

PRIORITY FOCUS



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LOCAL PUBLIC SAFETY FUNDS CONTINUE TO SERVE AS PAWN IN BUDGET DYNAMICS

Late Wednesday night, the Assembly Budget Subcommittee #4, chaired by Assembly Member Juan Arambula (D-Fresno), completed its business on a variety of issues, including public safety. In recent budget discussions, the level of state public safety funding has been hotly debated.

For more, see Page 2.

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LEADING ORGANIZATIONS, ELECTED OFFICIALS AND NEWSPAPERS MAKE FINAL PUSH AS ELECTION DAY NEARS – NO ON 98/YES ON 99 **Election Day Is Tuesday, June 3**

When voters head to the polls just four days from now on Tuesday, June 3, they will have a critical choice to make that will affect California for generations to come. While there are only two statewide measures on the June 3 ballot, the outcome of Propositions 98 and 99 could transform local planning and local government services in a remarkable way. *For more, see Page 3.*

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AB 2176 PASSES OFF ASSEMBLY FLOOR

AB 2176 (Caballero), a bill that would aid in distribution of federal funds to cities through the Federal Energy Efficiency Block Grant (EEBG) program, passed off the Assembly floor on a vote of 76-0 on Wednesday, May 28. *For more, see Page 4.*

The Assembly Budget Subcommittee #4 voted to fund the Citizen Option for Public Safety (COPS) and the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention program at the level proposed in Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's budget of \$214 million (\$107 million for each). This amount reflects the Governor's proposed across-the-board 10 percent cuts.

However, the subcommittee voted along party lines (Democrats-Yes, Republicans-No) to drastically reduce the proposed funding for rural sheriffs and Booking Fees. The Governor's January and May budgets propose to support these programs at 10 percent less than the FY 2007-08 levels at \$17 million for rural sheriffs and \$32 million for Booking Fees. The subcommittee, however, reduced the proposed amounts allocated to each of these programs to a token amount of just \$1,000 each.

While this action continues to allow the funding levels for these programs to be revisited by the full Budget Conference Committee, the signal the Democrats are sending to Republicans suggests that if additional revenues are not part of the final budget solution, vital public safety programs could be sacrificed.

In a similar move, the actions of the Senate Budget Subcommittee #4 on May 8 were much more drastic. They, along partisan lines, voted to entirely eliminate funding from the budget for COPS, Booking Fees and other local public safety programs from the Senate's version of the budget.

Thus, the combined action of these two committees communicates that local public safety funds are clearly emerging as a pawn in the budget dynamics.

Safe Act

Another piece of the budget public safety dance involves the "Safe Neighborhoods Act: Stop Gang, Gun and Street Crime," for which signatures were submitted on April 25. As of May 29, the measure had yet to qualify.

The initiative would secure an annual appropriation from the General Fund for significant state and local public safety programs. It would also require local government funding to be maintained at same or greater levels indefinitely.

While many Democrats support public safety programs, the actions taken by the two Budget Subcommittees #4 also suggest that political positioning over this initiative has begun.

The League has not taken a position on the Safe Neighborhoods Act. City officials are encouraged to delay any action on it until it qualifies and the League finishes an analysis of the measure.

The League reported on this initiative in the May 23 issue of *Priority Focus* (http://www.cacities.org/resource_files/26823.may23.pdf). Please see the article titled "Safe Neighborhoods Act Targeted for November 2008 Ballot."

Next Steps

The work of the Assembly Budget Subcommittee #4 is now done. The Senate Budget Subcommittee #4 is expected to conclude its business next week. Once all of the budget subcommittees have finished their work, the action will move to the full budget committees of each house. Following that, the Senate and Assembly will appoint a budget conference committee to reconcile differences between the two houses. Also to be expected are meetings among legislative leadership and the Governor which may inject other ideas into the mix.

Take Action!

The League urges city officials to communicate to their legislators the importance of supporting public safety funding at the levels proposed by the Governor. Public safety funding is extremely vulnerable and will remain so because of the "hostage taking" actions by the budget subcommittees and the introduction of the Safe Neighborhoods Act.

A complete list of each house's budget committees is included below.

