

PRIORITY FOCUS



IN THIS ISSUE:

Sept. 14, 2007
Issue #35-2007

- Page 10: Caballero Honored as 'Legislator of the Year'
Governor Appoints Anti-Gang Director and Advisors, Releases \$2.8 Million to Fight Gang Violence
Page 11: League Joins Coalition Intervening on Prison Overcrowding Lawsuit
Page 12: ACWA Launches Public Information Campaign
Page 13: Have a Housing Success Story? Tell Us About It!
Find a Bill, Legislators, Leg Committee, or Ask League Leg Staff

ACA 8 FAILS TO GAIN THE NECESSARY TWO-THIRDS VOTE IN THE ASSEMBLY

On Tuesday, Sept. 11, Assembly Constitutional Amendment (ACA) 8, the eminent domain reform measure authored by Assembly Member Hector De La Torre (D-Southgate), failed to receive the two-thirds vote necessary in the Assembly in order to put it before the voters.

For more, see Page 2.



LEGISLATIVE SESSION WINDS DOWN: CITIES URGED TO CONTACT THE GOVERNOR TO SIGN/VETO BILLS

The following is a list of high priority bills for cities that have been sent to Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger. The League of California Cities is asking for either a sign or a veto on these bills. While the Governor has until Oct. 14 to sign or veto legislation, his decisions could happen at any time. Cities are encouraged to contact the Governor's office with sign or veto requests immediately. *For more, see Page 4.*



LEAGUE ANNUAL CONFERENCE WRAPS UP

The 109th League of California Cities Annual Conference was held last week in Sacramento. More than 2,000 city officials attended the conference and were briefed on key legislative issues affecting cities. *For more, see Page 7.*

De La Torre's office reported Wednesday that the final vote was 45 for and 31 against, falling short of the 54 votes needed for constitutional amendments.

Assembly Member De La Torre did an outstanding job reaching out to all legislators in an effort to make this a bipartisan bill. ACA 8 had been recently amended to include new protections against eminent domain for homes, small businesses, houses of worship and farmland, addressing concerns expressed by Republicans.

ACA 8 and its companion statutory measure AB 887 (De La Torre) are supported by Californians for Eminent Domain Reform (CEDR), a broad coalition of groups which includes local government, small business organizations, taxpayer groups, labor, environmental, community and ethnic organizations.

Following Tuesday's vote, coalition members, including the League, expressed disappointment in the outcome.

"ACA 8 was solid eminent domain reform, and we'd like to thank Assembly Member De La Torre for his efforts," said League Executive Director Chris McKenzie. "Our coalition has always preferred a legislative solution to solve this issue, and we worked very hard to achieve it. However, it is obvious that certain blocks of legislators don't agree this is a priority the voters expect them to address."

Future Eminent Domain Reform

CEDR will continue to work on efforts to address the critical need for responsible eminent domain reform.

"Our coalition will evaluate our options for going directly to the voters via the initiative process," McKenzie added. "We have been gathering signatures on our coalition measure, the 'Homeowners and Private Property Protection Act,' that would provide strong constitutional protections for homeowners against eminent domain reform. Our polling shows this measure is strongly supported by the voters, so we'll take a few days to consider our options."

Signatures are now being gathered for the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association-sponsored "California Property Owners and Farmland Protection Act" (CPOFPA). Much like last year's Prop.90, CPOFPA is a "trojan horse" with regulatory takings provisions that would harm local government's ability to protect neighborhoods and the environment.

CPOFPA is fatally flawed, threatening future water projects in the state because it contains provision that would prevent government from securing private land natural resource consumption.

If CPOFPA qualifies for the ballot, however, CEDR plans to make sure that Californians understand the ramifications of the measure which would also eliminate rent control ordinances that are vital for working families, seniors, veterans and others.

"We will be sure to educate the voters about these fatal flaws in the measure," McKenzie stressed. "We're confident that the voters will see through this phony reform and defeat it next June, as they did last year in defeating Prop. 90."

