

# THE VOORHIS VOICE

Liberal Voice of the Pomona Valley

February, 2012

[www.claremontdems.org](http://www.claremontdems.org)

## MEETINGS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Friday, Feb 3, 2012, 12 – 2 PM

Rabi's Café, 930 Central Avenue, Upland

**Issues Committee Luncheon**

No speaker: Bring your issue

Friday, Feb. 10, 2012, 12 - 2 PM

**Monthly Luncheon at the LYL Gardens Restaurant**

921 W. Foothill Blvd., Claremont, 91711. Tel. 626-9151

Cost is ten dollars; meal is served family style. No pork on menu; some vegetarian dishes.

Friday, Feb 17, 2012, 12 – 2 PM

Rabi's Café, 930 Central Avenue, Upland

**Issues Committee Luncheon**

No speaker: Bring your issue

Friday, Feb 24, 2012, 12 – 2 PM

Rabi's Café, 930 Central Avenue, Upland

**Issues Committee Luncheon**

No speaker: Bring your issue

Monday Feb. 27, 2012, 6 – 9:30 PM

**Monthly Membership Meeting at Porter Hall**

601 Mayflower Rd., Pilgrim Place Campus, Claremont

Access Porter Hall from the west side of Berkeley St. at 6th Street

## Assemblyman Tim Donnelly Arrested in Gun Crime

Ontario, January 4, 2012 — Assemblyman Tim Donnelly was cited today for carrying a loaded .45-caliber handgun in his carry-on bag at the Ontario airport. The Tea Party Republican was stopped at a security checkpoint, detained, and cited by airport police. . . Donnelly's carry-on bag housed a .45-caliber Colt Mark IV that had four live rounds in its magazine and a spare magazine with five additional rounds. . . The incident sparked confusion because Donnelly's initial citation specified that the gun was unloaded. Ontario airport police later released a revised statement saying that the charge will be possession of a loaded firearm. . . Possession of a loaded firearm in an airport security zone is a misdemeanor, punishable by a maximum sentence of one year in jail and a \$1,000 fine. Since candidate Donnelly had previously promised, if elected, to “annihilate” Democrats in the State Assembly, his detention sparked renewed concerns regarding his intentions and sanity.

Source: [\*The Sacramento Bee\*](#)

## Occupy the Economy

by Charles Boyer

This is the second column I write regarding the issues that underlie the Occupy demonstrations. Robert Jenson of the University of Texas suggests three issues in this substratum: Empire, Economy and Environment. Jenson opines that the genius of Occupy does not lie in specific complaints to be rectified with legislative action, but in addressing the subsurface pathologies. The VV's focus this week is economics. While acknowledging the validity of the underlying complaints, I am also suggesting initial steps in addressing them.

Few in Occupy would seriously argue that the capitalistic system must be scrapped in favor of collective ownership. Neither is the goal to replace income inequality with income equality. While many in the Occupy networks are visionaries, the movement is shot through with realism. A sturdy economy relies on those with sufficient capital who create the businesses and the jobs that flow from them. Occupy's complaint lies in the inordinately unequal distribution of wealth in which the flow is dramatically upward in favor of an economic oligarchy at the expense of everyone else — the 99%. It is the maldistribution of wealth, exacerbated by the obscene power the wealth owners possess, which guarantees the inequity. Power buys money, and money buys power, and caught in this cycle, the American dream is decimated. While Occupy avoids any specific solutions to the underlying issues it raises, let me suggest three and amplify the third.

### **1 — Expand the distance between corporate money and the politicians that money buys**

While it is doubtful we will very soon see the public funding of elections, the super-pacs allowed by the Citizens United decision, must be confronted, if in no other way than by a Constitutional amendment. The hundreds of millions of slush fund dollars that now come through allowable corporate contributions buys politicians who need the money in order to be reelected, and also buys the TV ads that dominate every election. Our democracy is not only being compromised, the current system guarantees that the political dynamics, which would insure a fairer division of the nation's economic pie, remains an impossible goal.

## **2 — Revise the tax code**

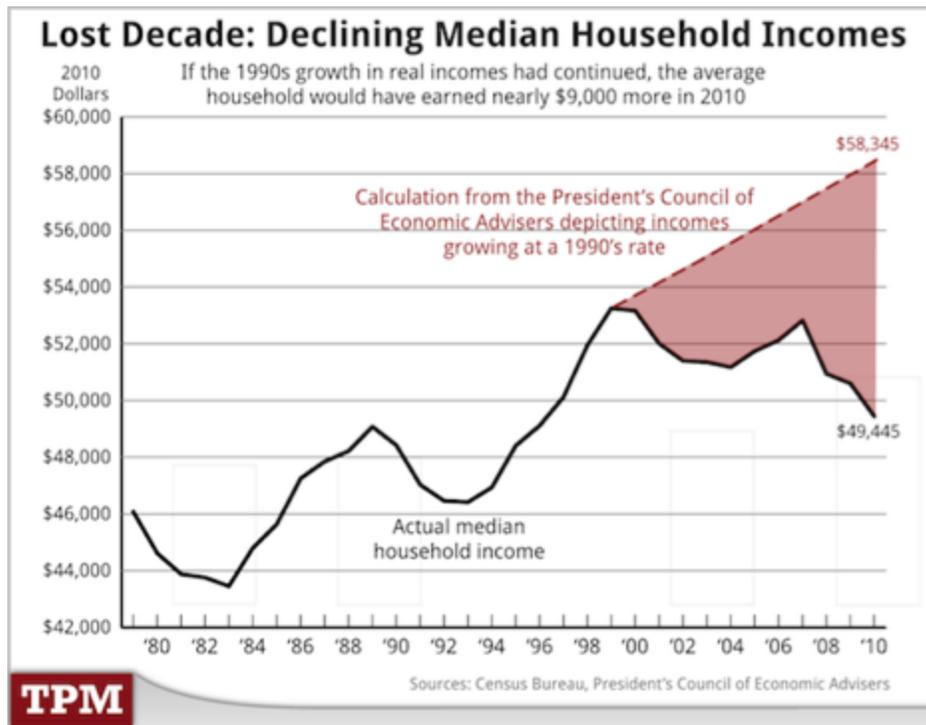
Revising the tax code so that those who have made enormous fortunes pay something back for what America has given them for free. Enormous tax loopholes guarantee that the wealthiest individuals and corporations pay inadequate rates. It is common knowledge that if you or your company are facing exceedingly large tax bills, you need to fire your accountants. Tax rates for corporations and the very wealthy are now lower than they have been in half a century. Not renewing the Bush tax cuts for the top group of earners—much of whose income is either inherited or comes via capital gains—remains a necessity.

