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Fresno residents at City Hall to demand rent control now. Photo by Bob McCloskey

Fresno's Frustrated Rent Control Advocates

BY OMAR SHAIKH RASHAD

(Editor's note: This story was originally published by Fresnoland, a nonprofit news organization.)

Community residents and housing advocates are regrouping after an unsuccessful push for Fresno's new city budget to include a rent control program.

"Community members are disappointed, and there really is this feeling that their narratives, their testimony aren't being taken seriously," said Marisa Moraza, a campaign director with Power California Action.

That fight, advocates acknowledge, is an increasingly uphill battle in Fresno, where the mayor and City Council have said solving the statewide housing crisis means incentivizing development and courting reinvestment.

Rent control, they argue, would be counterproductive to building new housing units.

"In terms of rent control, I can tell you I don't support that because I've seen what has happened in other cities," Mayor Jerry Dyer said during a news conference following the budget's adoption.

"When rent control is implemented, ultimately, you have landlords making fewer dollars, and so they're not investing in their property. And as a result, we end up with a lot of slums within a city."

Despite lingering frustrations, housing advocates say they aren't backing down on their demands.

In May, a coalition of advocacy organizations sent a letter to Dyer and the City Council, listing a series of budget requests on everything from transportation and infrastructure to housing and, specifically, a new rent control program.

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Voting Rights Facing Relentless Attack

BY MARK HEDIN

(Editor's note: This story was originally published by Ethnic Media Services, a nonprofit news organization.)

In the 10 years since the John Roberts-led Supreme Court gutted the 1965 Voting Rights Act (VRA), states in the Deep South have been working furiously to strip non-white citizens' voting rights.

A recent report from the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) details some of the effects of that 2013 case, *Shelby County v. Holder*.

The ruling, in favor of Shelby County, Alabama, ended the VRA's rules that jurisdictions with a history of racist voting policies had to get "preclearance" from the U.S. Attorney General—in this case, Eric Holder—or a panel of federal judges before making any changes in how they ran elections.

Six states were originally subject to that requirement—Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina and Virginia—plus 39 counties in North Carolina and one in Arizona. Those determinations were based on voter registrations or turnout of less than 50% in the preceding presidential election, or discriminatory practices such as voting eligibility "tests."

From its passing in 1965, Congress continued to adjust and reauthorize the law—for instance, barring English-only election materials if 5% of the population primarily used another language—until 2006, when it passed a 25-year extension, until 2031, with a unanimous vote in the Senate.

But the Court's 2013 decision in favor of Alabama's Shelby County, based on Roberts' reasoning that the almost 50-year-old legislation had been so successful in stopping

vote suppression that it could be set aside, unleashed a torrent of examples of why that wasn't so.

Disenfranchising Black Voters

"From the end of slavery to the present day, significant advancements in Black political participation and representation have often been followed by a swift backlash and retrenchment of rights," the SPLC report states.

"It happened after Reconstruction. It happened after the election of the nation's first Black president. And it is happening today as we stand at a critical moment where our democracy is under attack on many fronts after the decade-long erosion of BIPOC [Black, Indigenous and Persons of Color] voter access—namely, Black voter access—sparked by the *Shelby County* decision."

Out of more than a half million proposed voting law changes submitted by jurisdictions subject to the preclearance rule between 1965 and 2013, the Department of Justice had blocked more than 3,000 as discriminatory.

On the day after the *Shelby* ruling was announced, Alabama enacted a restrictive photo ID rule, the report notes, and as of March this year, 35 other states now have voter ID rules too.

Alabama's secretary of state reported in 2014 that about 20% of its registered voters didn't have a driver's license or

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Fresno's Frustrated Rent Control Advocates

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In the letter, advocates said the City should establish a board to enforce rent control policies, which, they say, would stabilize rents in Fresno.

"We wanted to also wrap in the opportunity to actually allocate funding for something like a rent control program," Moraza said. "It would be a very low funding allocation, but just having that allocation then opens the door to conversation of building up a policy."

Leadership Supports Affordable Housing but Opposes Rent Control

Just before the City Council approved the 2024 fiscal year budget, a group of community residents and housing advocates, with signs in hand, rallied inside the Fresno Council Chambers.

"What do we want? Rent control!" the group chanted. "When do we want it? Now!"

About 15 seconds into the chant, Council President Tyler Maxwell put the City Council meeting into recess for five minutes, and the City's live feed and audio cut out shortly after.

The chant capped about two months of Fresno residents and housing advocates showing up to public comment before the City Council—which they have noted is composed of a majority of landlords—to voice their concerns about rising rents.

"This is really like our final attempt to be able to speak directly to Council members because the in-person meetings (with them) weren't making a shift," Moraza said. "We're now seeing that public comment is not making a shift."

Speaking to reporters, Dyer said the rent control issue was a nonstarter.

Dyer said passing rent control would send a message to housing developers to leave Fresno, which he said could lead to a lack of housing production and actually drive up rents. Dyer has maintained that the City can resolve its housing crisis by building more units, and rent control does not fit his vision.

Since 2021, 400 new affordable housing units have been built and are currently occupied in Fresno, City spokesperson Sontaya Rose told FresnoLand in May. She said the City plans to add 2,493 more affordable housing units by the end of 2025.

But when new affordable housing developments open up, applications pour in.

One 60-unit affordable housing development in Clovis recently received more than 10,000 applications, and another 57-unit development that opened up in Fresno's Chinatown received 4,000 applications, said Michael Duarte, the chief real estate officer at the Fresno Housing Authority, at a June 15 FresnoLand/CalMatters panel on housing.

Duarte added that the Fresno Housing Authority received 10,000 applications in less than one day for its Section 8 housing voucher waitlist.

Leaders Say Rent Control Not the Only Way to Help Tenants

In an interview with FresnoLand, Maxwell said he sees both sides of the issue but said he believes rent comes down to simple supply-and-demand economics.

He added the best way to bring rent down is to increase the housing supply, and that means construction.

"These last three years, I can tell you that we have set a record when it comes to either subsidizing or helping initiate affordable housing projects here in the City of Fresno," Maxwell said. "It's a priority for not just this Council but the mayor and his administration to really try to expedite as many housing projects as possible."

In lieu of rent control, Maxwell said the Council in recent years has taken steps to beef up some protections for tenants.

He pointed to the City's Eviction Protection Program, which Maxwell co-authored in 2021. The program, which provides legal representation for tenants facing eviction, wasn't included in the proposed budget that Dyer released in May.

Maxwell, one of the few City Council members who rents his home, pushed to save the program with a budget motion to put \$2 million toward the program's third year. He said he hopes the program wouldn't require a budget motion to get funding in the future.

"Going forward, my hope is that it starts getting baked into the proposed budget," Maxwell said. "Either because it's a priority for the mayor or a priority for the city attorney."

Maxwell added that another piece of legislation he authored, the Tenant Relocation Assistance Program, helps renters avoid getting displaced due to unhealthy or unsafe living conditions. The ordinance requires landlords to assist with the expense of relocating tenants to complete needed renovations or face fines.

However, the City's Emergency Rental Assistance Program, a key Covid-19 era effort that provided assistance with rent and utility bills to Fresno residents who met income requirements, is going away soon. The \$54 million from federal and state governments that funded the program is almost depleted, and the remaining \$2.5 million in funding remaining for the program will likely get spent in the next fiscal year.

With no City funding to keep the program around next year, it will likely end soon.

"There was a lot of community momentum and energy that really shows that folks care about this issue," said Moraza. "We will continue to push for this rent control demand."

Omar Shaikh Rashad is the government accountability reporter for FresnoLand.

Voting Rights Facing Relentless Attack

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non-driver ID, and half of those 500,000 people didn't have anything else that would satisfy the new requirement.

In 2015, the state moved to close 31 driver's license offices in Black population centers.

When Georgia passed its voter ID law, of the 273,000 registered voters without the license or ID it required, more than half were Black and living in Democratic Party-leaning counties.

When North Carolina's voter ID law was disallowed by an appeals court in 2016, it noted that the law targeted Black voters "with almost surgical precision."