What's Next:

The League of California Cities will continue to issue updates on this issue through the League Web site (www.cacities.org) and future issues of *Priority Focus*.

Complete Californians for Eminent Domain Reform Coalition

Homeowner/Housing

- League of California Homeowners
- Coalition of Mobilehome Owners – California
- Golden State Manufactured Home-Owners League
- Mobilehome Residents Alliance of Nevada County
- Lincoln Place Tenants Association
- Santa Monica's for Renters' Rights
- Coalition for Economic Survival

Public Safety

- California Fire Chiefs Association

Ethnic/Community

- California Mexican-American Chamber of Commerce
- Los Angeles Metropolitan Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Southern California Black Chamber of Commerce
- San Mateo County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- San Joaquin Valley Black Chamber of Commerce
- (Long Beach) Regional Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Stanislaus

Taxpayer

- Marin United Taxpayers Association

Education

- Coalition for Adequate School Housing
- Small School Districts' Association

Labor

- California State Council of Laborers
- State Building & Construction Trades Council of California
- California Apollo Alliance

Cities/Counties and Special Districts

- League of California Cities
- California State Association of Counties
- California Special Districts Association
- California Contract Cities Association
- California Redevelopment Association
- Goleta Sanitary District

Senior

- California Alliance for Retired Americans

Small Business / Employers

- Small Business Action Committee
- California Small Business Association
- Small Business California
- California Business Properties Association

- California Downtown Association
- Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce
- Silicon Valley Leadership Group
- Valley Industry and Commerce Association (VICA)
- United Chambers of Commerce of the San Fernando Valley and Region
- Universal City-North Hollywood Chamber of Commerce
- Santa Rosa Chamber of Commerce
- South Gate Chamber of Commerce
- Torrance Area Chamber of Commerce

Public Interest/Consumer

- League of Women Voters of California
- Consumers Coalition of California

Conservation

- California League of Conservation Voters
- Natural Resources Defense Council
- Sierra Club California
- Steven and Michele Kirsch Foundation
- California State Parks Foundation
- Trust for Public Land
- American Planning Association, California Chapter
- California Oak Foundation
- Citizens for Responsible Growth
- Endangered Habitats League
- Planning and Conservation League
- California Council of Land Trusts
- Audubon California
- The Ocean Conservancy
- Environmental Defense
- California Park and Recreation Society
- Center for Biological Diversity
- Trout Unlimited

'Bills of Interest' Continued from Page 1...

You can find the League's sign or veto request letters and sample letters for cities, by looking up the bills at www.cacities.org/billsearch.

Land Use

AB 414 (Jones). VETO. Restricts how local agencies can count sites for housing designated on non-residential land and imposes these conditions for all local agencies regardless of size, circumstance, or performance.

AB 1542 (Evans). SIGN. Continues to allow local rent control ordinances to keep mobile homes at an affordable rate for those on fixed incomes.

AB 1358 (Leno). VETO. Mandates that local general plans accommodate for the "safe and convenient travel" for a variety of users, including pedestrians, cyclists, movers of commercial goods, children, seniors, and public transportation. Though a laudable goal, the question is

whether this bill creates a new legal standard upon which may invite interest groups to litigate specific elements of the general plan.

Economic Development

SB 103 (Cedillo). VETO. Requires local agencies to generate a hold a public hearing before granting any economic subsidy (include reduced revenues), post the information on the agency's Web site (if applicable), and then generate a report on all economic development subsidies that remain in effect every two years. The bill is also applicable to redevelopment agencies.

Infrastructure

SB 586 (Dutton). SIGN. This bill implements the \$100 million innovation fund authorized by Prop. 1C (the provisions of which requires a two-thirds approval by the Legislature). Appropriations include \$35 million for local housing trust funds, \$50 million for a land acquisition loan fund, \$10 million for innovative home ownership programs, and \$5 million for a pilot construction liability insurance reform program.

Flood Package

SB 5 (Machado). SIGN. This bill is a comprehensive planning proposal to improve development practices in flood plains. While it requires 200-year protection in the most vulnerable areas of the Central Valley it also provides relief in the form of "adequate progress" provisions that will allow cities and counties to continue to grow during the interim period until they reach the 200-year level of protection.