## **3 — Put money into the hands of the middle class**

The major cause of the current recession is not that corporate America has an inadequate supply of investment capital, but that the 99% don't have money to purchase what the economy produces. Corporations currently have stockpiled over three trillion dollars they will not invest in producing products that American's don't have the money to buy. How then can the nation's wealth be modestly redivided so that more of it ends up on the plates of the 99%?

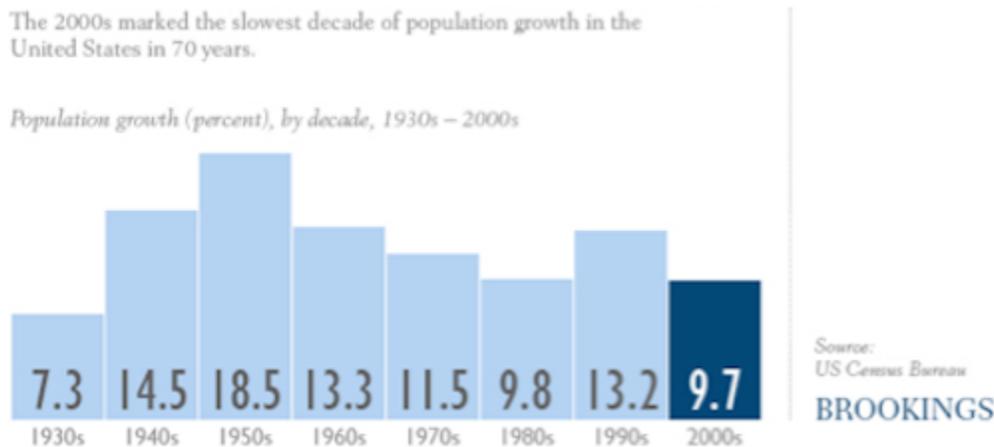
First, offer tax breaks to the middle-class. Second, invest in infrastructure. The infusion of government money in renewing America's roads, bridges, sewers and schools, while investing in education, scientific exploration and universal health care. Third, restore the purchasing power of America's workers. Money in the pockets of consumers is not only a fair way to close the enormous gap between the rich and the rest of us, it also provides the economic stimulus which is necessary to generate corporate investment. This involves dramatically increasing the minimum wage. Henry Ford paid his workers well so that they could buy his cars. At the same time we must reverse the popular class-warfare against unions. Significant purchasing power on Main Street would be a boon to Wall Street. No community suffers because its middle-class is economically solid, and a vigorous union movement is essential to actualizing that reality. Yet unions are being scapegoated as causing America's economic problems.

If money in the pockets of America's middle-class helps close the gap between the rich and the rest of us, and at the same time eases the recession, we have addressed two of America's persistent problems. The trick is finding ways to more equitably share America's wealth without radically changing our capitalist system. Occupy's concern with the underlying issues may produce a few of the answers.



**Chart above: Incomes soared under Clinton; sagged under George W. Bush, our “worst President ever.”**

## The United States is Growing More Slowly



The 2000s marked the slowest decade of population growth in 70 years. The country grew by 9.7 percent, adding 27.3 million people from 2000 to 2010. The pullback from rapid 13.2 percent growth in the 1990s reflects slower U.S. economic growth across the decade, reduced immigration and birth rates.

As in previous decades, the Sun Belt accounted for most of the nation’s population growth in the 2000s. Southern and Western states added 23 million people, compared to just 4 million added in the

Northeast and Midwest. Las Vegas and Raleigh were the fastest-growing metros while Detroit and Youngstown lost residents. And suburbs continued to grow faster than cities. However, many of these patterns began to shift in the late 2000s amid a housing market crash that hit fast-growing Sun Belt and outer suburban locations especially hard.

Despite the recent decade's slowdown, America remains one of the fastest-growing developed nations. We added the equivalent of more than three-quarters of Canada's population in just 10 years, helping to replenish our workforce and offset the costs of an aging society. Population growth will continue to vary greatly across the national and metropolitan maps, but ongoing restructuring in the U.S. economy and housing market may reduce somewhat the imbalances from the 2000s in the years to come.

Source: [Brookings Institution](#), January 6, 2012

## **How the Bush Administration Mismanaged the Reconstruction of Afghanistan**

By Dov S. Zakheim

The "Vulcans," . . . , were eight foreign policy experts who advised George W. Bush during his 2000 presidential campaign. After Bush assumed the presidency, the Vulcans helped shape the administration's foreign policy following 9/11, including the military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. All were veterans of past administrations, having served under either Ronald Reagan or George H.W. Bush, and they included among their ranks Dov Zakheim. Made comptroller and chief financial officer for the Department of Defense in 2001, Zakheim was also named the DoD's coordinator for Afghan civilian reconstruction in 2002.

In *A Vulcan's Tale*, Zakheim draws on his own participation and intimate knowledge to analyze how the United States missed critical opportunities while it struggled to manage two wars, particularly the seemingly endless endeavor in Afghanistan. In his view, the Bush administration's disappointing results in Afghanistan were partly attributable to the enormity of the challenges, certainly. But flawed leadership and deficiencies of management, understanding, and forethought all played their parts as well.

