can come just for the day. *For more, see Page 2.*



## REGISTER NOW FOR MAYORS AND COUNCIL MEMBERS EXECUTIVE FORUM

Monday, May 12 is the deadline to register for the League's 2008 Mayors and Council Members Executive Forum and Advanced Leadership Workshops. Slated for Wednesday, June 4 – Saturday, June 6, the annual event will be held at the Resort at Squaw Creek in Squaw Valley. *For more, see Page 2.*



## ABSENTEE BALLOTS TO BE MAILED NEXT MONDAY Advise Your Family and Friends Prior to Voting

Ready or not.....here they come. Beginning Monday, May 5, county election officials are expected to mail ballots to permanent absentee voters. Even though Election Day is June 3, voting by mail could start as early as next week. Experts project that up to **60 percent** of citizens could vote in June by mail! *For more, see Page 2.*

With California's fiscal crisis, the FY 2008-09 budget negotiations are predicted to be extremely difficult. The final signed budget will likely include a combination of significant cuts and revenue-generating solutions, and the May Revise (scheduled to be released May 15) will set the tone for the coming weeks of negotiations. California cities need to join forces to respond to any relevant May Revise proposals to ensure cities' needs are heard and understood in the Capitol.

### **Schedule of Events**

#### **10 – 11:30 a.m., May Revise Budget Briefing**

Sheraton Grand Hotel Sacramento, Bataglieri Room  
1230 J Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

#### **11:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m., Time for Scheduling Lunch and Lobbying Appointments with Legislators**

#### **3:30 – 4:30 p.m., Post-Lobbying Debrief** *(Stop by the League offices for light snacks and refreshments)*

League of California Cities  
1400 K Street, 4th floor conference room  
Sacramento, CA 95814

### **R.S.V.P.**

Please R.S.V.P to League Staff Meghan McKelvey by Wednesday, May 14 at [mmckelvey@cacities.org](mailto:mmckelvey@cacities.org) or (916) 658-8253.

### **District Budget Meetings**

City officials who are unable to make the trip to Sacramento May 21, are encouraged to contact their League public affairs manager to schedule a district meeting with their legislator.

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### **'Executive Forum' Continued from Page 1...**

Created for mayors, mayor pro-tems, council members, city managers and assistant city managers, the three-day conference is designed to equip city leaders with the skills they need and offer practical workshops for planning ahead for the challenges their city is facing. Session topics include:

- Achieve Substantial Water Saving in Your City
- Strategies for Council-Manager Conflict Resolution
- Gang and Violence Protection
- Delivering Messages in the Media Interview
- Land Use and Climate Change

Advanced Leadership Workshops will be offered Friday, June 6 – Saturday, June 7. Participants may choose from one of three workshop tracks: economic development, meeting management or city finances. A separate fee is required for Advanced Leadership Workshops.

To register online, visit [www.cacities.org/events](http://www.cacities.org/events).

For more information, contact Brian Sanders, the League's education program director, at [bsanders@cacities.org](mailto:bsanders@cacities.org) or (916) 658-8238.

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### **'Absentee Voting ' Continued from Page 1...**

In addition to congressional and state legislative primaries, the only two statewide ballot measures are Propositions 98 and 99. The League opposes Prop. 98 because it will undermine

local land use regulations, water supply development projects, public works projects, environmental protection laws and affordable housing programs. In contrast, the League supports Prop. 99 because it protects single-family homes from eminent domain without the hidden provisions of Prop. 98.

Since early voting could start next week, city officials are urged to get information on these and other issues on the ballot in order to better advise their friends, family members and constituents.

For more information, see [www.cacities.org](http://www.cacities.org).

All communications by city officials should be on city officials' personal time, using personal equipment and email accounts.

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### **Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger Opposes Prop. 98**

On Friday, April 25, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger announced his opposition to Proposition 98, joining a growing bipartisan coalition of California officials and groups opposed to the measure. Prop. 98 purports to offer eminent domain reform but in reality would destroy renter protections and rent control, gut environmental protections and jeopardize the state's ability to rebuild aging infrastructure. One of the Governor's top priorities is water and Prop. 98 would threaten the adequate supply of clean, safe drinking water for future generations.

Also slated for the June 2008 ballot is Prop. 99, the Homeowners Protection Act. This measure offers true eminent domain reform, by prohibiting the government from using eminent domain to take a home to transfer to a private developer. Prop. 99 is supported by a broad coalition of homeowners, business, labor groups, cities, counties and environmentalists.

