

4th of July Fizzles in Sacramento

On the Budget

The state began another fiscal year yesterday, and with that, another July 1st passed with no budget in sight. While Senate President pro tem Darrell Steinberg, Assembly Speaker John Pérez and Governor Schwarzenegger have assured the public they are “on the same page,” the fact that not even the Senate Democrats and Assembly Democrats can agree means another long, budget-less summer. And with an estimated \$1.1 billion in unpaid bills this month and the state spending \$52 million more each day it fails to pass a budget, it could be one expensive summer vacation.



On the Water Bond

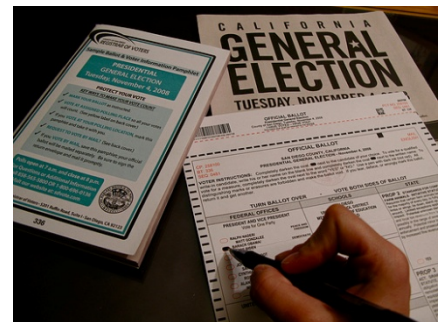
Fearing that the passage of an \$11 billion bond could be a daunting task with the current condition of the economy and the state’s deficit, the Governor announced this week that he will seek to postpone a vote on the Safe, Clean and Reliable Drinking Water Supply Act until 2012. Adding serious intrigue, the water bond can only be taken off the ballot with that infamous two-thirds vote by the Legislature. Opponents hoping to sink the bond this November will try to prevent that supermajority vote. < sigh > It looked as though we may have been able to solve one of our state’s many crises this year, but that will have to wait.



On the Ballot

Hang on to your wallet. Already staring down a tight race for Governor and the U.S. Senate, the state ballot book just got loaded with a bunch of new initiatives. The Bay Area Council has already taken a position to oppose a repeal of AB 32, but we will need to reconvene the Government Relations and Executive Committees to consider:

- A measure to lock in California city financing;
- A repeal of reduced taxes for some of our members secured in last year’s budget;
- Reducing the margin for the state budget passage from two-thirds to a simple majority;
- Increasing the threshold for new “fees” from a simple majority to a two-thirds margin;
- Creating citizen-redistricting of Congressional districts;
- Imposing a \$18 vehicle license fee to help state parks;
- And, legalizing marijuana



Many of these measures are complex and will require research and debate. We will announce our positions as soon as possible.