The power of the purse proved to be especially damaging. The Office of Management and Budget was slow to fund Defense's efforts at the outset of the Afghan conflict and then inadequately funded the State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development, casting the die for several additional years of conflict. The invasion of Iraq siphoned off critical resources for Afghanistan, thereby further complicating that country's reconstruction.

Order Zakheim's book from the [Brookings Institution Press](#), \$32

## **GOP Super PACs Attacking Each Other**

By Joe Garofoli

*Des Moines, Iowa, Jan. 5, 2012* — Mitt Romney barely won (then lost on a recount) the Iowa caucus with the help of an ominous new trend in politics: Anonymous corporate money. The Iowa race was a national showcase for new political action committees known as super PACs. Super PACS are now permitted to receive unlimited donations from corporations and individuals. Super PACs are reshaping the Republican race this year because federal election rules don't require them to reveal their donors until January 31 - the day of the Florida primary and after voters in Iowa, New Hampshire and South Carolina have cast ballots.

Born out of the Supreme Court's "Citizens United" decision in 2010, the anonymous PACs spent \$12.9 million through December 31, according to the nonpartisan Center for Public Integrity. Much of that was directed toward the 122,000 Iowa Republicans who cast ballots Tuesday. The largest spender was a super PAC supporting Romney called Restore Our Future. The source of these funds is confidential.

Partisan TV ads funded by the pro-Romney Super PAC sank the campaign of onetime Iowa front-runner Newt Gingrich with a \$4.1 million onslaught of TV ads in the final weeks before the caucuses. . . Gingrich struck back in South Carolina after receiving a \$10 million gift from an Sheldon Adelson, billionaire owner of the Venetian casino in Las Vegas as well as gambling casinos in Macao, China. Unlike traditional political action committees, super PACs cannot legally communicate with the campaign they are supporting. So Romney could - and did - claim that he wasn't coordinating with Restore Our Future. Dozens of super PACs have been formed, with many holding their fire until the general election.

Every GOP presidential candidate has one acting on his behalf. Make Us Great Again supports Texas Gov. Rick Perry and is run by Perry's former chief of staff. It has spent \$3.7 million so far. A super PAC known as Our Destiny PAC that is supporting former Utah Gov. Jon Huntsman is funded in large part by his wealthy father, Jon Huntsman Sr., and has spent \$2.2 million.

Source: [San Francisco Chronicle](#)



Above: No, this is not our candidate for Congress. Taken by a New Deal agency, this historic color photo shows a farm couple in New Mexico, 1940. Photo: Farm Security Administration Source: [Denver Post](#)

## Evangelicals Reject Romney

*Brenham TX, January 15, 2012* — A week before the South Carolina GOP primary, one hundred evangelical Christian leaders attending a convention in Texas voted overwhelmingly to back Santorum for the Republican nomination. According to the New York Times, a majority of evangelicals regard Romney as a non-Christian, and hold his religious identity against him. Romney is a Mormon. Evangelicals also fear that, if elected, Romney would enable the Mormon Church to proselytize effectively around the world, possibly in competition with the evangelicals.

Mormons consider themselves Christians, but a majority of evangelical Christians disagree, citing theological differences. Mormons reject orthodox Trinitarian theology; they believe instead in a physical Father God and a physical Mother God, married to one another, as well as a physical Jesus of Nazareth, their son. The Mormons' "blurring of the line" between God and humanity is hard for evangelicals to accept. Additionally, many Mormons believe that dead Mormons reign as gods over distant planets. The concept of godhood after death is not new, but the origins are not Christian. "I think I am becoming a god" was the last words of the Roman Emperor, Caligula. Mormon religious ideas are incompatible with evangelical Protestants' concept of Christianity, and, since most evangelicals vote Republican, the disaffection of this constituency undermines Romney's chances in November, 2012, and also explains in some measure the rejections he is experiencing in state primaries.

Source: [New York Times](#), Jan. 15, 2012, p. 17

## Frustration with Congress Could Hurt GOP

Public discontent with Congress has reached record levels, and the implications for incumbents in next year's elections could be stark, according to the latest national survey by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, conducted December 7-11. Two-in-three voters say most members of Congress should be voted out of office in 2012 - the highest on record. And the number who say their own member should be replaced matches the all-time high recorded in 2010, when fully 58 members of Congress lost reelection bids - the most in any election since 1948.

The Republican Party is taking more of the blame than the Democrats for a do-nothing Congress. A record-high 50% say that the current Congress has accomplished less than other recent Congresses, and by nearly two-to-one (40% to 23%) more blame Republican leaders than Democratic leaders for this. By wide margins, the GOP is seen as the party that is more extreme in its positions, less willing to work with the other side to get things done, and less honest and ethical in the way it governs. And for the first time in over two years, the Democratic Party has gained the edge as the party better able to manage the federal government.

<b>Record Anti-Incumbent Sentiment</b>				
<i>Want to see...</i>	<b>Feb 2006</b>	<b>Feb 2008</b>	<b>Feb 2010</b>	<b>Dec 2011</b>
<b>Most members reelected</b>	%	%	%	%
Yes	36	36	32	20
No	49	49	53	67
Don't know	<u>15</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>13</u>
	100	100	100	100
<b>Your representative reelected</b>				
Yes	59	60	49	50
No	28	22	31	33
Other/Don't know	<u>13</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>17</u>
	100	100	100	100
<b># of incumbents who lost reelection bids</b>	24	23	58	--

Source: [Pew Research Foundation](#), December 15, 2011

## Gingrich Roasts Romney and Vice-Versa

"Gingrich says that he wants everyone to enjoy Romney's 15 percent tax rate. Romney points out that under the Gingrich tax plan, investment gains would be taxed at zero. "Under that plan, I'd have paid no taxes in the last two years," Romney says. This is true. It is the reason Gingrich's policies are even better for wealthy financiers than Romney's policies. Romney would keep his own tax rate on investments at 15%."