Members of the Budget Committees

Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee

Denise Ducheny (D-San Diego) – *Chair*
Robert Dutton (R-Inland Empire) – *Vice Chair*
Elaine Alquist (D-Santa Clara)
David Cogdill (R-Fresno)
Tom Harman (R-Orange)
Christine Kehoe (D-San Diego)
Alan Lowenthal (D-Long Beach)
Mike Machado (D-Linden)
Alex Padilla (D-Los Angeles)
Gloria Romero (D-Los Angeles)
Darrell Steinberg (D-Sacramento)
Mark Wyland (R-Escondido)

Assembly Budget Committee

John Laird (D-Santa Cruz) – *Chair*
Roger Niello (R-Sacramento) – *Vice Chair*
Juan Arambula (D-Fresno)
Jim Beall (D-San Jose)
John Benoit (R-Palm Desert)
Patty Berg (D-Eureka)
Sam Blakeslee (R-San Luis Obispo)
Julia Brownley (D-Santa Monica)
Paul Cook (R-Yucaipa)
Hector De La Torre (D-South Gate)
Chuck DeVore (R-Irvine)
Michael Duvall (R-Brea)
William Emmerson (R-Redlands)
Noreen Evans (D-Santa Rosa)
Michael Feuer (D-Los Angeles)
Jean Fuller (R-Bakersfield)
Mary Hayashi (D-Hayward)
Ed Hernandez (D-Baldwin Park)
Bob Huff (R-Diamond Bar)
Dave Jones (D-Sacramento)
Paul Krekorian (D-Burbank)
Bill Maze (R-Visalia)
Gene Mullin (D-South San Francisco)
Ira Ruskin (D-Redwood City)
Jim Silva (R-Huntington Beach)
Sandre Swanson (D-Oakland)
Lois Wolk (D-Davis)

'Election Day' Continued from Page 1...

That's why leading California organizations, elected officials and more than 55 newspapers are making a final push this week to urge voters to vote No on 98, and Yes on 99 on Election Day.

The supporters of Proposition 98 tout its eminent domain reforms, but in reality, the measure, which is funded almost exclusively by apartment and mobile home park owners, would also abolish renter protections and rent control, weaken environmental protections and threaten the state's ability to rebuild its aging infrastructure.

On the other hand, Prop. 99 directly protects single-family homes from being taken by the government for private development.

Opposition Against Prop. 98 Swells

Prop. 98 is so destructive that only four newspapers in the state endorse the measure, compared to the more than 70 papers which have urged their readers to vote against it. For a complete list of papers against Prop. 98, please visit the No on 98/Yes on 99 Web site, www.noprop98.org.

Over the past few months, numerous high level state officials have publicly opposed Prop. 98, including Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, U.S. Senators Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer, former Governor Pete Wilson, Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-San Francisco) and many others.

These elected officials are joined by one of the most diverse coalitions ever formed to defeat a ballot measure, including leading organizations like:

- AARP
- League of Women Voters of California
- California Professional Firefighters
- California Teachers Association
- California Labor Federation
- California Chamber of Commerce
- Every leading environmental organization
- Nisei Farmers League
- Western Growers Association
- More than 300 organizations

When voters head to the polls in just a few days, they'll have plenty of reasons – and company – to oppose Prop. 98 and support Prop. 99.

Make Your Vote Count

On June 3, vote No on Prop. 98 and Yes on Prop. 99.

For more information about the two measures, visit www.no98yes99.com.

'AB 2176' Continued from Page 1...

The legislators unanimously agreed that AB 2176 will help local governments in California achieve additional reductions through this federal block grant program.

As the sponsor of AB 2176, the League is working with the California Energy Commission to ensure efficiency of the funding mechanism once this grant money is allocated by the federal government.

Background

The EEBG program is part of the Energy Independence and Security Act (H.R. 6), which President Bush signed into law in December 2007. The program would provide cities with federal funding for innovative practices to improve energy efficiency, lower energy usage and reduce fossil fuel emissions. Although H.R. 6 authorizes \$10 billion (\$2 billion per year from 2008-2012), the funds need to be appropriated by Congress each year as part of the federal budget process.

H.R. 6 splits up the \$2 billion annual allocation into four different funding pots: 68 percent is designated for cities and counties (local government pot), 28 percent for states (state pot), 2 percent for Indian tribes, and 2 percent for competitive grants to local governments or a consortia of local governments who are ineligible for funding out of the other funding streams.

Cities with a population of 35,000 or more, and counties with a population of 200,000 or more (as well as the top 10 most populous cities and counties in each state) will be eligible for funds out of the local government pot.

AB 2176 addresses California's portion of the state funding and would establish a mechanism through which funds received by the state would then be passed on to cities and counties. H.R. 6 mandates that 60 percent of the state portion must go to cities and counties that are not eligible to receive funding out of the local government pot (those not eligible would be cities under 35,000 in population).

Crucial Vote Pending on Public Works Contracting Legislation Opposition Letters Requested for AB 983

A crucial vote on the Senate Floor is pending for AB 983 (Ma). The League opposes this bill because of the negative consequences it would create for any local agency entering into a public works contract. City officials are urged to request that AB 983 be referred back to the Senate Local Government and Appropriations committees before it is voted upon by the full Senate.

