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February 6, 2004  
Issue #5-2004

### MULTI-CITY NEWS CONFERENCES JUMPSTART INITIATIVE SIGNATURE GATHERING

League Regional Representatives are working with campaign consultants and other members of the Californians to Protect Local Taxpayers and Public Safety coalition to organize 9 news conferences to take place around the state next Monday, February 9. The goal of the press conferences is to achieve a virtually simultaneous statewide launch of an aggressive signature gathering effort to qualify the Local Taxpayers and Public Safety Protection Act for the November 2004 ballot. *For more, see page 2.*



### SIGNATURE GATHERING – WHY WE NEED YOU!

The League will kick off statewide signature gathering efforts on Monday, February 9 to qualify the initiative for the November ballot. The total number of signatures targeted is 1 million, which includes a comfortable cushion for invalid signatures. Our statewide **volunteer** signature-gathering goal is 300,000; the Santa Monica-based firm Progressive Campaign Management is managing paid signature gathering to collect the remaining 700,000. *For more, see page 4.*



### NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES SAYS ADMINISTRATION'S "FLAWED BUDGET" FOR 2005 WOULD FAIL TO KEEP HOMETOWN AMERICA STRONG

The National League of Cities (NLC) issued a press release this week calling the proposed Bush federal budget for 2005 "a flawed budget that fails to keep our communities strong". The statement came from NLC President Charles Lyons, selectman from Arlington, Mass. Lyons said cuts to federal programs like community policing would translate directly into cuts in local services. *For more, see page 3.*

## Hot Bills Act Now

There are no Hot Bills at this time.

Want more details on these and other bills? Log on to the League of California Cities Web site at [www.cacities.org/legtracking](http://www.cacities.org/legtracking).

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**PRESS CONFERENCES from page 1** .....

The League and its local government partners, the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) and the California Special Districts Association (CSDA), have set a goal of one million signatures to ensure that the ballot measure qualifies for the November ballot. Additional organizations representing local employee unions and public safety labor and management organizations are also helping the coalition in the initiative efforts.

Following training on proper signature-gathering rules and procedures, and operating solely on their own personal time and without the use of public resources, volunteers will be asked to encourage individuals interested in protecting local services to read and sign the initiative petition. City officials interested in helping collect signatures can find out how to get involved by contacting their League Regional Representative. Information will also be available on the new campaign website, [www.ProtectLocalServices.com](http://www.ProtectLocalServices.com).

**The following is a list of the press conference times and locations as of press time.**

- Redding:** 10:00 am, Fire Station #3, 4255 Westside Road. League Contact: Bryan Barr, 916.768.8127
- Sacramento:** 10:00 am, Downtown Fire Station, 1229 I Street. Contact: Meghan Meisel of Bicker, Castillo & Fairbanks (campaign consultants), 916.443.0872
- Oakland:** 10:00 am, County Courthouse, 1225 Fulton Street. League Contact: Stacey Wells, 510.206.7253; Rebecca Elliot, 408.829.2946
- Salinas:** 11:00 am, Salinas Chamber, 119 E. Alisal Street. League Contact: Deanna Sessums, 831.915.8293
- Fresno:** 10:30 am, Fresno City Firefighters Association, 710 R Street. League Contact: Catherine Medina, 559.432.7945
- San Diego:** 10:00 am, Fire Station #28, 3880 Kearny Villa Road. League Contact: Catherine Hill, 619.733.1751

- San Bernardino:** 10:00 am, 710 North D Street. League Contact: Nancy Cisneros, 909.377.7110.
- Cathedral City:** 9:00 am, Fire station #412, 32-100 Desert Vista Road. League Contact: David Willmon, Pager 909.777.1633
- Santa Barbara:** 10:30 am, Santa Barbara Fire Department, 121 W. Carillo. League Contact: Dave Mullinax, 805.797.3530

**WORKERS' COMPENSATION HEARING – ONE LAST EFFORT**

The Workers' Compensation Reform package, AB X4 1 (Maldonado) will be heard in the Assembly Insurance Committee on Wednesday, February 11<sup>th</sup>. This will be a last attempt by the Legislature to debate the reform package before the March 1<sup>st</sup> deadline that Governor Schwarzenegger set during his State of the State address. The Governor stated that he wanted a workers' compensation reform proposal on his desk by March 1<sup>st</sup> or he would take a proposal that his administration develops to the ballot in November.