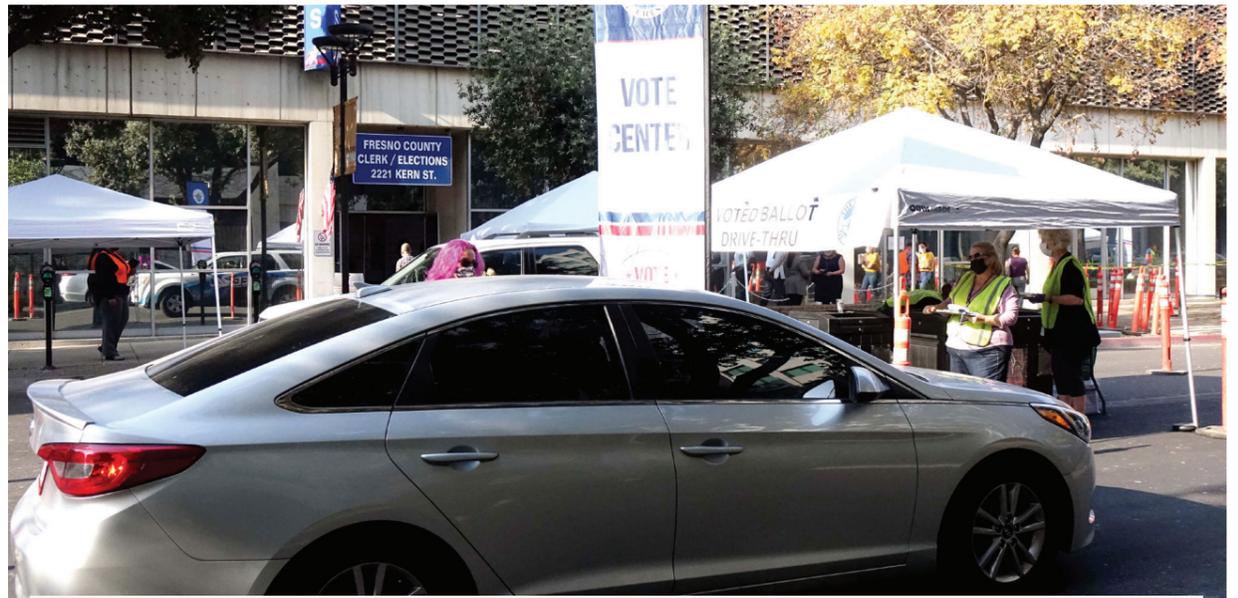
Closing Polling Stations and Purging Voter Rolls

Another vote suppression tactic has to do with polling places. Overall, states previously covered by the preclearance rule closed 1,688 from 2012 to 2018. In Florida, after a hurricane, Lee County reduced almost 100 polling locations, predominantly in Black communities, to a dozen "super sites."

Added to that was a lack of outreach and communication about the changes. In one Mississippi case involving almost 100 polling place changes from 2020 to 2022, even the state database for voter information failed to provide the necessary updates.

Another vote suppression tactic, voter roll purging, also caught on, particularly after the Court's *Husted v. A. Philip Randolph Institute* ruling in 2018. But already, a Brennan Center analysis found, jurisdictions no longer subject to preclearance purged 2 million more voters in 2016 than they would have if their purges had happened at the same rate as states that never faced preclearance requirements.

Georgia's then Secretary of State Brian Kemp defeated Stacey Abrams by 54,723 votes to become governor in



In the last 10 years, states in the Deep South have been working furiously to strip non-white citizens' voting rights. In this image, local citizens drop off their ballots from their cars on Election Day—Nov. 3, 2020. Photo by Eduardo Stanley

2018. On his way to the governor's mansion, his unrestricted changes to polling places, the *Atlanta Journal Constitution* found, likely kept 54,000–85,000 voters away on Election Day.

But on top of that, he also purged more than a half million people from the state's voter registration rolls—including 107,000 in one day because they hadn't voted in prior elections.

Court cases that cited the preclearance rules limited Florida's efforts to purge 182,000 people from the rolls to 2,600 in 2012, the SPLC report notes. But whereas the state was purging voters at a rate of 0.2% in 2008–2010, that rate grew to more than 7% in 2016–2018, according to a Brennan Center finding the report cites.

There's more. The SPLC has also published a timeline synopsis of voting changes since *Shelby County v. Holder*. Among them: Florida and other states implementing new barriers to voting by the formerly incarcerated, in

defiance of the expressed will of voters; new limits on early voting, assisting voters in accessing absentee ballots and supporting those waiting in long lines at polling places; eliminating Sunday voting; and more.

"In a glimmer of hope," the SPLC pointed out, "the Covid-19 pandemic provided an opportunity to make voting more accessible in light of social distancing restrictions, with states across the nation exploring novel methods to protect access to the vote," leading to the highest voter turnout this century.

"Where there is political will, change can occur," noted the SPLC.

Mark Hedin is a journalist based in the Bay Area. He currently works for Central City Extra newspaper and is an instructor with the Alameda Unified School District. He contributes to *Ethnic Media Services* and was previously the editor of the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

How We Stop the Hate

BY MIKE RHODES

On the hottest day in June, more than 100 people attended the Stop the Hate town hall at the First Mennonite Church in Reedley. Presentations included an impassioned talk by Shirley Guevara (Dunlap Band of Mono

Indians), State Center Community College District (SCCCD) Trustee Nasreen Johnson speaking about her personal connection with LGBTQ+ issues and Dolores Huerta, who gave the keynote address.

The town hall was opened by lead pastor Jon Mark who welcomed everyone to the "coolest" place in town. Sponsored by the San Joaquin Valley Media Alliance and the *Community Alliance* newspaper, some of the groups that helped organize the event were the Dolores Huerta Foundation, the Human Rights Coalition of the Central Valley, the

Central Valley Partnership, the NAACP Fresno and Madera chapters, the Reedley Peace Center, Poder Latinx, the Black American Political Association of California (BAPAC), Fresno Interdenominational Refugee Ministries (FIRM), Residents for Renaming S Valley, the Fresno Homeless Union and Indigenous Justice. This event was made possible by a grant from the California State Library under the statewide Stop the Hate initiative.

The three Indigenous women who spoke captivated the audience with their heartfelt

stories of what life is like for them. Guevara talked about the extremely high number of missing, murdered indigenous women (MMIW) and how law enforcement does not investigate these cases the same way they would if the women were white.

"We have the highest rate of missing and Indigenous women in the country" here in this area, Guevara says. "They don't come out to the reservation and look for them."

Victoria Garcia, another Indigenous speaker, said, "We can't keep letting

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FROM THE EDITOR

Private Interests Rule City Council



Recently, several residents and housing advocates attended a Fresno City Council meeting to push for rent control. However, they ran into a block of ice. City Council members and the mayor of Fresno are against it.

“When rent control is implemented, ultimately, you have landlords making fewer dollars, and so they’re not investing in their property. And as a result, we end up with a lot of slums within a city,” said the mayor (read our story, “Fresno’s Frustrated Rent Control Advocates,” on page 1). This reasoning is much shared by most of the Council members. The basic point is that they are in bed with developers and will not implement any measure that could annoy them.

Council members say they support building more affordable units. If that is the case, they should build 25,000–30,000 units due to the needs of the population. Keep in mind that Fresno topped the national list for highest rent increases in 2022.

“As of January 2022, rental prices in Fresno for a one-bedroom apartment have increased to a median of \$1,400 a month, and two-

bedroom apartments are an average of \$1,700 a month, according to Zumper” (*Fresno Bee*, Feb. 8, 2022).

The building of new affordable units is a slow process and the refusal to change the pace or implement any kind of rent control is a way to leave the solution to those who created the housing problem in the first place: developers and housing investors. They are driven by profit, so they don’t care about solutions.

The City Council recently passed a repressive anti-homeless resolution and a similar one oriented to “control” street vendors.

So much for the expression that “we finally have Democratic control of the City Council.” All the Council members are under the influence of big money. The Democrats are conservative too, with less repulsive speeches than their Republican counterpart, but in the end, they are pro-corporate/pro-business.

The problem is that government has the responsibility to resolve mainly social issues and to consider the public interest as a priority, not private interests. On supporting private interests, the Council members are truly bipartisan.

Till next month.

The *Community Alliance* is an independent voice for workers and progressive groups in the Central San Joaquin Valley. The goal of this monthly newspaper is to build a powerful progressive movement that will support social, environmental and economic justice; immigrant rights; and a living wage for all working people. We seek to expose social and political injustices and to link the diverse network of activists working in our community.

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Letters to the Editor

Re “Kill the Poor”

These [Fresno] City Council members are the worst of the worst! So you are trying to sweep the problem under the rug instead of fixing the problem. I thought your job was to make this city better, not cause more harm to people that are suffering the worst thing imaginable.