But thanks also to Gingrich for bringing out the long-term relationship between Romney and Goldman Sachs. When in 1989 Romney's Bain Capital sought to raise money for a fast-growing office-supply company named Staples, Romney called on a trusted business partner: Goldman Sachs, whose bankers led the company's initial public offering. Goldman Sachs subsequently managed Romney's blind trust when Romney was Governor of Massachusetts. And, as of September, 2011, Goldman Sachs employees had contributed \$367,000 to Mitt Romney's campaign, making Goldman Sachs the Romney campaign's single largest donor. If elected, according to the AP, Romney "would be among the richest presidents in American history — probably in the top four."

Source: [Time](#) Magazine and the [New York Times](#)

## **Governor's State of the State Message, 2012**

By Jerry Brown

"California is on the mend. Last year, we were looking at a structural deficit of over \$20 billion. It was a real mess. But you rose to the occasion and together we shrunk state government, reduced our borrowing costs and transferred key functions to local government, closer to the people. The result is a problem one fourth as large as the one we confronted last year.

"My goal then was to balance budget cuts with a temporary extension of existing taxes—if the voters approved. You made the reductions and some very difficult decisions but the four Republican votes needed to put the tax measure on the ballot were not there. So we are left with unfinished business: closing the remaining gap.

"Again, I propose cuts and temporary taxes. Neither is popular but both must be done. In a world still reeling from the near collapse of the financial system, it makes no sense to spend more than we have. The financial downgrading of the United States, as well as of several governments in Europe, should be warning enough. It is said that the road to hell is paved with good intentions and digging ourselves into a deep financial hole—to do good—is a bad idea. In this time of uncertainty, prudence and paying down debt is the best policy.

"For my part, I am determined to press ahead both with substantial budget cuts and my tax initiative. The cuts are not ones I like but the situation demands them. As for the initiative, it is fair. It is temporary. It is half of what people were paying in 2010. And it will protect our schools and guarantee—in the constitution—funding for the public safety programs we transferred to local government. With enough time, we can and should devise more permanent tax reform but for now we should finish the job of bringing spending into balance with revenues.

"Putting our fiscal house in order is good stewardship and helps us regain the trust of the people. It also builds confidence in California as a place to invest and realize one's dreams. Contrary to those critics who fantasize that California is a failed state, I see unspent potential and incredible opportunity. Every decade since the 60's, dystopian journalists write stories on the impending decline of our economy, our culture and our politics. Yes, it is fair to say that California is turbulent, less predictable and, well, different. Yet, look at the facts.

"After the mortgage bubble burst in 2007, California lost a million jobs, much of it driven by the

overleveraged construction industry and its financial partners in the under-regulated mortgage industry. The result is a recovery far slower than after the previous six national recessions. But now we are coming back. In 2011, California personal income grew by almost \$100 billion and 230,000 jobs were created—a rate much higher than the nation as a whole.

“Contrary to those declinists, who sing of Texas and bemoan our woes, California is still the land of dreams—as well as the Dream Act. It’s the place where Apple, Intel, Hewlett-Packard, Oracle, QUALCOMM, Twitter, Facebook and countless other creative companies all began. It’s home to more Nobel Laureates and venture capital investment than any other state. In 2010, California received 48% of U.S. venture capital investments. In the first three months of last year it rose even higher—to 52%. That is more than four times greater than the next recipient, Massachusetts. As for new patents, California inventors were awarded almost four times as many as inventors from the next state, New York.

“California has problems but rumors of its demise are greatly exaggerated.

“The year 2012 presents plenty of opportunity and, if we work together, we can:

- Stimulate jobs
- Build renewable energy
- Reduce pollution and greenhouse gasses
- Launch the nation’s only high-speed rail system
- Reach agreement on a plan to fix the Delta
- Improve our schools
- Reform our pensions, and,
- Make sure that prison realignment is working—to protect public safety and reduce recidivism.

“Last year, I appointed a top advisor with an impressive background in the private sector and charged him with finding out what doesn’t work for business in this state and how to fix it. What he heard consistently was that business needed an effective champion to navigate the state’s plethora of complex laws and regulations which can discourage investment and job creation. You enacted a law to restructure our office of business development and place it in the governor’s office. Under the name GO-BIZ, we now have a point of contact at the highest level for businesses large and small. More than that, the GO-BIZ office is staffed with people who understand what it’s like to be in business and stand ready to intervene and give real help to get businesses open and projects off the ground.

“Already California is leading the nation in creating jobs in renewable energy and the design and construction of more efficient buildings and new technologies. Our state keeps demanding more efficient structures, cars, machines and electric devices. We do that because we understand that fossil fuels, particularly foreign oil, create ever rising costs to our economy and to our health. It is true that the renewable energy sector is small relative to the overall economy but it pays good wages and will only grow bigger as oil prices increase and the effects of climate change become more obvious and expensive.

“I have set a goal of 20,000 megawatts of renewable energy by 2020. You have laid the foundation by adopting the requirement that one third of our electricity come from renewable sources by that date. This morning I can tell you we are on track to meet that goal and substantially exceed it. In the last two years alone, California has permitted over 16,000 megawatts of solar, wind and geothermal

energy projects.

“In the beginning of the computer industry, jobs were numbered in the thousands. Now they are in the millions. The same thing will happen with green jobs. And California is positioned perfectly to reap the economic benefits that will inevitably flow. California also leads the nation in cleaning up the air, encouraging electric vehicles and reducing pollution and greenhouse gases. Our vehicle emissions standards—which have always set the pace—now have been adopted by the federal government for the rest of the country.

“Under AB 32, California has stepped out and crafted a bold plan to deal with climate change and foreign oil dependency. The plan will require less carbon in our fuels, more efficient technologies across a broad swath of businesses and a carefully designed cap and trade system that uses market incentives instead of prescriptive mandates.