This bill is part of a package of flood bills (SB 5, AB 5, SB 17, SB 162) that are the result of extensive stakeholder negotiations and are supported by a coalition of cities, planners, business and environmental groups. AB 70 (Jones) is **not** part of this answer.

AB 5 (Wolk). SIGN. This bill is a technical cleanup vehicle to the package of flood bills (SB 5, SB 17, SB 162) that are the result of extensive stakeholder negotiations and are supported by a coalition of cities, planners, business and environmental groups.

AB 162 (Wolk). SIGN. This bill expands the requirements for flood management in city and county general plans.

SB 17 (Florez). SIGN. This bill reforms and renames the State Reclamation Board to improve proficiency, and requires development of State Plan of Flood Control for the Central Valley.

Flood Liability

AB 70 (Jones). VETO. This bill shifts millions of dollars in potential legal liability from the state to local governments in the event that state-maintained levees fail. It is extremely flawed policy to attempt to saddle local governments with liability for the failure of levees over which they have no control. This bill is not part of the consensus package of flood bills supported by the League and passed by the Legislature this year.

Transportation

AB 193/AB 196 (Committee on Budget). SIGN. The bills contain the League-sponsored cleanup language to SB 88 (Budget Committee) to clarify allocation and oversight for Prop. 1B local streets and roads funding. AB 196 is especially important to cities because it clarifies the split of the \$950 million for local streets and roads funding between cities and counties so cities receive \$550 million and counties receive \$400 million as per their budget request. This clarification is supported by both the League and the California State Association of Counties (CSAC).

AB 945 (Carter). SIGN. Requires the California Transportation Commission (CTC) to develop an assessment of the unfunded costs of programmed state projects and

federally earmarked projects in the state, as well as an assessment of available funding for transportation purposes and unmet transportation needs on a statewide basis.

CTC would be required to work with regional transportation planning agencies, California Transit Association, CSAC, and the League to develop the reports with the first report due by July 1, 2008.

SB 717 (Perata). SIGN. Continuously authorizes sales tax revenue derived from the sale of motor vehicle fuels to be transferred to the Transportation Investment Fund (TIF) beginning in FY 2008-07 (Prop. 42). It also maintains the current distribution formula of the tax revenues at 20 percent to the Public Transit Account (PTA), 40 percent to the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), and 40 percent to cities and counties (20 percent to cities and 20 percent to counties) for street and road purposes.

A permanent shift of sales tax on gasoline for transportation purposes and the agreed upon formula under Prop. 42 will ensure that cities and counties can preserve, maintain, and rehabilitate the local street and road system.

Labor Relations

AB 220 (Bass). VETO. Duplicates the Public Safety Officers Procedural Bill of Rights and permits firefighters to engage in special political activities and provide procedures and conditions for the investigation and interrogation of an employee that could lead to a punitive action.

AB 553 (Hernandez). VETO. The bill would authorize the Public Employees Relations Board to determine, under the Meyers Milius Brown Act, whether to seek from a court jurisdiction injunctive relief involving employee strikes, work stoppages, or lockouts.

SB 942 (Migden). VETO. Requires an employer to reinstate an employee to their pre-injury job within five working days upon release of the treating doctor or reimburse the worker for lost wages and work benefits.

Public Safety

AB 81 (Torrico). SIGN. Allows a local fire agency, upon approval of the appropriate governing board, to designate safe-surrender sites for accepting physical custody of a minor child seven days old or younger. It would also create greater awareness of options other than child abandonment and reduce the likelihood that public safety personnel will have to go through the experience of responding to a call to retrieve an abandoned baby.

AB 1291 (Mendoza). SIGN. Allows for court-ordered anti-gang classes for parents or guardians of minors involved with a first time gang-related offense. The anti-gang classes proposed in the measure would help increase parental and guardian understanding about the impact of their child's actions, and will also provide the tools and resources to help prevent future gang involvement.