During the last workers' compensation hearing in December, 2003, the primary debate centered on capping the rates of the insurance companies. Since most of our cities are self insured, we did not participate in this debate. Instead, we centered our advocacy efforts on permanent disability, medical, penalties, and standards of compensability reform. These issues will be presented to the Assembly Insurance Committee on Wednesday. For more information, please contact Amy Brown at [browna@cacities.org](mailto:browna@cacities.org) or call 916-658-8279.

**NLC from page 1** .....

The National League of Cities is also concerned that the continuing, growing federal deficit will take resources from programs that benefit America's cities and towns. Making the tax cuts permanent would lead to higher deficits and more cuts in domestic programs, hurting children and families. "It is a drastic mistake to forget about programs that make our communities and hometown America strong." Lyons said.

**NLC says American cities would suffer from cuts in critical areas including:**

- Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) funding would suffer an enormous cut, from \$756 million in 2004 to \$44 million under the proposed Bush budget, leading to layoffs of police officers;
- Local law enforcement grants would decline by 40 percent (The Local Law Enforcement Block Grant programs would be eliminated and merged with Byrne Grants into Justice Assistance Grants, for which cities and towns would compete with states);
- Homeland security funding for local governments and first responders would suffer a net loss of more than \$800 million for programs that fund the First Responder Initiative;
- Housing and community development funding would be cut severely in several areas including a \$316 million cut in Community Development Block Grants and a \$149 million cut in HOPE VI funds, eliminating the program.

At the same time, the National League of Cities acknowledges proposed increases for education – \$1 billion for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and \$1 billion for the No Child Left Behind Act. However, these increases are far less than what is needed to meet the requirements of these laws.

The National League of Cities reported last November that four out of five city finance managers reported declines in their ability to meet the financial needs of their cities. In a letter sent to Congress last Friday, NLC President Charles Lyons said, "Across too many of our cities and towns, there exists virtually no capacity to absorb or compensate for cuts in program budgets."

The National League of Cities is the oldest and largest national organization representing municipal governments throughout the United States. NLC serves as a resource and advocate for 18,000 U.S. cities that serve 225 million people across the United States. For detail, visit [www.nlc.org](http://www.nlc.org).

**ATTENTION NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES CONVENTIONEERS!!**

Many exciting events will take place during the National League of Cities' Congressional Conference in Washington, D.C. March 5-9. We strongly urge you to attend.

**Monday, March 8**

League Reception  
5:15 p.m.—7:00 p.m.  
Monroe East-West Room  
Washington Hilton and Towers

**Tuesday, March 9**

Meeting with Senator Barbara Boxer  
11:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m.  
Room G-11, Dirksen Senate Office Building

California State Society Reception for California City Officials and California Congressional Delegation  
6:00 p.m.—8:00 p.m.  
Room B-339, Rayburn House Office Building

**Wednesday, March 10**

Homeland Security Roundtable Discussion  
Hosted by California delegation Co-Chairs David Dreier & Zoe Lofgren Secretary Tom Ridge, Department of Homeland Security (Invited)  
10:00 a.m.—11:30 a.m.  
Room 1310, Longworth House Office Building

All California city officials attending the NLC Congressional Conference should include these important opportunities on their calendars. For more information and to RSVP for CA Delegation events, contact Jessica Mullan at 916/658-8243, [jmullan@cacities.org](mailto:jmullan@cacities.org).

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## SIGNATURE-GATHERING MADE EASY: SOME TIPS ON WHERE AND HOW TO REACH YOUR SIGNATURE-GATHERING GOALS

The following is a partial list of potential sources for signatures among registered voters. Working in high traffic areas is key, as is working with community based organizations and service clubs. Use your imagination! And please help: this isn't just a job for the other guy. But remember, never take part in signature gathering activities while on public time and never use any public resources in your efforts.