Karma has a way of paying people like them [Council members] for their unspeakable behavior.

These people are human beings! I’d bet that the [Council members] treat a dog better than these unfortunate people [the homeless]. I cannot believe that you are “stealing” the only belongings they have in this world! I cannot believe that you can sleep at night with what you have done! I cannot believe that you can look in the mirror and like who you see!

As the article stated, you are sociopaths!

Marilyn

Re “Fresno Goes Viral”

Someone should contact the ACLU unless there is a local attorney who is willing to take on a lawsuit on the restaurant’s behalf and sue [Maria] Garcia for her careless and financially ruinous libel and slander.

Until people are held accountable for their vicious unfounded posts, reputations and livelihoods will continue to be trashed in social media.

The [restaurant is] fortunate that the idiots who called with death threats did not act on them. If they had, hopefully criminal charges would have been levied against Garcia for inciting violence.

Cindy Simpson

Re “The Fall of Bitwise”

The Bitwise mission, “To be a transformative tech company offering technology-based solutions for underserved communities and clients,” is one that many of us believed in.

I took two coding classes [there] and was impressed with the diversity of the students. I also participated in a WordPress support group that met there.

We can’t lose sight of this vision because the Central Valley has so much potential.

Hopefully, someone will conduct an autopsy of the death of this organization to find out what happened and perhaps have an opportunity to salvage this dream for the young people of the Central Valley. They deserve no less.

Juan M. Flores

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An Open Letter to Chief Justice Roberts

BY BAYARD TAYLOR

Dear Chief Justice Roberts,
We the people are experiencing a crisis in confidence with the current Supreme Court.

With its recent decisions, the Supreme Court has disgraced and delegitimized itself. The 6-3 supermajority of activist right-wing justices have swept away longstanding precedents and betrayed core moral and constitutional principles.

We the people don't see you addressing this crisis.

Let's start with *Citizens United v. Federal Elections Commission* (2010), decided on the fiction that corporations are "people" (with the rights of "people") and the deception that huge political donations by the uber-wealthy are "protected free speech."

Whose interests does this decision serve? The super-rich and powerful, obviously. Certainly not "the people" of this country who are real flesh-and-blood human beings. How can real-life individuals (real people, not fake "people") compete against corporations?

Citizens United opened the door for unlimited dark money to flow unseen into the coffers of PACs and the pockets of politicians. It gutted provisions for transparency, allowing full-frontal bribery to happen. And you on the Supreme Court did nothing to prevent this travesty. Instead, you gladly encouraged the corruption of our elections.

Again the question must be asked: Whose interests does this decision serve? Not regular people! Only those of the richest and most powerful. This is not "equal justice under the law." It violates our vaunted "rule of law," which is supposed to make the United States "exceptional."

You and your colleagues have aided and abetted the avaricious greed of the rich. Oh yes, they will make a big show of "generosity" by giving ostentatiously to "charities." Your court turns a blind eye to these gilded rapists.

Next: In *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* (2022), your Supreme Court reversed the constitutional right of a woman to control her own body. As a result of that decision, now a woman's vital health decisions are no longer between her and her doctor; they are subject to the prejudices of politicians—who themselves are basing their positions on contested interpretations of religious texts!

This is not liberty. It is not religious freedom. It is not freedom of conscience. It is tantamount to the imposition of theocratic law—a direct and obvious violation of the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment (the clause that bars the federal government from sponsoring a particular religion).

The inflexible adherence to iffy interpretations by religious sects is what the framers of the Constitution were trying to get away from, not to enforce!

Next: In *Sackett v. Environmental Protection Agency* (2023), the Supreme Court gutted the EPA's authority to enforce clean water laws—laws designed to protect watersheds and estuaries—in the morally and socially corrupt assumption that rich people's "property rights" trump every other consideration.

Coming at a time of immense environmental peril, we have to ask, who does this decision serve? Certainly not we the people. On the contrary, this decision elevates as all-controlling the naked greed of the richest Americans. It sniffs at the truth that we all are dependent on the earth for our very lives. It refuses to acknowledge the importance of clean water for all of life.

In this way of thinking, nothing else matters—not the environment, not the common good, not future generations. Nothing other than property rights matters.

In *Arizona v. Navajo Nation* (2023), your Supreme Court ruled that the State of Arizona had no treaty obligation to protect the Navajo people's water rights, arguing that an 1858 treaty regarding reservation land did not apply to that land's water! Shame, shame on the Supreme Court!

The Indigenous people cared for and tended the land for 10,000-plus years before the white invaders ever came.

This decision ignores that fact, reinforces white supremacy and continues the 500-year war against the original inhabitants—actions that included mass murders followed by "thanksgivings"; land stealing; the routine

breaking of solemn treaty promises; policies of deliberate starvation and forced banishment from ancestral lands; death marches in the dead of winter; reservations little more than open-air concentration camps; laws intended to crush tribal sovereignty; kidnapping Indigenous children and forcing them to attend government-funded, church-run "assimilation" schools; severe punishments at those schools for kids who dared to speak their own languages; forced conversions to Christianity; the non-prosecution of kidnappers who rape and murder Indigenous women; and job discrimination—all done with zero remorse or self-criticism!

So whose interests does this decision serve? Certainly not the dispossessed original inhabitants! Rather, it serves the white nationalist ideology and predatory capitalism that legalized all the atrocities mentioned above—in the name of profit.

An Indigenous commentator observed dryly that your Supreme Court's decision was not surprising and added, "What can you expect from a colonialist court?"

When push comes to shove, this is a court that almost invariably serves the interests of the dominant class—rich and wealthy white people—at the expense of Indigenous people, Black Americans, other minorities (LGBQ), wage earners, the poor, the marginalized, those in debt (like students!), those who have to pay rent and so on. This Court is promoting class warfare by siding almost always with the rich and powerful.

An embarrassing episode just occurred in *Creative LLC v. Elenis* (2023). In this case, your Supreme Court ruled against the State of Colorado's anti-discrimination law, claiming that the law violated the religious freedom of a Christian Web designer. This decision appeared to support "the little guy" (actually, it was a woman), but the decision actually serves the interests of the dominant (white) culture.

Even more embarrassing is that your Court majority bought into the lie that a gay couple had contracted the Web design services of Lorie Smith, that she had refused and that therefore they felt they must sue.

Several problems need to be pointed out: 1) The complaint supposedly occurred before Smith started her Web design business! In addition, 2) the so-called gay "client" named in the suit says that he never asked to work with Smith, 3) that he never filed an anti-discrimination case against her, 4) that he's not gay, 5) that he has been happily married for 15 years and 6) that he himself is a Web designer and wouldn't need her services.

This avalanche of facts means the whole case was a fraud and that the case should have been thrown out long ago. It appears that a political agenda was driving the majority opinion. What agenda? The "conservatives" on the Court are leaning into turning religious favoritism into the law of the land. Establishment of religious favoritism is not far from "establishment of religion" by the federal government, which is prohibited by the First Amendment.

Then, in two affirmative action cases, *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard College* and *Students for Fair Admissions v. University of North Carolina* (2023), the Supreme Court decreed that racism can no longer be considered as a factor in college admissions.

Who is this decision going to help? Already-privileged white students. Who is it going to harm? Minority students who are already discriminated against by our at times covert and more often open white supremacy.

If the Court's majority was really concerned about justice in college admissions, it could have considered "legacy admissions," which are hogged by the children of alumni, meaning wealthy white people's kids. Legacy admissions go against conservative claims that admissions should be based only on merit and perpetuate the injustice of white privilege.

Furthermore, the Court's majority failed to explain why affirmative action is verboten in college admissions but is okay for the military academies. These decisions serve old-wealth, rich white people. They are classist and racist. How could supposedly impartial and intelligent "justices" not see this?

Just as disturbing—over the past year, we have learned that Ginni Thomas, wife of Justice Clarence Thomas, promoted the Big Lie of a "stolen election." She hobnobbed with violent Oath Keepers, and she made phone calls to Republican state lawmakers pressuring them to overturn election results.

Furthermore, over the years the Thomases have received lavish gifts from billionaire Harlan Crow. There are cases in which "Justice" Thomas should have recused himself, but he did not. How did this not outrage you, Chief Justice Roberts?



Official photo of John G. Roberts Jr., chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, taken in 2005.
Photo courtesy of The Commons

We are also just now learning that "Justice" Samuel Alito received big gifts from billionaire Paul Singer that were 1) kept hidden when two of Singer's cases came before the Supreme Court and that 2) could easily have predisposed him to decide in favor of his "friends." Alito also should have recused himself from those decisions, but he didn't.