SB 67 (Perata). SIGN. Provides law enforcement agencies with an additional tool to address "sideshow" activities and the safety concerns associated with these dangerous actions by enabling law enforcement to impound involved vehicles.

SB 839 (Calderon). SIGN. Provides for the Office of the State Fire Marshal to develop a model ordinance permitting local jurisdictions to adopt a streamlined enforcement and administrative fine procedure related to the possession of 25 pounds or less of dangerous fireworks. It also helps establish a funding source to offset the costs incurred by the safe collection and disposal of these fireworks by public safety agencies.

Revenue and Taxation

AB 1222 (Laird). SIGN. Implements a number of reforms to the procedures involving processing claims to establish the existence of a reimbursable state mandate, including

parameters and guidelines for mandate determination and procedures for development of statewide cost estimates.

AB 1260 (Caballero). SIGN. Provides helpful guidance to local government agencies on the process for handling the notice and protest requirements contained in Article XIII D (established by Prop. 218 of 1996) to address issues raised in the recent court decision *Bighorn-Desert View Water Agency v. Verjil and Kelly*.

AB 373 (Wolk). SIGN. Expands the authorized use of Mello-Roos districts to include lighting maintenance, street and road maintenance, and plowing and removal of snow; makes other clarifying and technical changes to address outdated code sections and cross-references.

AB 969 (Eng). SIGN. Improves the collection of use tax revenues owed to state and local government by consumers and businesses through clarifications made to state income tax return forms.

SB 38 (Battin). SIGN. Provides income and property tax relief to individuals, businesses and local governments that suffered losses resulting from the wildfires in Riverside County in October 2006.

AB 62 (Nava). SIGN. Provides income and property tax relief to individuals, businesses and local governments that suffered losses resulting from specific wildfires in Ventura, El Dorado, and Santa Barbara County during the past two years.

SB 114 (Florez/Hollingsworth). SIGN. Provides income and property tax relief to individuals, businesses and local governments that suffered losses resulting from the 2007 freeze.

Miscellaneous

AB 701 (De La Torre). SIGN. Increases city council member compensation in general law cities for the first time since 1984.

AB 1294 (Mullin). SIGN. Allows "ranked voting" as an election method in which voters rank the candidates for office in order of preference, and the ballots are counted in rounds.

'League Annual Conference' Continued from Page 1...

The conference's first general session, held on Wednesday, Sept. 5, featured keynote speaker Mark Sanborn and remarks from League President Maria Alegria and League Executive Director Chris McKenzie.

Alegria presided over the opening session and discussed the League's activities over the past year.

"The conference is an opportunity to witness the fruits of our labor and the successes we've had working together," she said. "Cities have taken the lead in shaping California's future and our advances have set the tone for the nation and the entire world."

League First Vice President Jim Madaffer announced the 2007 winners of the League's prestigious Helen Putnam Awards, given to cities that develop programs that significantly increase the level of service for their communities. A total of 35 cities were honored, including grand prize winners Santa Fe Springs, Elk Grove, San Rafael, Santa Clara, Dana Point, Santa Clarita, and Cathedral City.

Mark Sanborn, noted author of *The Fred Factor: How Passion in your Work and Life Can Turn the Ordinary into the Extraordinary*, remarked on the defining work city officials do during his keynote address.

"We talk about defining moments – graduations, marriage, birth of a child – those are commemorative moments," he said. "Right now, what you're doing, you do the important work. Those tasks are your defining moments."

Day Two

The Thursday, Sept. 6 general session, held at the Memorial Auditorium, featured keynote speaker Greg Nickels, mayor of Seattle; and California Attorney General Edmund G. Brown.

Attorney General Brown centered his comments on issues of climate change, remarking that cities can make a difference in the battle against pollution.

"I want to rally local officials on whatever ideas they have to reduce global warming," Brown said. "The collective strength of the League membership can make a difference."

Nickels spoke to the crowd about challenging U.S. mayors to meet the Kyoto Protocol emission reduction targets. So far, 667 mayors have signed on, representing 73 million Americans. This includes 102 California cities with 14.4 million residents.