- **Community- Based Organizations.** Many League members have deep ties to local community-based organizations. Use your contacts to recruit volunteers and ask them to help you gather signatures.

- **Other Elected and Appointed Officials.** They frequently know as many people and attend as many community events as you do – but not all of your council colleagues are as engaged in the League as you. Make sure they know what we're trying to achieve and are encouraged to help by circulating petitions. Don't forget to ask your city's appointed officials to help.

- **Parks and Recreation Activities.** Activities sponsored by your city's Department of Parks and Recreation, like Little League games, swim meets, art and crafts classes, senior centers, etc., are great places to gather signatures.

- **Service Clubs.** Use your involvement with service clubs like the Lion's, Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs to circulate petitions.

- **Church.** Arrive a little early and stay a little late. You'll have plenty of signatures in no time.

- **Local Businesses.** Many business owners are your strongest supporters. If you have a favorite restaurant you frequent and are friendly with the owner, ask if they'll help you gather signatures from loyal customers. You can also ask if they'll let you gather signatures outside. This also works with major grocery and discount stores.

- **College and High School Students.** Community colleges are great places for signature gathering. If you use high school volunteers to help you, they must be eligible to register to vote 180 days prior to the election or the petition will be invalid.

- **Neighbors, Family and Other Gatherings.** Don't neglect your neighbors and family when it comes to circulating petitions. Go for a walk

around the block and ask everyone you see to sign the petition. Pick a neighboring block and do the same thing the following week. Take plenty of petitions to family gatherings.

- **Be Prepared.** Always carry petitions in your car. You never know when you might run into someone who will sign the petition.

**Remember:** all signatures must be from registered voters. And all signature-gathering efforts must be done on personal, not public, time and without the use of public resources.

### SIGNATURE GATHERING from page 1 • •

**Help Save Campaign Money for Advertising and Other Direct Voter Contact.** The importance of volunteer signature gathering cannot be overstated. Each signature we pay for will cost the campaign \$1.50 to \$3, and could go much higher the longer it takes to gather the required number of signatures. That is money that can be used to pay for TV airtime, direct mail, and other forms of direct voter contact in the fall. With a large number of initiatives expected on the November ballot, our effort needs all the air time and direct voter persuasion we can afford!

Clearly, the more signatures we gather through our volunteer efforts, the more we save on paid signature gathering. We CAN make a difference.

Gathering 300,000 signatures would seem to be a huge undertaking – until you break it down into manageable pieces. This is what we've done: to achieve our volunteer signature goals, each League division has been assigned an individual goal. All signatures must be collected by April 15.

City officials interested in helping with this volunteer effort should contact their League Regional Representatives to find out how to get involved.

**Remember:** these activities can only be carried out on your personal, non-public time. No public resources may be used to support the signature-gathering work.

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ANALYSIS, COMMENTARY & UPDATES  
**PRIORITY FOCUS**  
ON LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY ISSUES THAT AFFECT CALIFORNIA CITIES

February 13, 2004  
Issue #6-2004

**STATEWIDE LAUNCH FOR INITIATIVE SIGNATURE-GATHERING CAMPAIGN**

The League and its initiative partners kicked off signature-gathering efforts this week for the Local Taxpayers and Public Safety Protection Act with announcements at 9 nearly simultaneous press conferences in cities around the state. League regional representatives worked with their coalition partners to organize many of the press events, lining up locations and speakers from among public safety employees, police and fire chiefs, special districts, as well as city and county officials. *For more, see page 6.*



**SENATE COMMITTEE HOLDS INFORMATIONAL HEARING ON COMPETING LOCAL FINANCE INITIATIVES**

On Wednesday, the Senate Local Government Committee under the direction of Chairman Tom Torlakson conducted a hearing on two proposed ballot measures that would revamp local government finance. The measures are headed for the November 2004 ballot. The League, CSAC and the CSDA are joint sponsors of one measure while the other is promoted primarily by former Assembly Speaker Bob Hertzberg. *For more, see page 3.*



**SENATE VOTES FUNDING FOR FEDERAL TEA-21 TRANSPORTATION MEASURE**

On Thursday, February 12, the Senate voted 76-21 to pass a \$318 billion bill to reauthorize TEA-21 surface transportation programs for six years. The measure would provide \$56 billion for the federal transit program and \$262 billion for the federal highway program. Floor debate on the measure was dominated by two groups of mostly Republican senators, one asserting that the bill would worsen the federal deficit, the other promoting the bill as a fiscally responsible necessity to boost the economy and create jobs. This fight is expected to continue as the bill advances. *For more, see page 8.*

**Hot Bills Act Now**

There are no Hot Bills at this time.