“As a result, California is attracting billions of dollars in clean tech venture capital investments. In 2011, almost 40% of such investments were made in California, making our state not only the leader in the nation but in the world.

“My commitment is to continue these innovative programs and build on them in the coming year in every way that I can. Just as bold is our plan to build a high-speed rail system, connecting the Northern and Southern parts of our state. This is not a new idea. As governor the last time, I signed legislation to study the concept. Now thirty years later, we are within weeks of a revised business plan that will enable us to begin initial construction before the year is out.

“President Obama strongly supports the project and has provided the majority of funds for this first phase. It is now your decision to evaluate the plan and decide what action to take. Without any hesitation, I urge your approval.

“If you believe that California will continue to grow, as I do, and that millions more people will be living in our state, this is a wise investment. Building new runways and expanding our airports and highways is the only alternative. That is not cheaper and will face even more political opposition.

“Those who believe that California is in decline will naturally shrink back from such a strenuous undertaking. I understand that feeling but I don’t share it, because I know this state and the spirit of the people who choose to live here. California is still the Gold Mountain that Chinese immigrants in 1848 came across the Pacific to find. The wealth is different, derived as it is, not from mining the Sierras but from the creative imagination of those who invent and build and generate the ideas that drive our economy forward.

“Critics of the high-speed rail project abound as they often do when something of this magnitude is proposed. During the 1930’s, The Central Valley Water Project was called a “fantastic dream” that “will not work.” The Master Plan for the Interstate Highway System in 1939 was derided as “new Deal jitterbug economics.” In 1966, then Mayor Johnson of Berkeley called BART a “billion dollar potential fiasco.” Similarly, the Panama Canal was for years thought to be impractical and Benjamin Disraeli himself said of the Suez Canal: “totally impossible to be carried out.” The critics were wrong then and they’re wrong now.

“Another huge issue we must tackle is water. Last week, Secretary of the Interior, Ken Salazar, met

here in Sacramento with those in my administration who are working to complete the Bay Delta Conservation Plan. Together we agreed that by this summer we should have the basic elements of the project we need to build. This is something my father worked on and then I worked on—decades ago. We know more now and are committed to the dual goals of restoring the Delta ecosystem and ensuring a reliable water supply.

“This is an enormous project. It will ensure water for 25 million Californians and for millions of acres of farmland as well a hundred thousand acres of new habitat for spawning fish and other wildlife. To get it done will require time, political will and countless permits from state and federal agencies. I invite your collaboration and constructive engagement.

“Next, I want to say something about our schools. They consume more tax dollars than any other government activity and rightly so as they have a profound effect on our future. Since everyone goes to school, everyone thinks they know something about education and in a sense they do. But that doesn’t stop experts and academics and foundation consultants from offering their ideas — usually labeled reform and regularly changing at ten year intervals—on how to get kids learning more and better. It is salutary and even edifying that so much interest is shown in the next generation. Nevertheless, in a state with six million students, 300,000 teachers, deep economic divisions and a hundred different languages, some humility is called for.

“In that spirit, I offer these thoughts. First, responsibility must be clearly delineated between the various levels of power that have a stake in our educational system. What most needs to be avoided is concentrating more and more decision-making at the federal or state level. For better or worse, we depend on elected school boards and the principals and the teachers they hire. To me that means, we should set broad goals and have a good accountability system, leaving the real work to those closest to the students. Yes, we should demand continuous improvement in meeting our state standards but we should not impose excessive or detailed mandates.

“My budget proposes to replace categorical programs with a new weighted student formula that provides a basic level of funding with additional money for disadvantaged students and those struggling to learn English. This will give more authority to local school districts to fashion the kind of programs they see their students need. It will also create transparency, reduce bureaucracy and simplify complex funding streams.

“Given the cutbacks to education in recent years, it is imperative that California devote more tax dollars to this most basic of public services. If we are successful in passing the temporary taxes I have proposed and the economy continues to expand, schools will be in a much stronger position.

“No system, however, works without accountability. In California we have detailed state standards and lots of tests. Unfortunately, the resulting data is not provided until after the school year is over. Even today, the ranking of schools based on tests taken in April and May of 2011 is not available. I believe it is time to reduce the number of tests and get the results to teachers, principals and superintendents in weeks, not months. With timely data, principals and superintendents can better mentor and guide teachers as well as make sound evaluations of their performance. I also believe we need a qualitative system of assessments, such as a site visitation program where each classroom is visited, observed and evaluated. I will work with the State Board of Education to develop this proposal.

“The house of education is divided by powerful forces and strong emotions. My role as governor is not to choose sides but to listen, to engage and to lead. I will do that. I embrace both reform and tradition—not complacency. My hunch is that principals and teachers know the most, but I’ll take good ideas from wherever they come.

“As for pensions, I have put forth my 12 point proposal. Examine it. Improve it. But please take up the issue and do something real. I am committed to pension reform because I believe there is a real problem. Three times as many people are retiring as are entering the workforce. That arithmetic doesn’t add up. In addition, benefits, contributions and the age of retirement all have to balance. I don’t believe they do today. So we have to take action. And we should do it this year.

“As for prison realignment, we are just at the beginning. The cooperation of sheriffs, police chiefs, probation officers, district attorneys and local officials has been remarkable. But we have much to do—to protect public safety and reduce recidivism—and together, we’ll get it done. It is one thing to pass a law and quite another to implement it and make it work.

“As I see it, that’s my job as governor and chief executive: make the operations of government work—efficiently, honestly and in the peoples’ interest. With your help, that’s what we’ll do in 2012 and prove the declinists wrong once again.”