We are asked to believe that money and politics don't influence the Supreme Court, only high-minded legal and good-faith arguments. We are asked to believe that the Supreme Court can "police itself" in an honorable way. And you, Chief Justice, have the effrontery to tell us that the Supreme Court doesn't need oversight, that you nine are just fine with the secret gifts and lack of transparency.

But whose interests are served by these attitudes and actions? Certainly not those of we the people. They serve the status quo of keeping power and money closely held by the richest few, and to hell with the rest of the country.

With Supreme Court "justices" getting paid (bribed) in advance for favorable outcomes, are you going to tell we the people that the rich and powerful prevailing almost all the time is an accident? That this is "equal justice for all"?

You have a crisis of legitimacy on your hands. And you don't even see it.

Bayard Taylor is a resident of the 93675 zip code, a nature lover, the author of two books, a former English teacher and a master's of divinity graduate of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. Contact him at bayardtaylor1@aol.com.

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How Does the Farm Bill Impact You?

BY PENIEL IBE

At the "Salt of the Earth Encuentro" hosted by the Pan Valley Institute of the American Friends Service Committee (PVI-AFSC) of the Central Valley, participants visited five small organic farms run by immigrant farmers of diverse cultural backgrounds. At one of the farms, the visitors ate delicious strawberries grown by Saetern Cheng, a refugee from Southeast Asia. Like him, every farmer shared about their vital role as stewards of the land and food systems in the Central Valley and their impact on the United States.

According to the U.S. Geological Services, California's Central Valley produces 25% of the nation's food, including 40% of our fruits, vegetables and nuts, among other table foods. The Central Valley supplies about 8% of the U.S. agricultural output using less than 1% of the nation's farmland. So how is the land that produces so much of the nation's food also home to the second most food-insecure city—Fresno—in the United States? One way to understand this paradox is by examining the Farm Bill closely.

What is the Farm Bill?

Every five years, Congress reauthorizes the Farm Bill, a massive omnibus legislation that determines federal policy in food and agriculture. The last Farm Bill was authorized in 2018 and cost about \$428 billion over five years. It expires this year, and the new one is due for reauthorization this September.

From farmers like Cheng to the child eating free school lunches in the city, we all have a stake in whether the food injustices we see in our communities will continue to be legislated into law. Because of the vital role food plays in our everyday lives, the Farm Bill impacts the quality of our environment, health and, for many of us, where we live and work.

In 1933, the first Farm Bill was created to address issues faced by farmers and, over time, grew to include resources to address widespread hunger, quality of the environment and availability of adequate infrastructure in rural communities.

The Farm Bill has 12 areas of focus, but the four major categories or titles are nutrition, crop insurance, commodities and conservation. Despite its broad scope, the bill does not cover issues such as food safety, farm and food worker rights and protections, irrigation water rights, some pesticide laws or food assistance programs such as the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program.

The bill ensures a considerable amount of funding makes it to the Central Valley through farm subsidies, food stamp benefits, crop insurance and more. But most subsidies go to corporate-controlled livestock and poultry operations and the production of grains (like corn and soybeans) to feed animals, not our community members.

Only about 4% of the federal subsidies reach farmers like Cheng, who grow fruits and vegetables, also known as "specialty crops." There is a need for the Farm Bill to allocate more funding for specialty crops because they are vital to a healthy and nutritious diet. Also, these crops comprise the bulk of California's farm production output.

Cheng's organic farmland, located in Madera County, has changed owners, so he must find new land to lease and grow his fruits and vegetables. Organic farmland is hard to come by when pesticides and chemical fertilizers are widely used.

Land access for small-scale farmers is also an issue. Cheng said that the funding in the Farm Bill would not help with his relocation costs and land purchase. Even fewer resources are available to BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) farmers and producers due to proven discrimination and inequity in technical support and assistance for these farmers and producers.

Hunger in the Farm Bill?

While the Covid pandemic exacerbated hunger issues, the reality is that it further sheds light on the deep-seated problems in the U.S. food system and raised questions about the root causes of hunger in our society. According to a report from the Center for American Progress, nearly 24 million households in the United States often do not have enough food to eat during the week.

Many households turned to federal nutrition assistance programs—such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)—for the first time. Fresno's numbers are alarming. Feeding America estimates that more than 100,000 people are food-insecure in Fresno. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Fresno County has 12 areas that are food deserts or "food apartheid," as food justice advocates have defined them.

The nutrition title in the Farm Bill accounts for more than 80% of its funding allocation, helping low-income households afford food. Nutrition programs such as SNAP, or "food stamps," tend to see a higher percentage of total population usage in rural communities than in urban communities.

Farmworkers—a significant percentage of the Fresno population—are among those who are often food-insecure and do not eat enough of the produce they help to grow and harvest. Every year, we increase subsidies to corporate agriculture to grow commodities that do not feed our neighbors, and in turn, every year, the United States gets hungrier.



Farmer Saetern Cheng of Madera explaining to a group of visitors the challenges that small farmers face to produce farm goods. Photo by Eduardo Stanley

In 2021, SNAP served as a lifeline, ensuring that 41 million low-income individuals—half of whom were children—had food on their table. Every increase in households turning to food assistance programs means that other policies legislating our farming and food system are failing to address hunger and must be reevaluated.

How does drastic climate change impact the Farm Bill?

During our visit to the farms, we saw firsthand the struggles that Cheng and other farmers face with the availability of freshwater. Sometimes, the region experiences extreme rainfall and snowcap melting. Still, in other seasons, there is little water, causing worry for small farmers who must not only deal with the climate situation but also compete with larger, water-consuming almond and pistachio farms.

While the Farm Bill does not legislate water quality for irrigation water rights, it impacts climate change. Industrial agricultural practices in the United States contribute to 11% of greenhouse gas emissions.

And while other industries have reduced emissions in recent years, emissions from agriculture continue to grow, leading to drought, extreme rainfall, snowcap melting and extreme heat, which farmers in the Central Valley must contend with. In 2021 alone, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration estimated that \$12.5 billion in farmland was lost to droughts, wildfires and other climate-related disasters.

We are spending a disproportionate amount of money responding to climate disasters rather than mitigation through climate-friendly agricultural practices. The Farm Bill's crop insurance title accounts for almost 9% of the bill, while the conservation title is only 6.8% of the bill—and of that, a significant percentage of funding continues to support agricultural practices that increase greenhouse gas emissions and reduce the quality of natural resources.

Climate change is a hunger multiplier as it jeopardizes the viability of farmland, harvests of staple crops and the food supply chain. Any policies to end hunger or regulate agriculture in the United States must align with our goals to address climate change.

We should be increasing funding to farmers—especially small-scale farms—to operate in ways that address climate change, such as regenerative agriculture (an indigenous farming practice that champions holistic and rehabilitative cultivation of resources) that protects air and soil quality.

How do you exercise your stake in the Farm Bill?

It does not matter what your place is in the food system. We need to call for policies to build a more economically, racially and ecologically just food system. Only then can we build economic and environmental justice while increasing the well-being of our neighborhoods and fostering food sovereignty.

Despite its bipartisan nature, the Farm Bill is rarely legislated on time, and the current state of play in Washington, D.C., will further delay its reauthorization until the end of the year. There is still time for members of Congress to hear from you.

Peniel Ibe is the policy engagement coordinator for Just Economies & Climate Justice in the American Friends Service Committee's Office of Public Policy and Advocacy.



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Climate Boomers, Doomers and Zoomers

BY KEVIN HALL

Most people's first reaction to the threat of climate change is the technofix. Raised to place our faith in market forces, we almost instinctively turn to technological solutions. A primary tenet is that innovation can solve any problem, including reversing the world's destabilizing weather patterns.

This is the province of "Boomers"—not Baby Boomers but Climate Boomers. Determined not by age but mindset, boomers are the market faithful ready to capitalize on carbon-reduction measures. They foresee—and preach for—a future in which current levels of international trade and consumption continue unabated; we just have to switch to electric cars, bullet trains and biofuel planes and all will be well, they proselytize.

A recent local example of the hypocrisy inherent in climate boomerism can be found along Elm Avenue in West Fresno where Boomers argue more ground-level air pollution is necessary if we're to reduce greenhouse gasses. They're wrong, but according to would-be Fresno City Council rezoner Annalisa Perea in Fresno, on May 19, without industrial expansion there, the current "no net increase" in emissions standard of the Southwest Fresno Specific Plan "would essentially stop us from being able to meet a lot of our climate goals in terms of transitioning to an increase in electric vehicles." Wrong again.