Want more details on these and other bills? Log on to the League of California Cities Web site at [www.cacities.org/legtracking](http://www.cacities.org/legtracking).

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## LEAGUE HOUSING GOALS FOR 2004

Many challenges await local governments on the land use/housing front for the 2004 legislative year. While 2004 promises to be dominated by budget debates, ballot initiatives, and election-year politics, the perennial debates over housing and land use issues will continue to simmer. Land use disputes are unavoidable with the state population growth, fed by births and immigration, continuing to increase at an annual rate of nearly 600,000 people – the equivalent of adding an additional Fresno (448,000), plus a Pasadena (142,000), each year.

Local officials facing infrastructure, service delivery, and affordable housing challenges can expect little additional assistance from the state or federal levels. The Governor's 2004 budget proposes cuts to local transportation funds, redevelopment projects and property tax dollars. Whatever the budget solutions for 2004, the state will be digging out of its fiscal hole for years to come. Little help can be expected from the federal level either, given the size of the federal deficit.

Expect to see legislation that attempts to respond to the housing issue by removing local authority. The paradox is that often the same legislators who call out for more housing, also vote for measures to reduce local revenues – used to provide services and infrastructure for housing — or that restrict development on farmland, open space, and in other areas. These measures typically require only a simple majority vote in the Legislature. Consequently, local officials must be ever-vigilant about protecting their local land use authority.

**For 2004, the League will be active on the housing and land use issues in the following areas:**

- Protecting local revenues through support of the League's ballot measure in November, 2004.
- Continuing to vigorously defend the prin-

ciple of local land use authority in an increasingly challenging legislative environment.

- Continuing to support the work of the League's Housing Opportunity Task Force, which included recommendation to allow communities producing affordable housing to self-certify local housing elements.

- Seeking solutions to streamline CEQA reviews for housing and infill developments through a League-led task force on CEQA, which includes both business and environmental groups.

### **EPA ACCEPTING ENTRIES FOR 2004 ENVIRONMENTAL AWARDS PROGRAM**

Nominations are now being accepted for the Environmental Protection Agency's 2004 Awards Program, sponsored by the EPA's ninth region. The awards program, now in its sixth year, seeks to recognize individuals and organizations making significant contributions to improving the environment. Past winners have included scientists, teachers, public officials and youths.

Nominations must be received no later than February 20, 2004. Applications can be obtained online at [www.epa.gov/region09/awards](http://www.epa.gov/region09/awards) or by calling (866) EPA-WEST. Applications call for the environmental accomplishments and highlights of the nominee to be described in narrative form, supported by evidence of the effectiveness of the nominee's efforts. Winners will be selected from nominations submitted throughout the EPA's region 9, covering California, Nevada, Arizona, Hawaii, Pacific Islands and Pacific South-west tribal lands.

**SENATE COMMITTEE from page 1** .....

Former Speaker Hertzberg was scheduled to make the first presentation. He was joined by Assembly Members Darrell Steinberg and John Campbell as well as Mayor Curt Pringle, Anaheim. His proposal does the following:

- Initiates a state and local government tax swap that involves local government giving up ½ cent of local sales tax money and all of the VLF allocation for an equal amount of property taxes.
- Local governments would be given the option to pick one of three sales tax “base years” for determining the swap.
- After the swap is made in the base year, local government revenues grow or decline based on the natural growth or decline of the revenue source.
- The state would get a ½ cent increase (i.e., the former ½ cent Bradley Burns local sales tax) in the state sales tax rate and all of the VLF revenues to finance schools.
- A state mandate reimbursement reform proposal.
- Constitutional protection of local government revenues as reconstituted under the Hertzberg proposal.