## **Claremont Residents Protest Water Rates**

*Claremont, January 27, 2012* — About 50 people gathered in front of Golden State Water Company’s Claremont office on Thursday, picketing to demand lower water rates. The mid-afternoon protest was the latest initiative led by Claremont Against Outrageous Water Rates, a grassroots movement fighting another additional water rate increases in 2013. Golden State Water filed its application to charge higher prices with the California Public Utilities Commission last July. The process is currently in review and a decision is anticipated late this fall. The Democratic Club of Claremont spoke against the price increase before the Public Utility Commission in December, and has forwarded a resolution opposing the price increase to the Los Angeles County Democratic Party.

## **Romney and the Tax Code**

The effective federal income tax rate paid by the wealthiest Americans has dropped significantly during the last several decades, largely because of tax cuts on investment income. Mitt Romney was right about that. The last major overhaul of the tax code, signed by President Ronald Reagan in 1986, set tax rates on capital gains at the same level as the rates on ordinary income like salaries and wages, with both topping out at 28 percent. But that link was uncoupled by his successor, President George Bush, and the rates on capital gains were reduced by President Bill Clinton. President George W. Bush then lowered the rates on capital gains and dividends to a high of 15 percent — less than half the 35 percent top rate on ordinary income.

While rates for all American taxpayers have fallen to near 50-year lows, the wealthy have reaped the most savings from the changes because they derive a larger proportion of their income from

investments. Between 1985 and 2008, the wealthiest 400 Americans saw the percentage of their income paid in federal income taxes drop from 29 percent to 18 percent, according to data from the Internal Revenue Service.

Some economists say the cuts are necessary to keep capital from fleeing the United States to lower-tax countries. . . But there is little data to support that contention: The nonpartisan Congressional Research Service issued a report last year concluding that tax cuts on capital gains reduce federal revenues and do little to stimulate economic growth. . . The issue of tax fairness has brought calls to alter the tax code's preferential treatment of investment income.

Mitt Romney now admits that he pays approximately 15 percent of his income in taxes (he actually paid 13.5% in 2010), and also has between eight and thirty-two million dollars stashed in a Grand Cayman Islands tax haven. In acknowledging that most of his income comes from investments, and very little from working, Mitt Romney underscored a fact likely to figure prominently in attacks from Democrats: Romney is among the small percentage of very wealthy Americans who have benefited enormously from shifts in federal tax policy that have pushed federal tax rates on investment income well below the top 35 percent rate for wages and salaries, which constitute most earnings for the vast majority of people. Romney pays a much lower rate of taxes than do his maids, valets, hair dressers, cooks, tailors, and chauffeurs.

Source: [New York Times](#), January 18, 2012

## **Five Things Everyone Should Know About Mitt's Taxes**

1. Mitt's got millions invested in the Cayman Islands "Although it is not apparent on his financial disclosure form, Mitt Romney has millions of dollars of his personal wealth in investment funds set up in the Cayman Islands, a notorious Caribbean tax haven." – ABC News
2. Mitt pays a tax rate lower than most middle-class Americans Even though Mitt's worth as much as \$250 million, "Republican candidate Mitt Romney believes his effective tax rate—the share of his income he pays in federal taxes—is around 15%, or, as he put it, "probably closer to the 15 percent rate than anything..." – Christian Science Monitor
3. Under Mitt's own tax plan, he'd pay half of what he'd pay otherwise "Under his plan, Romney in 2013 would see his taxes cut by nearly half of what they would be if you use current law as a baseline." – Washington Post
4. Mitt jokes he's "unemployed," but he's still making millions a year off investments "In what would be the final deal of his private equity career, he negotiated a retirement agreement with his former partners that has paid him a share of Bain's profits ever since, bringing the Romney family millions of dollars in income each year and bolstering the fortune that has helped finance Mr. Romney's political aspirations." – New York Times
5. Mitt made over \$300,000 in speaking fees last year—but called it "not that much" "He also said he had earned 'a little bit of income' from his book, which he donated to charity, and 'speakers' fees from time to time, but not very much.' Romney earned almost \$375,000 in speaking fees from Feb. 26, 2010, to Feb. 20, 2011, according to his personal financial disclosure." – Bloomberg

Source: [DNC](#)

## **GOP Dominates Sunday Morning Talk Shows**

GOP lawmakers appeared on the Sunday shows nearly twice as often as Democratic lawmakers in 2011, a dominance far greater than the prior two years, according to a Roll Call database of Members' television appearances.

Roll Call's "Face Time" feature has for many years tracked appearances of Members of Congress on five major Sunday talk shows: "Face the Nation" on CBS, NBC's "Meet the Press," ABC's "This Week," CNN's "State of the Union" and "Fox News Sunday."

In 2009 and 2010, Republican Members held a small advantage over Democratic Members in appearances on these programs, getting 52 percent of the invites in both years. In both years, CBS had more Democrats as guests than Republicans by a narrow margin; in the same period, Fox News had more Republican guests by a wider margin.

But in 2011, the GOP lawmakers captured 64 percent of the Congressional appearances on the five shows that Roll Call tracks, and every network featured more Republican lawmakers than Democrats. Of 330 Congressional appearances tallied by Roll Call last year, 210 went to Republicans and only 120 went to Democrats. The trend plays out in each network as well as in aggregate. For example, in 2009, CNN's "State of the Union" featured Republican Members of Congress 43 times and Democrats 41 times, plus three by Democratic-leaning Independents. In 2010, the show had 35 Democratic lawmaker appearances, Lieberman was on twice and Republican Members appeared 28 times. But in 2011, the numbers flipped, with 51 Republican appearances, 28 Democrats and three visits by Lieberman.

Sources at CNN and ABC point out that Roll Call's tally counts only Members of Congress; the shows generally achieve a partisan balance by inviting members of the Democratic administration — or President Barack Obama's campaign apparatus — to counter the appearances of Republican lawmakers who are the newsmakers in Congress.