Perea, whose father has openly lobbied for the rezone and whose brother is a full-time lobbyist for Big Oil, is arguing that without reverting back to heavy-use industrial zoning on the subject property and increased toxic diesel pollution, that the health of southwest Fresno residents will somehow be harmed.

"In short," she misleadingly told reporter Gregory Weaver, "the conflict and zoning with neighborhood mixed use is going to potentially prohibit businesses down there from being able to clean and green their operations." Fresno City Council Member Miguel Arias repeats similar contradictory justifications.

There's little cleaning going on, and the only green in play is that of money. Entire careers have been spent developing such business-friendly strategies—filled with such false promises and reliant on massive government subsidies and little regulation—to curb greenhouse gas emissions; backers' favorite method is pollution credit trading.

It's the same failed approach we've been using for 30 years to clear the San Joaquin Valley's air of ozone and fine

particle pollution; in those three decades of neoliberal regulation, peak ozone levels and unhealthy air days have been reduced by only 25%. For greenhouse gasses, it's a worldwide crisis and cap-and-trade will not work in time. But it's all that politicians are willing to try.

And it's getting worse. Hit hard by the increasingly harsh realities of worldwide weather destabilization, society as a whole is rapidly shifting into the technofix mode of response. "We have the technology," we tell ourselves. "It's only the political will that's lacking."

That's where I started. It was the summer of 1999, and I'd just finished reading the late Ross Gelbspan's *The Heat Is On: The Climate Crisis, The Cover-up, The Prescription*. The book is a startling investigative report with a grim warning about climate change's impacts and the corruptive fossil-fuel powers blocking political reform. From the Kochs to Chevron, the same players were determining our fate then as now.

By that winter, I was running an old Mercedes 300D on biodiesel made from restaurant grease, carrying a business card from a start-up fuel company and even persuaded the Fresno Area Express to test its use. The idea was appealing: close the carbon loop by burning leftover restaurant grease and soybean oil. However, my reading continued and I soon learned of this crop-based fuel's devastating impacts on landscapes in South America and Southeast Asia, which negate all benefits.

The same applies to 26 million acres of corn grown for ethanol in this country. Recent research "found that ethanol is likely at least 24% more carbon-intensive than gasoline due to emissions resulting from land use changes to grow corn, along with processing and combustion," Reuters reported in February. It's boomerism run amok.

Meanwhile, Doomers either care too much or not enough. The people in this broad category, which includes most retirees, are there to party through life—or stay in bed—until the lights go out. Their ranks include old school climate-deniers and large religious sects that believe whatever disasters befall us is their god's will, usually as punishment for socially liberal values.

Of growing concern is the emerging group of people debilitated to varying degrees by eco-anxiety angst as they work their way through the emotional toll of a bleak future and society's empty promises.

Britt Wray, writing in *Wired* (May 2022), quotes researcher Panu Pihkala, who warns of the emotional immaturity of modern societies, "which will go to great lengths to block out the deep internal and collective external work that is required to face and process tough feelings to completion."

Wray writes that "bromides like 'action is the antidote to despair' can oversimplify a complicated experience and indicate a society that is averse to difficult emotions."

Which brings us to Zoomers.

They've been through the Boom and Doom phases and regard the Covid-19 shutdown experience as a preview

CLIMATE POLITICS

Frontline Zoomers

BY KEVIN HALL

The local climate adaptation battle is being waged on specific fronts, and my list of recommendations is limited to organizations focused on radically new directions in related public policy and investment:

- Homelessness: We Are Not Invisible (on Facebook), Fresno Homeless Union (on Facebook)
- Fresno County General Plan: Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability (leadershipcounsel.org)
- Rent Control: Tenants Together (tenantstogether.org)
- Transportation: Fresno Building Healthy Communities (fresnobhc.org/), VoteNoMeasureC Coalition (votenoasurec.com/)

of the near future. They've taken a clear-eyed look at the science of climate change, society's decades-long feckless response, and the time remaining to prepare for our dangerously unstable future, which for hundreds of millions has already arrived.

Zoomers are preparing for the future as it appears from 2023 onward, not through 1990s strategies corrupted by industrial interests and compliant politicians. Zoomers are demanding government investment in transit microgrids, community resiliency hubs, community-supported agriculture, clean water systems, flood protection, local clean energy generation and more.

Zoomers accept that the American political and economic systems failed to meet the challenge of reversing global warming and are doing meaningful work on adaptation. As Gelbspan warned decades ago, "Absent the rapid mobilization of climate advocates at every level—and the pooling of all their energy, creativity, and resources into a coordinated, no-holds-barred campaign—we will soon be crossing the threshold into climate hell."

Kevin Hall hosts Climate Politics on KFCF 88.1 FM every second and fourth Friday, 5 p.m.–6 p.m. He tweets as @airfresno and @sjvalleyclimate, coordinates an informal network of climate activists at valleyclimate.org and can be contacted at sjvalleyclimate@gmail.com for presentations and information.

How We Stop the Hate

Continued from page 2

our women get lost or murdered. We need protection and we need people to understand that this issue is more than just a statistic."

Local law enforcement listened to the testimony. In attendance were representatives from the Department of Justice and the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Reedley Police Chief Joe Garza.

Efrain Botello-Cisneros, of the California Department of Justice, spoke about the dramatic increase in hate crimes locally and the importance of reporting them to law enforcement. If you are a victim of a hate crime, you are urged to

- Contact the local law enforcement agency right away.
- Get medical attention (if you need it).
- Write down the exact words that were said.
- Make notes about any other facts.
- Save all evidence (e.g., graffiti, eggshells, writing on the victim's vehicle). If safe, wait until law enforcement arrives and takes photos.
- Get the names, addresses, phone numbers and e-mails of other victims and witnesses.
- Try to get a description from any eyewitnesses of the criminal or the vehicle.
- Contact community organizations in your area that respond to hate crimes.

SCCCD Board President Johnson told her personal story about having a transgender child. She told the audience about how

her daughter knew she did not want to be a girl from a young age and the support she gave as her child grew older. Johnson acknowledged how some supportive people still have issues with the transgender community.

"I understand that even in really affirming and accepting places where LGBTQ are affirmed, some people still have an issue with that T. I would like to remind everyone that the reason we celebrate June as Pride Month is because of a trans woman."

Huerta, founder of the Dolores Huerta Foundation, was the featured speaker for the event. She asked the audience to be the messengers for justice and peace. "There is one basic truth in this society, that we are all human beings...and the human race began in Africa." We are all related and should treat each other with dignity and respect.

Huerta also said that "we have more people in prison than they do in India or China...and who are the people in prison? They are Black, Brown and poor white people who don't have the money to pay for an attorney." To loud applause, Huerta said she would like to see a big march in the Central Valley to Stop the Hate.

The Reedley town hall was the fourth of four town halls in the San Joaquin Valley, organized by the San Joaquin Valley Media Alliance and *CommunityAlliance* newspaper. The first one was held in Huron to address the issue of institutional racism. Since that first town hall, held last year, great progress has been made toward building a high school in Huron. The state superintendent of schools, Tony Thurman, came to Huron to pledge his support.

The second town hall was in Fresno and brought together a powerful group of advocates who are committed to continuing to work together as the gathering storm of hate from right-wing groups continues to



Dolores Huerta. Photo by Peter Maiden

attack BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) communities.

Madera was the site of the next town hall where we had the support of Madera



L to R: Shirley Guevara, Victoria Garcia and Taweah Garcia. Victoria was speaking about missing and murdered Indigenous women and became overcome with emotion.

Photo by Peter Maiden

City Council Member Elsa Mejia and the Madera NAACP, and the event included a magnificent cultural presentation by Los Diablitos, a traditional Oaxacan dance group.

The San Joaquin Valley Media Alliance has received another grant from the California State Library that will be used to continue this important work.

To see a video of the entire Reedley town hall, visit youtu.be/iazeVCY95Lo.

Mike Rhodes is the executive director of the Community Alliance newspaper and author of the book *Dispatches from the War Zone, about homelessness in Fresno*. Visit his website at mikerhodes.us. Contact him at mikerhodes@comcast.net.