The proponents of the measure framed their proposal as bold, “big think” reform and tended to downplay the League/CSAC/CSDA measure as more parochial. Unfortunately, the advocates exited immediately after their presentation, so they did not hear the presentation on the alternative measure. This was unfortunate because they were unable to hear important background information, including the solid research that underlies the construction of the League/CSAC/CSDA measure. In contrast, more than half a dozen versions of Hertzberg’s measure have been filed with the Attorney General, making it difficult at this point to determine what the measure actually contains.

Presenting the League/CSAC/CSDA measure were League Immediate Past President John Russo; Paul Stein, CSAC president; and Bill Miller, CSDA president. The local government measure contains two essential elements. First, it requires voter approval before the State Legislature and Governor take local government sales taxes, property taxes or vehicle license fee revenues (or successor revenue). Second, it strengthens the state mandated reimbursement law to give local government greater surety in receiving mandate reimbursements.

The primary theme from the local government officials making the presentation was that before the state and local government revenue structure can be reformed, it has to be stabilized, and that this measure would accomplish that goal, while still allowing reform discussions to continue and for those proposals to be brought to the voters for approval.

**Panel Highlights Housing, Services Concerns with Hertzberg Proposal**

In the final panel that appeared before the committee, Michael Coleman, fiscal consultant to the League, explained some of the major concerns with the Hertzberg proposal, including its impacts on cities and housing production. These include problems in unincorporated and newly annexed areas and in redevelopment areas, in which housing can be expected to generate less total revenue to pay for local services than it does under current law.

**Legislators Will Introduce Both Measures**

Senator Torlakson announced at the hearing that he will introduce the League/CSAC/CSDA measure as a legislative proposal. Assembly Member Steinberg plans to introduce the Hertzberg measure as a legislative proposal. The Legislature has until the summer to meet deadlines to place any measure on the November 2004 ballot. It is expected that a working group will be formed to examine the two measures during the legislative session.

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## WORKERS' COMPENSATION – THE LAST LEGISLATIVE EFFORT

The League of California Cities and the California State Association of Counties have been meeting with legislators to discuss the rising costs of workers' compensation for our public agencies. A series of informational hearings were set in both the Assembly and Senate to discuss the Governor's package reform, authored by Assembly Member Maldonado and Senator Poochigian, in which both organizations have been actively involved. The Legislature has been asked by the Governor to have a comprehensive reform package by March 1. We have a lot of work cut out for us before then!

In recent months, the debate has centered on capping the insurance companies' rates in order to pass on savings to the employer. Since most cities and counties are self-insured, they are not subject to insurance company rate hikes. Reform in this area would thus not help reduce cities' skyrocketing workers' compensation costs. Consequently the League has been advocating reform in the areas of medical utilization, permanent disability, apportionment, penalty provisions, and temporary disability.

The Assembly Insurance Committee met on Wednesday, February 11<sup>th</sup> to discuss the Governor's reform package. Those discussions will continue, as the League and CSAC will be active members in those hearings.

We would like to thank you for providing your workers' compensation cost history data to the League. It has helped in our effort to educate legislators about the magnitude of the problem and our core concerns. For more information, or if you have not forwarded your workers' compensation cost history to the League, contact Amy Brown at [browna@cacities.org](mailto:browna@cacities.org).

## STATE WATER BOARD SEEKS COMMENTS ON BIOSOLIDS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

The State Water Resources Control Board is planning a Tuesday, March 2 hearing in Sacramento to receive comments on a revised Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) relating to the Board's proposed General Order for General Waste Discharge Requirements for Biosolids Land Application.

Biosolids are sewage sludge that has been treated, tested, and shown to be capable of beneficial uses as a soil amendment. The General Order would establish prohibitions, discharge and application specifications, transportation, and storage requirements, and general procedures and provisions to which all land appliers would be required to adhere.

In the year 2000, the Water Board certified a Program Environmental Impact Report on the General Order. Litigation against the Order was brought and as a result, a new EIR was required by the court. That draft EIR has now been complete. It analyzes two additional alternatives beyond those analyzed in the original EIR. Complete information about the revised Draft EIR and the General Order is available on the Water Board's website at: [www.swrcb.ca.gov/hearings](http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/hearings).