A change in the partisan balance of talk-show guests overall may simply be a reflection of news value. Michael Shanahan, assistant director of the George Washington University School of Media and Public Affairs, said, "Democrats aren't all that interesting." Some of the Republican TV gains in 2011 are clearly connected to the tumultuous GOP presidential primary season.

Source: [Rollcall.com](#)

## **Contacting Local Newspapers by Email**

[Editor@claremont-courier.com](mailto:Editor@claremont-courier.com)

[Letters@inlandnewspapers.com](mailto:Letters@inlandnewspapers.com)

[Inlandvalley@LATimes.com](mailto:Inlandvalley@LATimes.com)

## Contacting the Federal Government

Capitol switchboard: 202 224 3121

Senate Web Site: [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov)

House Web Site: [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov)

White House switchboard: 202 456 1414

### Public Perceptions of Conflict Between Rich and Poor

*% who say there are "very strong" or "strong" conflicts between the rich and the poor*

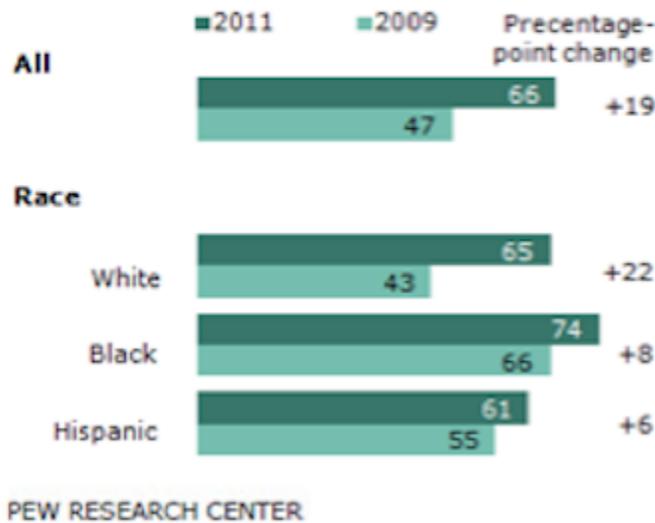


Chart Above: Majorities perceive Class Conflict in USA

There was a big jump between 2009 and 2011, probably because of Occupy Wall Street.

## Obama is Biggest Recipient of Donations from Private Equity

... The biggest beneficiary of campaign contributions from private equity donors in 2011 was - **President Obama**, not Mitt Romney. Of the \$17 million the [private equity] sector poured into campaigns, from 2007 to 2011, Obama received close to \$2 million, according to numbers compiled by MapLight, the Berkeley nonpartisan research organization that publishes data on campaign contributions and their links to issues before Congress.

Out of the \$20 million in contributions to congressional lawmakers from 2001 to 2011, the six biggest recipients were Democrats, headed by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton . . . Besides Sen. John McCain . . the only other Republicans to figure in the top 10 over the same period, are Sen. Mark Kirk, R-Ill., who filled the seat vacated by Obama, and Senate Minority Leader, Mitch

McConnell, R-Ky.

In total, since Obama started running for president in 2007, Democratic lawmakers have received almost twice as much [from private equity donors]- close to \$11 million - as Republicans (\$6.5 million). Of course, being a presidential candidate, then president, does attract donations from financial fat cats. So does being in charge of the Senate, especially when three of the top recipients – Hilary Clinton, and Democratic Senators Chuck Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand stem from New York where Wall Street financiers are constituents. In contrast, Senator Boxer copped a measly \$89,000 from financial fat cats over 10 years; former House Speaker Pelosi \$77,500; and Senator Feinstein, only \$75,000.

Source: [\*San Francisco Chronicle\*](#), January 13, 2012, p. D-1.

## Abraham Lincoln on War Powers

“Allow the President to invade a neighboring nation whenever he shall deem it necessary to repel an invasion, and you allow him to do so whenever he may *choose to say* he deems it necessary for such a purpose; and you allow him to make war at pleasure.” Lincoln was commenting on President Polk’s Mexican War, 1846-7.

Source: Abraham Lincoln’s Letter to Wm. Herndon, Feb. 15, 1848

## Beyond Regulation vs. Deregulation

I recently spent a half hour with a fellow from Philadelphia who owns a big commercial bakery there. His bakery makes and distributes bread and cakes to supermarkets in the region. This business owner spent that half hour telling me the problems his business faces with government regulation. He was quite indignant, and thought that the government regulation (county, state, and federal) was trying to compel him to sell for three dollars what it costs him four to produce; as a result, he was desperately considering what options he might have to shift production to the American South or even offshore. The undesirable result of government regulation was job loss in his opinion. Did I, a known liberal, really want that, he wondered?

As the discussion progressed, it became clear that to this business owner the political issue at stake was regulation vs. deregulation. That is, in his opinion, the government regulates his business now, the cost of regulation is unacceptably high, and the result has been the creation of financial incentives to relocate his business to a low-regulation environment someplace else. Well, what’s his solution? In his opinion, the solution is total deregulation of his industry, wholesale bakeries. The government should stop regulating his industry, said he, and just let him make bread and cake in Philadelphia as he best devises, subject only to the competition of other bakeries. This opinion echoes Ronald Reagan, who famously said “Government is not the solution; government is the problem.”

Of course, I could not explain away nor condone the various examples of maladroit government policy that bedevil the bakery industry in Philadelphia. What do I know about the wholesale bakery industry in Philadelphia? I had to agree with him that the examples of maladroit regulations that he

offered sounded unwise and counterproductive, and should be abolished. In fact, I *do agree* with him about that. We *should* abolish regulations that unreasonably and counterproductively hamstring business, and the sooner the better! But that is not the same as agreeing that all economic regulation of industry is undesirable and should be abolished, which was his program. Wholesale abolition was his nostrum, and, as is well known, it's also the nostrum peddled by GOP candidates who say that the Democrats are the party of regulation and the GOP is the party of deregulation.