The Holodomor: Capturing History

BY ZARINA ZABRISKY

In 2022–2023, Ukraine commemorates the 90th anniversary of the Holodomor, a man-made famine engineered by Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin and his communist government. In 1932 and 1933, millions of Ukrainians were killed in the Holodomor, often referred to as the Great Famine, and translated as “death inflicted by starvation.”

During Stalin’s first five-year plan for the industrialization of the Soviet Union, farms were subject to collectivization, a forceful appropriation by the Soviet government. Rural farmers and villagers, roughly 80% of Ukraine’s population in the 1930s, resisted and faced executions, torture and deportations.

The exact number of deaths during the Holodomor in Ukraine is a subject of debate among historians. Estimates range from roughly 3.5 million to 7 million (with some estimates even higher). The most detailed demographic studies estimate the death toll at 3.9 million.

The classification of the Holodomor as a genocide against the Ukrainian nation has been a subject of ongoing debate and resistance, even though Raphael Lemkin, the legal expert who coined the term *genocide*, defined the Ukrainian famine as such.

“In the case of the Holodomor, this was the first genocide that was methodically planned out and perpetrated by depriving the very people who were producers of food of their nourishment (for survival). What is especially horrific is that the withholding of food was used as a weapon of genocide and that it was done in a region of the world known as the ‘breadbasket of Europe,’” according to Andrea Graziosi, professor at the University of Naples.

The sad anniversary highlights the ongoing struggle for Ukrainian survival as the Russian Federation is waging a full-scale war of aggression on Ukraine, employing methods reminiscent of Stalin’s era: execution, hunger, cold, terror, torture and deportation.

An award-winning Ukrainian filmmaker, scriptwriter and producer, Victoria Trofimenko, currently an artist-in-residence at the University of Texas–Austin, is working on a project about the Holodomor. In an interview, Trofimenko discussed the challenges of making the film.

How do you explain the Holodomor to the American audience?

The Holodomor, a severe famine in Ukraine caused by Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin in 1932–1933, led to millions of deaths. Ukraine, one of the republics of the USSR by that time, paid its price for speedy industrialization. The republic’s borders were sealed, trapping the Ukrainian population, while their bread was forcibly seized, leaving them to starve to death.

Meanwhile, Stalin exported the same bread at minimal prices to fuel industrial growth. Many Americans are still unaware of the Holodomor, even though the U.S. Senate passed a resolution in 2018 acknowledging the man-made famine as genocide against the Ukrainian people.

What is the focus of your film?

In my film, *Yakiv*, the protagonist starts as a dedicated communist who introduces the Communist Party to his village and enforces collectivization through torture. While initially portrayed as an antagonist, *Yakiv* undergoes a transformative journey.

Based on a real-life figure, *Yakiv Drobot*, who saved nearly 3,000 lives during the Holodomor, the film’s protagonist transforms from an executioner to a rescuer as the story unfolds. I see this transformation as a beautiful dramatic arc.

I chose to analyze human behavioral patterns within the context of the Holodomor. I believe that understanding the role fear can play in human behavior is crucial. I explored not only what Stalin inflicted upon the Ukrainians, which was horrific, but also the actions of ordinary villagers.

Focusing solely on victimhood is unproductive and only serves to weaken us. It is important to analyze the active deeds of individuals during the Holodomor to gain a better understanding.

In 2018, I attended a conference on Ukrainian-Jewish Dialogue about the Holocaust and the Holodomor in Israel. I was glad to see that they were openly analyzing cases of collaboration to prevent such behavior in the future.

The teaser for Yakiv became very popular. Why?

People liked the way it was shot and wanted this story to be told to the world in a proper and professional manner, on the big screen. This subject is important for Ukrainians: In almost every family, there is a story of a Holodomor loss. We carry this pain on a genetic level.

This is why Ukrainian resistance to the Russian war of aggression is possible. We have been collecting these traumatic experiences for too long. Now we see the response.

The teaser evoked strong emotions, leading to widespread discussion and coverage. This response from the public was unexpected. People were deeply moved as if they were watching an entire movie, not a teaser. The press supported me, reprinting articles and conducting interviews. I was overwhelmed and grateful for their reaction.

What challenges did you face working on the film project?

The subject of the Communist Party is painful and important for both ordinary Ukrainians and the political life of the country due to the many crimes committed in Ukraine during the Soviet era. I approach the story with utmost care, recognizing the high stakes at play, but initially, the film did not receive a state grant.

It took persistence and multiple pitches to convince the Ukrainian State Film Agency that I am not pro-Soviet and aim to create a powerful dramatic film without political statements and harmful consequences.

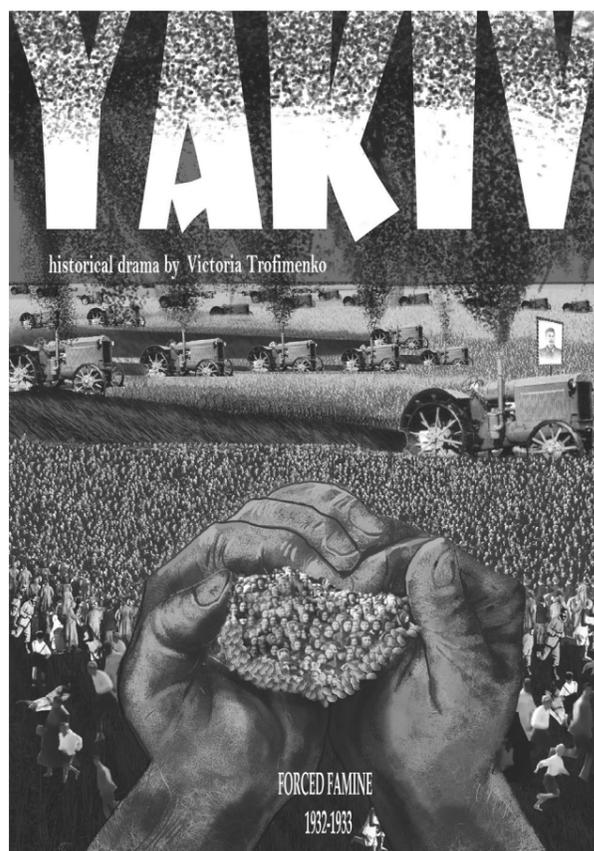
Eventually, in 2019, we won and were supposed to receive financial support from the Ukrainian government for the movie’s production. Unfortunately, *Yakiv*, along with many other film projects, lost state financing due to internal policy issues.

The Covid-19 pandemic overshadowed 2020. In 2021, the economy was recovering from the effects of the pandemic, and budgets were limited. We planned to apply again, but the full-scale Russian invasion started in February 2022.

In 2022, as a visiting scholar, I came to the University of Texas at Austin in the United States and began working on a book (stage play) based on this script. I continued searching for funds to bring the film *Yakiv* to life. I saw my presence in the U.S. as a twist of fate. I believe it was meant to be and that this was the path my story was taking, and I resolved to make the film here.

Can you share any insights into the research of the Holodomor in your film?

To write the script, I conducted extensive research, reading numerous historical accounts from the Holodomor survivors.



Poster for the trailer of the movie *Yakiv*. Image courtesy of Victoria Trofimenko’s archive

I attempted to incorporate real dialogues documented in archives to ensure historical accuracy.

Daria Mittingly, a historian who has extensively studied the Holodomor at the University of Cambridge and translator of the famous book *Red Famine* by Anne Applebaum, recognized the thorough research and historical accuracy of my script.

You mentioned in an interview that the female perspective is “a hero who survives” versus a male model of “a hero who dies fighting.” Can you elaborate on this?

I have observed men’s fatal attraction to Thanatos, the personification of death in Greek mythology. This male perspective often revolves around self-sacrifice for a cause, depicting heroes who die fighting. This narrative is prevalent in stories of heroism, particularly within military contexts, aligning with global military agendas.

From a woman’s perspective, I do not find Thanatos attractive or compelling. Instead, I strive to understand the nature of life in the face of genocide. For me, it is more important to emphasize survival for the sake of future generations. My cultural and historical background might influence this perspective.

In Ukraine, Cossacks, free semi-nomadic warriors, lived in a specific territory called Sich. Their wives and families lived outside that territory, managing households and running businesses. While men were dying fighting, women were focusing on surviving. As a female director, this perspective shapes my storytelling approach.

In my story, I guide the audience through the horrors of Holodomor to a life-affirming conclusion. I hope so.