The Water Board will receive comments on the revised Draft EIR at its March 2 hearing in Sacramento. It will also accept written comments on the Draft EIR until March 18. Details about where to send comments are included on the above website.

Interested city officials are encouraged to review the material on the Water Board's website and send comments, if appropriate.

### ***Our Mission***

*Restore and protect local control for cities through education and advocacy to enhance the quality of life for all Californians.*

## CITIES URGED TO TESTIFY AT CALPERS FEB. 18 HEALTH BENEFITS MEETING

Cities that participate in the CalPERS health program are urged to send representatives to a February 18 CalPERS Health Benefits Committee meeting in Sacramento, and to testify regarding the impacts on your city from rising health care costs.

The committee will meet on Wednesday, February 18, at the Auditorium located in Lincoln Plaza, 400 P Street, in the City of Sacramento, beginning at 10:00 a.m. The CalPERS Health Benefits Committee oversees the administration of the Public Employees' Medical and Hospital Care Act (PEMHCA) program and the Public Employees' Long-Term Care Program.

The Contracting Agency Panel, a pro-reform advocacy group consisting of labor, management, retiree representatives, and cities, has met over a 3-month period and has developed a series of recommendations centering on changes to the PEMHCA system. The League, along with the California Professional Firefighters, will present the Panel's recommended changes to the CalPERS Board on February 18.

Topics to be raised include the rate setting process, an alternative self-funded PPO option, a joint statewide drug purchasing pool, establishment of a public agency pool, optional benefit designs, prioritizing staff time for contracting agency focus, PEMHCA rules and regulations, regional rating, and adjusting PEMHCA to the health care marketplace.

A detailed discussion of these issues is available on the League's website under [www.cacities.org/employeerelations](http://www.cacities.org/employeerelations).

The League encourages affected cities to participate in this forum. For additional information, please contact League Legislative Representative Amy Brown at [browna@cacities.org](mailto:browna@cacities.org), or by calling 916.658.8279.

## LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA CITIES' BOARD VOTES SUPPORT FOR PROPOSITIONS 55, 57 AND 58

The board of directors of the League of California Cities voted to support Propositions 55, 57 and 58 at their Feb. 7 meeting in Huntington Beach. All three of the measures will appear on the March 2 ballot.

Proposition 55, the Kindergarten-University Public Education Facilities Bond Act of 2004, would allow the state to issue \$12.3 billion of general obligation bonds for construction and renovation of K-12 school facilities (\$10 billion) and higher education facilities (\$2.3 billion).

Proposition 57, the California Economic Recovery Bond Act, would authorize the state to issue a \$15 billion bond to finance a portion of the state's deficit, with a ¼ cent of the 1 cent of local sales tax dedicated to payment of the debt service on the bond. Proposition 58, the California Balanced Budget Act, makes constitutional changes to require a balanced budget and a rainy-day budget reserve, establishes additional mid-year reduction authority for the executive branch, and disallows future borrowing to pay off deficits. Provisions in Proposition 57 specify that it would become operative only if the voters also approve Proposition 58.

Commenting on the board's support for Prop. 55, League Executive Director Chris McKenzie said, "City officials understand that these kids are our future. California's rapidly growing population makes it essential that we construct new schools to meet the needs of growing communities, and commit the necessary resources to modernize existing schools. It's all part of maintaining a strong, healthy community."

Governor Schwarzenegger and state legislators negotiated propositions 57 and 58 in December as part of a plan to address the state's \$15 billion deficit.

"This board's vote on these measures expresses the League's support for the state's efforts to bring order to its fiscal affairs," said League President Ron Loveridge, Mayor of the City of Riverside. "We understand that these two measures are important features of the state's plan to find immediate, near-term remedies to restructure the state deficit. We support these efforts, as we do any solutions that will help prevent further impacts on local services."