"I think this [current emphasis on global warming] is an opportunity for the United States to recognize we have a common interest in preserving the environment ... and get beyond partisan bickering," Nickels said. "I salute California for leading the way."

Caballero Honored

Assembly Member Anna Caballero was honored during Thursday's general session with the League's 2007 "Legislator of the Year" award. Accepting the award, Caballero cited how important her experience as a local official has been in her first year as a member of the State Assembly, and as chair of the Assembly Committee on Local Government. For more on Caballero, see ["Caballero Honored as 'Legislator of the Year'"](#) on Page 10.

Day Three

At the closing general session on Friday, Sept. 7, the League announced the election of new officers to form the 2007-2008 executive committee of its board of directors.

San Diego City Council Member Jim Madaffer is now the League's president, assuming the post held for the past year by Pinole Mayor Maria Alegria. Sacramento Mayor Heather Fargo is first vice president, and Rolling Hills Estates Council Member Judy Mitchell joined the League's executive committee as second vice president.

The League's bylaws call for officers to serve one-year terms. Under the League bylaws, Alegria now becomes immediate past president of the League, and remains a member of the executive committee. Madaffer moved up to his current position after serving the past year as first vice president. Fargo has served the past year as second vice president.

"Pinole Mayor Maria Alegria has been an outstanding leader for the League of California Cities this year," said League Executive Director Chris McKenzie. "Her leadership and that of our entire executive committee, has been critical to our legislative efforts on infrastructure, eminent domain reform, climate change and affordable housing."

Post Recognized

A. Alan Post was a recipient of the League's Past Presidents' Lifetime Achievement Award at the general session. Post was honored for his 27 years as California's chief legislative analyst and is a founding director of the Public Policy Institute of California.

"Alan is respected by both sides of the aisle because he focused on the principle, not the politics," former League President Pat Eklund explained, when presenting Post with the award. "He resisted offers from governors to leave the legislative analyst's office for other positions because

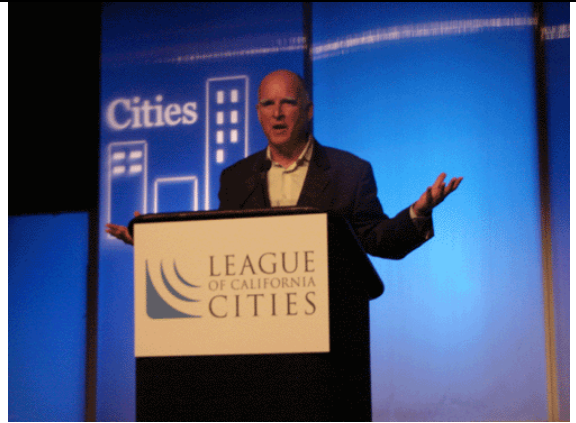
he felt strongly he could serve California best by remaining an independent voice. We are all grateful that influence was exercised with courage, careful analysis and nonpartisan integrity.”

Robinson Wraps it Up

Keynote speaker Sir Ken Robinson, Ph.D., addressed the attendees following the introduction of the League’s new board members. An internationally recognized leader in the development of creativity, innovation and human resources, Robinson emphasized the unique opportunity the cities of California have to be creative leaders in an ever-changing, innovative culture.

“California is blazing a trail about the need for sustainable development. The state is on the move, and [as city officials] your role is to help California sustain its creativity and innovation,” Robinson said.

Annual Conference Photo Gallery

	
California Attorney General Edmund G. (Jerry) Brown attempts to rally city officials on global warming issues. (League Photo/Brian Heaton)	League First Vice President (now President) Jim Madaffer congratulates the cities who received the Helen Putnam Award for Excellence. (League Photo/Brian Heaton)
	
From left to right: The New League of California Cities Officers - Immediate Past President Maria Alegria, President Jim Madaffer, First Vice President Heather Fargo, Second Vice President Judith Mitchell, and Executive Director Chris McKenzie. (League Photo/Yvonne Hunter)	Maria Alegria places the “President’s Pin” on the lapel of Jim Madaffer, acknowledging Madaffer’s new role as President of the League of California Cities as League Executive Director Chris McKenzie looks on. (League Photo/Brian Heaton)