Zarina Zabrisky is an American journalist and an award-winning novelist currently reporting on the Russian war in Ukraine. She is a war correspondent for *Bywire News (UK)*, writes a *Daily Review* column for *Euromaidan Press*, an online Ukrainian English-language independent newspaper since 2014, and contributes articles and podcasts on information warfare, reports from the sites and interviews with military experts and eyewitnesses for these and other publications, including *The Byline Times (UK)*.



Image taken from the trailer of the movie *Yakiv*. Image courtesy of Victoria Trofimenko’s archive



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Graphic by Lincoln Cushing

WILPF CRAFTS FAIRE RETURNS



We are excited to bring back our annual Crafts Faire. We miss seeing everyone. And we are making a few changes. Our date is TBD, but watch for updates as we continue planning.

We have a new venue, thanks to Rev. Floyd Harris. This year, our Crafts Faire will be at the Free AME Church (806 Collins Ave., Fresno).

We will offer all the festivities of our annual Crafts Faire but on a slightly smaller scale. We look forward to seeing all of our friends again!

For more information, contact Teresa Castillo at 559-360-8054 or taca_03@ymail.com.

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Jane Addams Dangerous Woman V-neck T-shirts in all sizes are now available! Look for them at the WILPF Crafts Faire. And if you just can't wait to get this great shirt, call or text Teresa Castillo at 559-360-8054.

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Jane Addams was a pacifist, a suffragist and a leftist, who helped found the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the American Civil Liberties Union, in addition to WILPF (Women's International League for Peace and Freedom). She was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

Often, radical workers for peace and social justice are "sanitized" after their deaths, so it's important to remember the real Jane Addams. We need more dangerous women like Jane Addams who will work to change the world.

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FRESNO WILPF LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON THE JOB IN PERSON

Urging a No Vote on H.R.314 and S.538



The WILPF Legislative Committee was so immersed in our advocacy that we forgot to take a photo. This is from the June 25 Off the List—No on H.R.314/S.538 action in Washington.
Photo by Bill Hackwell

Fresno WILPF's Legislative Committee visited the offices of Senators Alex Padilla and Dianne Feinstein and Rep. Jim Costa to talk about the legislation that has been introduced in the U.S. Congress to block Cuba, and only Cuba, from being removed from the U.S. State Sponsors of Terrorism list.

Legislative Committee Chair Jean Hays was joined by Cuba and the Bolivarian Alliance Committee Co-Chairs Leni Villagomez Reeves, Dr. Jean Kennedy, Patricia Wells-Solorzano, Kyla Mitchell and Evelee Jane.

Our message was clear: Please vote NO on H.R.314/S.538, the FORCE Act, and urge President Biden to remove Cuba from the U.S. list of State Sponsors of Terrorism. There is no reason Cuba should be on this list.

We urged a NO vote on H.R.314, the FORCE Act, in the House of Representatives, and S.538, the Senate companion bill, because the bill changes the process for removing, specifically and uniquely, Cuba from the U.S. State Sponsors of Terrorism list in order to prevent the President and State Department from acting.

The FORCE Act has also been introduced in the Senate by Senators Marco Rubio and Tim Scott. If enacted, this bill would stop President Biden from making any effort toward normalizing relations with Cuba.

Former President Trump arbitrarily reinstated Cuba's designation as a State Sponsor of Terrorism less than a week after the Jan. 6 attempted coup, reversing the Obama-Biden administration's 2015 decision to remove this status after an exhaustive review by the U.S. State Department. Cuba does not satisfy any criteria for inclusion on this list.

The unjust State Sponsor of Terrorism designation has no basis in fact and gravely increases the punitive restrictions on Cuban trade, finance, family remittances and travel.

Countries and potential business partners refrain from trading with Cuba for fear of angering the United States or incurring penalties. The result has been severe shortages of food, medicine, spare parts, fuel and all necessities in Cuba. This adds to the shortages that the Cuban people already experience due to the blockade.

Even humanitarian aid is blocked by the restrictions involved in this designation, as detailed by the Washington Office for Latin America: "Fearful of being accused of abetting terror and the mammoth fines that an infraction entails, most banks refuse to process Cuban payments and have frozen funds for permitted religious and humanitarian activities."

The alleged primary reason for Cuba's inclusion on the State Sponsors of Terrorism list is the alleged refusal to extradite members of the Ejercito de Liberación Nacional (ELN) of Colombia after the past breakdown of peace talks between the ELN and the government of Colombia. This is not only spurious, it ignores the fact that the current government of Colombia has successfully conducted peace talks with the ELN, and the president of Colombia has dropped the extradition request and has requested that Cuba be removed from the State Sponsors of Terrorism list.

You can help: Send a letter or sign on to an online letter at acere.org/category/action-alert/.

WILPF MEETING

Aug. 10 (second Thursday), 7 p.m., online and in person at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence. Watch your e-mail for an announcement with a link and a call-in number. For more information, contact Teresa at taca_03@ymail.com or Leni at lenivreeves@gmail.com.

STIR IT UP—WILPF KFCF 88.1 FM

Aug. 23 (fourth Wednesday), 3 p.m. Jean Hays highlights people and events important to our WILPF community.

UNPACKING RACISM

Aug. 27 (last Sunday), 6:30 p.m. With Dr. Jean Kennedy. To join and get a link, RSVP with your e-mail address to drjeankennedy@yahoo.com or text 559-270-1023.

WOMEN IN BLACK

Aug. 2 (first Wednesday), noon, Courthouse. Check first with Sue Kern at skern@netptc.net or 559-349-3777.

Cuba Solidarity Activists Arrested at Senator's Office

BY LENI VILLAGOMEZ REEVES

On June 22, three activists, including Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO)/Pastors for Peace Executive Director Gail Walker, who lives in New Jersey, went to the Washington, D.C., office of U.S. Senator Bob Menendez (D-N.J.) to try to meet with the senator. They were arrested while sitting in his office, awaiting his return.

"We wanted to have a conversation with Sen. Menendez. We wanted to talk to him about his policy toward Cuba, his policy of keeping Cuba unjustly on the State Sponsors of Terrorism List...and that's why we're being arrested," said Walker, with her arms handcuffed behind her back.

"We're standing in defense of our Cuban family because we believe this policy is unjust."

Also arrested was Calla Walsh, co-chair of the National Network on Cuba. "The Capitol Police used 20 officers to arrest three of us peacefully sitting in Sen. Menendez's office, asking him to stop killing the Cuban people," said Walsh.

"Remember, the U.S. is the real police state and state sponsor of terrorism. End the blockade! Take Cuba off the list!

"You know, it's funny that we're always told that Cuba is a repressive dictatorship, a police state, when we're getting arrested just for trying to have a conversation.

"The U.S. people do not support this, and we will not stop protesting until [the blockade] is lifted. Why isn't Menendez being arrested for his fraud and corruption?"

"Why isn't Menendez being arrested for his fraud and corruption?"

On April 1, 2015, Sen. Menendez, and Salomon Melgen, a Florida ophthalmologist, were indicted in connection with a bribery scheme in which Menendez allegedly accepted gifts from Melgen in exchange for using the power of his Senate office to benefit Melgen's financial and personal interests. They were both indicted in the District of New Jersey for one count of conspiracy, one count of violating the travel act, eight counts of bribery and three counts of honest services fraud. Menendez was also charged with one count of making false statements.

The U.S. Department of Justice site states that "according to allegations in the indictment, between January 2006 and January 2013, Menendez accepted close to \$1 million worth of lavish gifts and campaign contributions from Melgen in exchange for using the power of his Senate office to influence the outcome of ongoing contractual and Medicare billing disputes worth tens of millions of dollars to Melgen and to support the visa applications of several of Melgen's girlfriends."

Specifically, the indictment alleges that, among other gifts, Menendez accepted flights on Melgen's private jet, a first-class commercial flight and a flight on a chartered jet; numerous vacations at Melgen's Caribbean villa in the Dominican Republic and at a hotel room in Paris; and \$40,000 in contributions to his legal defense fund and more than \$750,000 in campaign contributions. Menendez never disclosed any of the reportable gifts that he received from Melgen on his financial disclosure forms.

According to allegations in the indictment, during this same time period, Menendez allegedly engaged in three efforts to use his Senate office and staff to advocate on behalf of Melgen's personal and financial interests.

First, Menendez allegedly pressured executive agencies in connection with a conflict between Melgen and the government of the Dominican Republic relating to a disputed contract that Melgen purchased to provide exclusive screening of containers coming through Dominican ports.