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## PRESS CONFERENCES from page 1

The campaign's goal is to gather, before the April 15 submission deadline, the 1 million signatures needed to qualify for the measure for the November ballot: 300,000 gathered through volunteer efforts, and the remaining 700,000 collected by paid signature-gatherers.

The following are summaries of a few of the 9 events involved in Monday's kick-off. All of the events took place away from city hall or other public buildings. All public officials participated on their personal time.

**Sacramento:** The sidewalk in front of a downtown fire station was the location for the Sacramento press conference, led by Rancho Cordova City Council Member Ken Cooley and Sacramento Mayor Heather Fargo. Other speakers included Fire Chief Bill Mikesell, Rocklin Fire Department; Captain Steve Pierce, Davis Police Department; Bobby Weist, President, Davis Professional Firefighters Association; Rita Velasquez, General Manager, Elk Grove Community Services District and Past President,



Sacramento Mayor Heather Fargo addresses the media and onlookers on the importance of giving voters a say on state raids of local services.

California Special Districts Association; and Sandra Poole, Executive Director of United Public Employees Local One and California Independent Public Employees Legislative Council.

The event was covered by four local TV networks, including Spanish-speaking Univision, in addition to several print and radio outlets. League Public Affairs Director Mike Madrid was interviewed in Spanish for Univision.

The San Diego Division kicked off the signature-gathering drive with a 10 a.m. press conference. Speakers included San Diego Mayor Dick Murphy, Supervisor Greg Cox, San Diego Council Member and League board member Jim



San Carlos Police Chief Jim Granucci at Bay Area press conference describes tough budget decisions facing police departments as a result of state raids of local revenues.

Madaffer; San Diego Firefighters Local 145 President Ron Saathoff; Santee City Council Member, San Diego Police Officer John Minto; and Leucadia Wastewater District Director Judy Hanson. On hand were mayors and council members from 13 of the 18 cities in the San Diego Division. News coverage was outstanding, with 7 TV news stations, two radio news programs, the Diario Latino daily newspaper and The North County Times.

A combined Peninsula-East Bay Division event was held in the Bay Area. John Russo, Oakland City Attorney and Immediate Past President of the League opened the news conference on the steps of the Alameda County Courthouse with an appeal to voters to restore local democracy in California, announcing that "With the beginning of this campaign we're serving notice on Sacramento that local government is going to change the way government is run in California for the people of California."

Also speaking were Alameda County Supervisor Keith Carson; Fremont firefighter Ron McCormick, President of Local 1689 of the International Association of Firefighters; San Carlos Police Chief Jim Granucci; Sherry Sterrett, a

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**PRESS CONFERENCES from page 6** .....

member of the Pleasant Hill Recreation & Parks District and a board member of the California Special Districts Association; and Jacque Salvador, administrative assistant of Public Employees Union Local One and past President of the California Independent Public Employees Legislative Council. Chief Jim Granucci, representing law enforcement, addressed the tough decisions facing police departments across the State, as their budgets are negatively impacted by on-going state raids of local resources.

The press conference was covered by KPIX TV (CBS), KTVU TV (Fox), KGO TV (ABC), KCBS AM, KQED FM, ANG Newspapers, which includes the Oakland Tribune and also circulates to newspapers in Pleasanton, Fremont, Hayward, Alameda, Marin, Vallejo, Vacaville and San Mateo, and the Contra Costa Times newspaper group, which circulates throughout Contra Costa and Alameda counties.

A final press event was held Feb.13 in the **Los Angeles Division**. Los Angeles Mayor Jim Hahn spoke in front of the Hollenbeck Police Station, together with Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Chairman Don Knabe, Long Beach Mayor Beverly O'Neill and other local and public safety officials. The event was covered extensively by the media, including: KNBC TV, Fox TV, The Los Angeles Times, the Daily News, La Opinion, the Chinese Daily News, City News Service, Copely News Service, KTCT Radio and KNX 1070 radio.

**Help Save Campaign Money for Advertising and Other Direct Voter Contact.** The importance of volunteer signature gathering cannot be overstated. Each signature collected by the paid signature-gathering firm will cost the campaign \$1.50 to \$3, and possibly more, depending upon how long it takes to gather the required number of signatures. That money could instead be used to pay for TV airtime, direct mail, and other forms of direct voter contact in the fall. With a large number of initiatives expected on the November ballot, our effort needs all the air time and direct voter persuasion we can afford!