	
Former League President Pat Eklund stands with A. Alan Post, the League's 2007 Past Presidents' Lifetime Achievement Award winner. (League Photo/Brian Heaton)	New League President Jim Madaffer thanks his family, staff, and friends upon being elected to the League's highest leadership position. (League Photo/Brian Heaton)

Caballero Honored as 'Legislator of the Year'



Assembly Member Anna Caballero (pictured at far left) was this year's recipient of the League of California Cities coveted "Legislator of the Year" award. Presented at the League's annual conference last week, the award was given in appreciation of Assembly Member Caballero's support for local government on a variety of issues throughout the legislative session.

"What I learned [at the local level] is how important local government is to the quality of life of California," Caballero said. "I am truly honored to receive this recognition. It's a great award coming from my peers."

In presenting the award, League President Maria Alegria touted Caballero's support of city priorities, particularly in her role as chair of the Assembly Committee on Local Government.

"Making policy decisions at the state level, Anna has demonstrated that she hasn't forgotten her local roots," Alegria said.

"Assembly Member Caballero has consistently demonstrated her understanding of the importance of preserving local control, and she has worked hard to defend this principle this year as chair of the Assembly Committee on Local Government," said League Executive Director Chris McKenzie. "I can think of no one more deserving of this award, and the League looks forward to working with Assembly Member Caballero in the years to come."

Governor Appoints Anti-Gang Director and Advisors, Releases \$2.8 Million to Fight Gang Violence

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger re-affirmed his Administration's commitment to reduce gang violence across California last week, announcing the distribution of \$2.8 million to the California Gang Reduction, Intervention and Prevention Program (CalGRIP); and the appointment of Paul Seave as the new state director of Gang and Youth Violence Policy.

Introduced in May 2007, CalGRIP targets more than \$31 million in state and federal funding toward local anti-gang efforts, including job training, education and intervention programs, and will give law enforcement the tools to track gang leaders. The Governor introduced CalGRIP to

tackle the recent dramatic upswing in gangs across the state and their proliferation in suburban and rural areas. According to the Department of Justice there are currently more than 420,000 gang members statewide.

Newly appointed Paul Seave, who most recently served as chief counsel for the California State Board of Education under, will responsible for numerous duties as director of Gang and Youth Violence Policy including:

- Coordinate anti-gang programs and grants at all state agencies
- Serve as the state contact for local governments and community organizations
- Collect, evaluate and promote local best practices
- Track all federal anti-gang funding and grants

Gov. Schwarzenegger also appointed an advisory team from the fields of education, business, law enforcement, victims groups and the faith community to work with Director Seave to build comprehensive, long-term fixes. The advisory committee includes:

- Jerry Dyer, chief of police, Fresno
- Harvey Woo, lieutenant, Sacramento Sheriff's Department
- David L. Brewer III, superintendent, Los Angeles Unified School District
- Jack Calhoun, president, Hope Matters; Leader, 13-California City Gang Prevention Network
- John Shegerian, CEO, Electronic Recyclers, Fresno
- Connie Rice, CEO, The Advancement Project, Los Angeles
- Reverend Dr. Joseph Bryant Jr., senior pastor, Calvary Hill Community Church, San Francisco
- Darryl Charles, founding member, Overcoming Gangs, San Diego
- Deborah Aguilar, co-founder, A Time For Grieving
- Sandra Rodriguez, principal, San Bernardino High School

In addition to the appointments, Gov. Schwarzenegger released \$2.8 million in discretionary Workforce Investment Act funds to local governments and organizations for job training programs targeting at-risk and gang-affiliated youth. Under the plan, local programs will match state funds at a 1:1 ratio, for a \$5.6 million total impact in 2007-08. Over the next year, CalGRIP will redirect \$11.5 million for a total impact of \$23 million.