Along with Gov. Schwarzenegger's opposition to Prop. 98, other high level state and national officials and organizations have publicly opposed Prop. 98 and/or supported Prop. 99 including:

- U.S. Senator Diane Feinstein opposes Prop. 98 and supports Prop. 99
- State Treasurer Bill Lockyer opposes Prop. 98 and supports Prop. 99
- Former Gov. Pete Wilson opposes Prop. 98
- California Transportation Commission opposes Prop. 98
- Speaker of the House, U.S. Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-San Francisco) opposes Prop. 98 and supports Prop. 99
- U.S. Representative George Radanovich (R-Mariposa) opposes Prop. 98
- Assembly Member Patricia Wiggins (D-Santa Rosa) opposes Prop. 98 and supports Prop. 99

For more information about the two measures, visit [www.no98yes99.com](http://www.no98yes99.com).

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### **Support Letters Needed for Bill To Consolidate Office of Homeland Security and Office of Emergency Services**

The consolidation of the Office of Homeland Security (OHS) and the Office of Emergency Services (OES) into a single Department of Emergency Services and Homeland Security made positive progress this week as AB 38 (Nava) moved to the Senate Appropriations Committee.

The League supports AB 38 because it would streamline emergency and disaster response through a single state department, creating a more cohesive and responsive system.

The new department would be responsible for overseeing and coordinating emergency preparedness, response, recovery, and homeland security activities. These duties were previously split between OHS and OES, creating confusion and conflict for local agencies in times of urgency.

In September 2007, the League board approved a resolution by the League's Public Safety Policy Committee endorsing combining both departments into one. The Department of Emergency Services and Homeland Security will put a cohesive system in place to help local agencies respond to and manage disastrous events.

### **Take Action!**

City officials are urged to send a letter of support on AB 38 to the Senate Appropriations Committee as well as encourage their city to pass a resolution in support of the bill.

The League's support letter to the Senate Appropriations Committee is available online at [www.cacities.org/billsearch](http://www.cacities.org/billsearch). Plug in AB 38 to the bill search function to access the League's letter of support and a sample letter of support.

The League's supporting resolution from 2007 can be found online at [www.cacities.org/resolutions](http://www.cacities.org/resolutions).

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## **A Reminder on the Upcoming Digital TV Transition**

TV stations across the country will switch from analog to digital television (DTV) on Feb. 17, 2009. Before this federally mandated transition occurs, however, the public will need information about how to convert their televisions to the new format, and some may turn to their city for help. The following is a quick primer on the transition to better serve city residents.

### **What is Digital TV?**

DTV provides crystal clear pictures and higher quality sound as well as the capacity for more channels. Unlike analog signal, DTV transmits the sound and picture information as "data bits" similar to a computer. Stations will be able to broadcast multiple channels simultaneously with this new technology. This technology also offers other features such as enhanced closed captioning ability.

### **Switching to DTV**

According to the National Association of Broadcasters, approximately 1.99 million California households use a traditional antenna and will not continue to receive free television after the conversion date without taking one of three actions:

- **DTV Converter Boxes.** Consumers without cable who have a traditional analog TV will need to purchase a DTV converter box. This is an electronic device that connects to analog televisions and over-the-air antennas to convert the digital signal to analog. The cost is expected to be \$50-\$70.

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) will be issuing coupons for DTV converter boxes in early 2008. Each household can apply for two coupons. The coupons are valued at \$40 each and can be used towards the purchase of the DTV converter box. They must be redeemed within three months.

For more information about the coupon program please visit [www.ntia.doc.gov/dtvcoupon](http://www.ntia.doc.gov/dtvcoupon).

- **Digital TV sets.** TVs with a built-in digital tuner will be able to receive digital signals broadcast by stations. Consumers with these TVs will still get their free programming without paying a monthly fee.
- **Paid Service.** Consumers who subscribe to a cable, satellite or telephone company service provider will continue to be able to use their existing TV to receive local broadcast stations carried by their service.

NAB has set up a Web site with information for consumers at [www.dtvanswers.com](http://www.dtvanswers.com).

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## **Find a Bill, Legislators, Leg Committee, or Ask League Leg Staff**

Visit (and bookmark!) the League's [Legislative Resources](http://www.cacities.org/legresources) Web page ([www.cacities.org/legresources](http://www.cacities.org/legresources)). You'll find a roster and contact information for the League's legislative staff; the online Bill Search program, background materials on lobbying your legislators, and more.

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