Wrong issue! The issue is not pro-regulation Democrats vs. deregulation Republicans. The issue is not deregulation at all. Recall that lack of regulation led to the financial crisis of 2008; lack of regulation led to the BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico; lack of regulation gave us air and water pollution and global warming; lack of regulation brings spoiled meat and poisonous vegetables to supermarket shelves; lack of regulation brings unsafe drugs to pharmacy shelves. The USA cannot just abolish government regulation of business.

The real issue is how to regulate most effectively. Effective regulation eliminates or minimizes undesirable restraints on business while retaining the desirable restraints. Effective regulation involves sifting and sorting what is helpful and what is not. Americans do indeed want to prevent companies from dumping their toxic waste into our water supply, the cheapest disposal solution for them, and government regulation of business is how we prevent them from poisoning us. Is there an alternative method? On the other hand, we do not want to impose useless or excessive regulation on any business. Therefore, America's problem is not regulation vs. deregulation as it's commonly introduced in the media, by the GOP, and by the business owner from Philadelphia. The problem is how to improve regulation.

What can be done to focus public attention around the terminally boring issue of how best to regulate business? First, we need to explain again and again why this boring issue is important so that people can understand why they should care. That's what I am doing right here. Hey, you, wake up! People should care about government regulation because their jobs, their health, and their children's future are at stake. Second, we need to make clear that the Democratic Party stands for *effective but minimal regulation* of business. That is, Democrats advocate the absolute minimum of government regulation that is necessary to protect the public safety and health; but Democrats absolutely insist on protecting the public against what economists call "negative externalities" e.g. the production of harmful by-products for the public as a result of commercial business. They frack; and as a result we drink toxic water. The public gets polluted water, and the oil companies get profits. Does this sound right to you?

How can we accomplish effective regulation? First, we can make more use of sunset provisions. All government regulations of business should expire automatically every three or four years unless renewed; a regulations commission should sit continuously, its function to examine expiring regulations, to weigh their desirability, and, if found undesirable, to allow them automatically to expire while recommending for renewal those regulations found to be in the public interest. If a sunset commission existed, the owner of the Philadelphia bakery would have an opportunity to explain why burdensome regulations should be abolished; and, by golly, he might be right. Second, commissioners should be protected against cooptation from the industries they purport to regulate by whatever devices we can set in place, including high salaries on the one hand, and imprisonment for corruption on the other. These are initial thoughts indeed, and they should and can be improved in Congress, but even these simple reflections shift the debate from "regulation vs. deregulation" to "how best to regulate." This is the debate we Americans need to have.

## **Benefits of Club Membership**

by Carolee Monroe, Special Events Chairperson

I want to emphasize the many benefits you receive as a member of our Democratic Club of Claremont. Do you wonder why we are asking you to join, rejoin and consider making an additional contribution to the DCC this year? As with any organization we have ordinary expenses and this year, a presidential election year, we will have more expenses as we work for our Democratic candidates and to re-elect President Barack Obama!

We conduct meetings each month. Our general membership meetings (on the last Monday of each month at 7 PM at Porter Hall, Pilgrim Place) and our luncheons (on the second Friday of the month at noon at the LYL Garden restaurant) feature speakers who inform us of topics of current interest.

We keep our members and the community at-large informed through our monthly newsletter, *The Voorhis Voice*, relevant emails and Sunday tabling in the Village during the hours of the Farmers Market. We maintain a website, [www.claremontdems.org](http://www.claremontdems.org), and an email address, [claremontdemocrats@yahoo.com](mailto:claremontdemocrats@yahoo.com). We maintain a telephone number, 909 632-1516 where messages are received. Through our Issues Committee, we generate resolutions about topics of relevance. These are disseminated as needed.

Because of concerns about the environment, along with printing and mailing costs, we have "gone green" – our newsletter is available on line either to our members or at our web site. For those members who do not have access to email, a few copies are available at our monthly meetings.

Prior to an election, we invite Democratic candidates to club meetings and community forums. We plan endorsements. We distribute appropriate candidate literature information about propositions. Redistricting has placed us in newly drawn Congressional District 27, State Senate District 25 and Assembly District 41, all favorable to Democrats.

We maintain a community presence through our Sunday tabling and our booths at Earth Day, Independence Day and Village Venture. We take part in the July 4 parade. We mentor the Claremont High School Student Democrats Club and maintain contact with the Claremont College Student Democrats. We also provide about one-fourth of the staff needed for the Los Angeles County Democratic Party's booth at the Los Angeles County Fair during the month of September. We celebrate ourselves with an annual holiday party in early December.

Now, in this important election year, we will need to establish a temporary headquarters. Besides rent, utilities and insurance we will have office expenses. (If you want to designate your gift for this effort, write "For Office" on the form.)

For these reasons we are asking you to consider participating in our club, with a contribution of both time and money. See the directions below and thank you!

**The Voorhis Voice is published by the Democratic Club of Claremont, PO Box 1201, Claremont CA 91711. The newsletter's name commemorates the late Jerry Voorhis, a talented and courageous Congress member from Claremont.**

## **Newsletter Editor**

Ivan Light: Email him at [claremontdemocrats@yahoo.com](mailto:claremontdemocrats@yahoo.com)

**Any registered Democrat may join the Democratic Club of Claremont on our web site!**

Access our website: <http://www.claremontdems.org>

Select: Get Involved > Join Us (Complete the form. Then...)

Select: Get Involved > Donate to the Club This will take you to the Act Blue website where you can pay your annual dues online.

P.S. – Part of your dues and contributions may be contributed to Federal and State candidates. Individual contributions will be deposited into the club's Federal account, subject to the Federal Elections Campaign Act. Non-individual contributions and contributions of individuals who so request will be deposited into the club's State account. Contributions are limited under State law. No anonymous contributions of more than \$50 will be accepted. Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, address, occupation and employer of each individual contributor. Political contributions are not tax-deductible. FPPC #841491. FEC #C00404319