League Joins Coalition Intervening on Prison Overcrowding Lawsuit

The League of California Cities has joined a coalition supporting intervention in *Coleman, et al. v. Schwarzenegger* and *Plata et al. v. Schwarzenegger*, two class action lawsuits regarding allegations that conditions in the California State prison system violate the federal constitutional rights of inmates.

Impact on California Cities

If offenders are released, they will be returned to their community of origin. Since approximately 80 percent of the state's population lives within city boundaries, the release of 40,000 inmates would place a monumental burden on local government. City police departments will be tasked with monitoring their activities, taxing our public safety system.

The potential release of offenders before they have finished their prison terms is of great concern to cities because parolees have an extremely high rate of recidivism meaning that our cities will bear the brunt of these future offenses. According to statistics from the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, the recidivism rate for 2003 was close to 40 percent.

In addition, the potential population cap in the state prison system will mean that county jail facilities will have limited ability to transfer inmates to the state system. This will back up the

whole system leaving city jails potentially unable to transfer offenders to overcrowded county facilities.

Coalition Details

The coalition includes the California State Sheriffs Association, the California Police Chiefs Association, the California Peace Officers Coalition, the Chief Probation Officers of California and the California State Association of Counties.

The group was formed because the outcome of this litigation may determine whether 40,000 inmates will be ordered released from the state prison system and if the population of the state prison system will be capped. This action would have a significant impact on California cities.

Coalition Press Conference Sept. 24

The federal Prison Litigation Reform Act gives authority to a three judge court to determine whether or not to issue a prisoner release order. This panel will hold its first hearing on Monday, Sept. 24, at 1:30 p.m. at the 9th Circuit Court of Appeal in San Francisco.

Prior to the hearing, the coalition will hold a news conference on the steps of the court at 11a.m. to inform the public about the potential public safety impact that the panel's decision may have. California city officials will participate at the news conference to discuss city concerns.

Background

There has been litigation on these issues for the past 12 years. Two federal judges ruled that the existing situation in the California prison system justified the creation of the three judge panel to assume control of the California prison system because the over crowded conditions violate the constitutional rights of the 175,000 inmates currently in the system. The 9th Circuit recently affirmed the creation of this three-judge panel to hear the prisoners' allegations, and determine whether to release offenders early, and whether to place a cap on the state's prison population.

When the three-judge panel has made a decision on this issue, the details will be reported in *Priority Focus*.

ACWA Launches Public Information Campaign

The Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) has launched a statewide public information campaign on current and future issues related to the water. The campaign, "California's Water: A Crisis We Can't Ignore" is designed to educate the public about the state's water delivery and storage crisis and its impact on the economy, environment and way of life.

The state faces some of the most significant water challenges in the last half century including the severe vulnerabilities in the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta and a recent court-ordered massive reduction in the water supply statewide to protect an endangered fish.

The campaign will engage the public through television, radio and print advertising plus the internet and other forms of community outreach. ACWA is asking leaders across the state to get involved with the public education effort in their local communities.

Suggested actions include:

- Distribute program materials to your constituent email lists
- Post a banner ad with a link to www.calwatercrisis.org on your Web site
- Publish an article on the water crisis in your newsletter or local press
- Post the campaign's ads on your Web site
- Host a local public forum on the water crisis
- Feature a panel discussion on the water crisis at conventions/conferences

- Submit letters to the editor on the water crisis to your local newspaper
- Write an opinion piece or guest editorial for your newspaper

More Information

For additional information, please visit www.calwatercrisis.org or contact Scott Adams, statewide outreach director, at (818) 760-2121 or sadams@redgatecommunications.com.

Have a Housing Success Story? Tell Us About It!

Focus on Housing, the League of California Cities' electronic monthly housing newsletter, is seeking new housing success stories to profile for its upcoming issues.

Has your city redeveloped a blighted or underused site with new affordable housing in the past two years? If so, we want to know about it. Typical housing success stories published in *Focus on Housing* range between 250-400 words, and include "before and after" photos to illustrate the property's change.

Questions and submissions should be sent to League Communications Specialist Brian Heaton at bheaton@cacities.org.

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). 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.