Utilizing the momentum from the major media roll-out, all League Divisions have begun volunteer signature gathering efforts. In the **Central Valley**

**Division**, acting on his own time, Division President and Mayor of the City of Galt Darryl Clare, urged members of his Division to become personally involved in the signature gathering:

"We're asking all mayors and council members in the Central Valley to get personally involved in this campaign by signing and circulating petitions, asking family members, neighbors and friends to sign and circulate petitions, and — most important — by making sure their citizens understand the critical role between the success of this ballot measure and the healthy future of their cities."

City officials interested in helping with this volunteer effort, or who can suggest large community events or venues in their area should contact their League Regional Representative. More information is available on the campaign website at [www.protectlocalservices.com](http://www.protectlocalservices.com).

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**INITIATIVE "CALL TO ACTION" INSPIRES VOTER, CITY OFFICIAL RESPONSE**

"Don't be surprised if you start getting emails from citizens wanting to help out," was the message of one of the League's regional representatives the morning after the press conference in her area that kicked off local signature-gathering efforts for the League/CSAC/CSDA initiative. Checking email, she found a message from a woman who watched the local news the previous evening, visited the campaign web site, found the representative's email address and immediately sent her a note.

The voter's message read: "I heard on the news last night that the city wants to collect signatures to put a proposition on the ballot to make it illegal for the state to take city taxes. I will gladly volunteer to collect signatures. City taxes belong to the city - the state can balance its budget with the state taxes they collect."

"She's getting some blue (signature) forms tomorrow!" wrote the regional representative.

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League Board Member Audra Gibson, Mayor of Mt. Shasta City, found an immediate, practical way to lend support for the League initiative by signing over her vehicle license fee refund check to the campaign committee which is raising funds to help pass the initiative.



Mt. Shasta City Mayor Audra Gibson endorses her VLF refund check in the amount of \$264.45 payable to the campaign to support the Local Taxpayers and Public Safety Act.

"I would like to invite others to contribute their Vehicle License Fee refund check to the campaign to support the Local Taxpayers and Public Safety Act initiative," said Gibson. "What a great message to send the state's own check as a contribution ... it's perfect irony ...."

To find out more about how you can help, contact your League Regional Representative or visit the campaign website at [www.protectlocalservices.com](http://www.protectlocalservices.com). To make an online contribution, please visit [www.citipac.org](http://www.citipac.org).

The Administration is pressing for a \$256 billion 6-year bill and has targeted the Senate-passed \$318 billion measure as an example of what it considers government overspending. On February 11, the Administration warned that it will veto the legislation and that it opposes efforts to pay for the Senate bill by raising the gas tax, pushing bonding initiatives, or shifting money from the Treasury's general fund rather than from the Highway Trust Fund. Still another potential complication is an effort to attach a pared-down version of last session's failed omnibus energy bill to the reauthorization bill. Many believe such an effort will minimize its chance for passage.

The House has yet to move its \$375 billion version of the legislation. House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Don Young (R-AK) has signaled that he is willing to scale back his \$375 billion six-year reauthorization bill after strong opposition from the Administration for his proposal to increase the federal gasoline tax to finance the reauthorization measure. The Chairman has not yet indicated what funding level he is willing to support, and no markups of a long-term transportation funding bill are scheduled.

In the interim, the House voted 421-0 on Thursday for a four-month extension of the current surface transportation law, which was extended once last fall and is set to expire on February 29. The newly House-passed measure will expire on June 30. The bill may receive opposition in the Senate, where legislators would prefer a shorter extension to keep up the pressure to act on the six-year authorization.

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Visit the League's website [www.cacities.org/ed](http://www.cacities.org/ed) for a complete schedule of upcoming meetings. View dates, locations and pricing information up to a year in advance. Not only can you register online or view the current program or outline for these meetings, you can use this information to help plan your meeting schedule and budget expenses for the upcoming year. New 2004 meeting information is currently available and continuously updated.