Reasons AB 983 Should be Referred

This bill was dramatically amended after it already passed through the Assembly and was never heard by the appropriate policy and fiscal committees in the Senate. Because of the major implications for cities, public infrastructure, and taxpayers, AB 983 should first be reviewed and voted upon in committee hearings before the full Senate votes on it.

Background

AB 983 would require local agencies to provide full, complete and accurate plans and specifications, including cost estimates, for public works projects *before* entering into any contract. This would essentially absolve a contractor from any responsibility for reviewing plans before submitting a bid on a public works project.

The League opposes AB 983 because under the proposed contracting law revision, a contractor would have no desire or incentive to report any omissions to a public agency prior to submitting a bid, resulting in expensive change orders to the benefit of the contractor and the detriment of the city.

Public contracting is a collaborative process through which a public agency and contractor work together to identify omissions or changes to provided plans and specifications. In fact, public agencies often rely on the expertise of contractors, who are professionals in their field and are in the best position to notify a public agency if project plans may be incomplete or inaccurate.

AB 983 is awaiting action on the Senate Floor, and could be voted on as early as Tuesday, June 3. Please fax your letters as soon as possible to help defeat this legislation.

Take Action!

A sample letter is available for your city to fax to your senator and other key contacts at www.cacities.org/billsearch. Plug in AB 983 to the bill search function to access the sample letter of opposition, along with faxing instructions.

Registration Now Open for 2008 Annual Conference

Conference and housing registration is now open for the League of California Cities 2008 Annual Conference and Exposition. The event will take place September 24 – 27 at the Long Beach Convention Center.

2008 Annual Conference at a Glance

Attendees may register for the optional pre-conference workshop, "California Public Officials Emergency Preparedness." Registration opens on September 24 at noon, and a "first-timers" orientation will be offered at 2:30 p.m. before the expected 2,000 attendees gather at 4 p.m. for the Opening General Session, featuring keynote speaker Neal Petersen, who will present "No Barriers – Only Solutions." Peterson will tell of his 27,000 mile, nine-month adventure at sea in a home-built boat and what can

happen when one truly lives by goals, planning and preparation. Later in the evening, attendees can enjoy the annual CITIPAC Casino Night festivities.

On Thursday, September 25, breakout sessions and professional department business meetings will be offered. The Exposition will open at 11 a.m. Attendees can have lunch in the Expo hall or purchase a ticket to the Institute for Local Government's (ILG) fourth annual lunch symposium, "Local Leadership and the Changing Demographics of California's Communities." The afternoon program concludes with keynote speaker Richard Florida whose talk is titled "Who's Your City." Florida takes a look at the way people choose the places they live and how that affects everything from their real estate to their families. In the evening, the Long Beach Host City reception will offer great food, music and entertainment.

The final full day of the conference, Friday, September 26, offers a regional networking breakfast. This full day includes breakout sessions, lunch in the Expo hall, installation of the new League board of directors and officers and an outstanding Closing General Session keynote speaker, Doris Kearns Goodwin. Goodwin is a gifted historian and storyteller who illustrates lessons relevant to today's issues and headlines from some of the country's greatest figures. In the evening, participants can join the fun at one of four League Caucus receptions or watch the first Presidential Debate with colleagues.

On Saturday, September 27, attendees are encouraged to participate in the concluding Annual Business Meeting from 8:30 – 9:45 a.m. Remember to register your voting delegate and be sure they are present at the business meeting for voting.

To register for the 2008 Annual Conference and make hotel reservations, visit www.cacities.org/events.

Civic Engagement Grants Available to Municipalities, School Districts, and Nonprofits

Common Sense California (CSC), a nonprofit organization supporting civic engagement, is offering a total of \$125,000 in grants to municipalities, school districts, and nonprofit organizations that are attempting to engage their citizens in informed decision-making through its "Citizen Engagement Grant Program."

The Citizen Engagement Grant Program is offering four "Common Sense Grants" of up to \$25,000 and multiple "Catalyst Grants" in amounts ranging from \$1,000 to \$7,500. Recent examples of citizen engagement projects include land use/infrastructure decisions at the city and county levels, K-12 school budget and curriculum policy formation, city-wide five and 10-year visioning plans, and school regionalization/shared service decisions.

Applications for the top-level Common Sense Grants must be submitted by September 12. Recipients will be notified in early October. Applications for Catalyst Grants will be awarded on a "rolling basis," beginning June 18. Proposals for these grants may be submitted immediately and will be reviewed as they are received.

For more information or to apply for a grant, visit the CSC Web site: www.commonsenseca.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.