Second, Menendez allegedly advocated on behalf of Melgen in connection with a Medicare billing dispute worth approximately \$8.9 million to Melgen.

Third, Menendez allegedly took active steps to support the tourist and student visa applications of three of Melgen's girlfriends, as well as the visa application of the younger sister of one of Melgen's girlfriends.

Throughout these efforts, Menendez allegedly engaged in advocacy for Melgen all the way up to the highest levels of the U.S. government, including meeting with a U.S. cabinet secretary, contacting a U.S. Ambassador, meeting with the heads of executive agencies and other senior executive officials and soliciting other U.S. senators, all to assist Melgen's personal and pecuniary interests.

Menendez beat the rap, with a hung jury, in a trial in Newark, N.J., in 2017. His co-defendant, Melgen, was subsequently sentenced in Florida to 17 years and fined \$42.5 million for Medicare fraud. On Trump's last day in office, Melgen was one of those pardoned, along with Trump chief strategist Steve Bannon. In Trump's announcement, he said that the pardon was supported by Menendez.

Now, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York is conducting an investigation about more corruption. Menendez and his wife are alleged to have received money, jewelry, an apartment and a Mercedes from IS EG Halal, a business that was awarded an exclusive contract with the Egyptian government to certify Halal meat exports worldwide.



Cuba solidarity activists arrested at the D.C. office of U.S. Senator Bob Menendez (D-N.J.).
Photo by Bill Hackwell

Seven companies in various parts of the world that previously held these contracts were suddenly fired by the Egyptian government, and the contracts were given to IS EG Halal. This company, despite the name, is run by a Christian without prior experience in Islamic certification of international meat imports and exports.

Peter Paradis, former deputy assistant inspector general at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), said the contract change "defies logic" and that "IS EG Halal has no preexisting relationship with the U.S. beef industry or Islamic organizations."

None of the "gifts" appear listed on Menendez's Senate disclosure forms. Menendez never disclosed any of the reportable gifts that he received from Melgen on his financial disclosure forms, either.

Menendez, the chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, oversees foreign aid to Egypt.

Why is this corrupt senator in charge of the Foreign Relations Committee?

In April 2018, the U.S. Senate Select Committee on Ethics stated that "the Committee concludes that your actions violated Senate Rules and related statutes, and reflected discredit upon the Senate. Accordingly, you must repay the fair market value of all impermissible gifts not already repaid, and amend your Financial Disclosure Reports to include all reportable gifts. Finally, by this letter, you are hereby severely admonished."

This seems to have been an empty admonishment.

Leni Villagomez Reeves is a local physician and activist. Contact her at lenivreeves@gmail.com. Check out her news and views about Cuba on Facebook ([fresnosolidarity/](https://www.facebook.com/fresnosolidarity/)).

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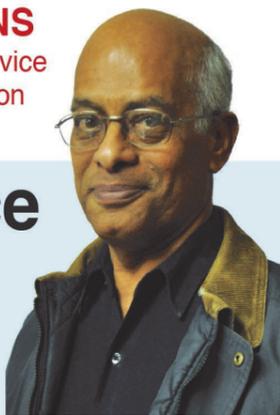
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I Began Reading Forbidden Books at a Young Age

BY STEVEN ROESCH

In Lodi—my home town—the public library was split into two clearly marked sections. There was a children’s room and, beyond an imposing wooden door, there lay the adult section.

But even in grade school I was an incorrigible bookworm, and soon enough I sneaked over that threshold and began checking out “adult” material on the sly.

At first, I was just feeding a restive Agatha Christie addiction. The Hardy Boys and Sherlock Holmes just didn’t cut it anymore; I needed the likes of Poirot and Marple.

But my reading appetites hardly stopped there. Soon I was checking out books by other authors deemed inappropriate for younger readers—John Dickson Carr, Raymond Chandler, even James Michener.

It was only a matter of time until I got caught. It turned out that one of the librarians had been on my trail for a while. Once, when I was heading out with my latest stash, she stopped me in my tracks and read me, politely but firmly, a riot act of sorts.

My craving for the “adult” stuff persisted, though—and fortunately my older sister came to my rescue. Soon we developed a routine. I’d go to the adult stacks with her, collect the books that I wanted and hand them all over to her. She’d use her library card to check out everything for me.

All very tidy and legal, of course.

Given my own fascination with books, it’s not surprising that I later got a B.A. in English and an M.A. in comparative literature. In the mid-1980s, I landed a full-time job teaching, among other things, English.

And then something unexpected happened during my first year in the Fresno Unified School District (FUSD).

After picking up a class set of *Hamlet* paperbacks from the school library, I was surprised to see that they were censored. *Hamlet*’s familiar “To be or not to be” was still in there, but someone had determined that other lines were definitely not going “to be.” They’d all been eliminated.

In Act 3, for example, *Hamlet* lets Ophelia know “That’s a fair thought to lie between maids’ legs.” Apparently, his remark—that sex can be pleasurable—was deemed too hot for high school English classes to handle, and it had been removed, along with other “controversial” lines.

A few years later, though, as our Honors and Advanced Placement offerings expanded, my colleagues and I could offer our students the real Shakespearean deal—unexpurgated Folger editions, maids’ legs and all.

Throughout the decades that I taught Shakespeare, no students or parents ever raised concerns about these lines—nor about Porter’s speech in *Macbeth*, nor about some bawdy passages in *Measure for Measure*.

Not all of my colleagues lived such charmed lives, though. One decided to teach all of the stories in Ray Bradbury’s *The Martian Chronicles*—including “Way in the Middle of the Air,” which features a few appearances of the N-word in its opening pages. Even though the district’s English guidelines allowed for the book to be taught, parent outrage came down hard on him.

That criticism always seemed misplaced to me. Bradbury’s story takes many of its white characters to task for their livid racism, a worthwhile topic if there ever was one. The ruckus about the N-word—something Bradbury used to show the ugliness of prejudice—seemed to overlook the story’s overall message.

News reports about moves to ban books and restrict schools’ curricula have caught my eye again and again in recent months, not least because some of the books under scrutiny (such as *Huckleberry Finn*) were staples in FUSD’s English reading lists.

It’s a tough problem, of course. Clearly, not all material is appropriate for use in elementary schools, or middle or high schools—either for classroom use or for inclusion in school libraries. A line has to be drawn somehow and somewhere.

On the other hand, restricting or banning books—or merely “cleansing” their contents—can come at a high cost.

In *The Language Police*, originally published in 2003, Diane Ravitch traces the mind-boggling rise of “beneficent censorship.”

Early on, she recounts how the bias and sensitivity reviewers at one company, Riverside Publishing, rejected

various texts that had been suggested for inclusion in a nationwide exam. One passage, which portrayed a blind man who had scaled Mount McKinley, was rejected because of its putative regional bias. Some students, the reviewers felt, wouldn’t be personally familiar with mountains and would thus be at a disadvantage should they come across a text like this one in an exam.

In general, the Riverside guidelines called for controversial topics to be avoided—topics such as politics, religion and death.

As Ravitch puts it, these reviewers acted on “assumptions that have the inevitable effect of stripping away everything that is potentially thought-provoking and colorful from the texts that children encounter.” Literary material in anthologies has often been bowdlerized, she notes. Swear words have been removed as well as references to God and religion—changes that severely weaken the message and meaning of works by such writers as Elie Wiesel.

The urge to restrict the scope of reading materials, even if well intentioned, can become an endless juggernaut, one that seeks to eliminate all aspects of texts that might be discomforting for some. Once unleashed, the appetite to restrict and censor can become insatiable.

Recently, the Bob Graham Education Center in Miami Lakes, Fla., opted to place Amanda Gorman’s *The Hill We Climb* on a shelf reserved for middle school readers only. Given the fact that a single parent complaint precipitated this decision, the incident suggests that no written work is safe from restrictions these days.

Could it be, however, that exposing students to potentially uncomfortable materials can be beneficial—in fact, highly beneficial? My experience in the classroom suggests that it can.

For many years, Hermann Hesse’s *Demian* had a place on FUSD’s recommended reading list for the 12th grade, and I taught it several times before my retirement. The book appeared in the wake of World War I, and in it several characters question their society’s institutions and mainstream beliefs—including Christianity.

Over the years, many students have let me know that *Demian* was the most important novel that they read during high school. Especially striking is the number of Christian students who felt that way. They’d never encountered these perspectives before, and they felt that they’d gained a lot by reading about them and confronting them head-on in their written assignments.

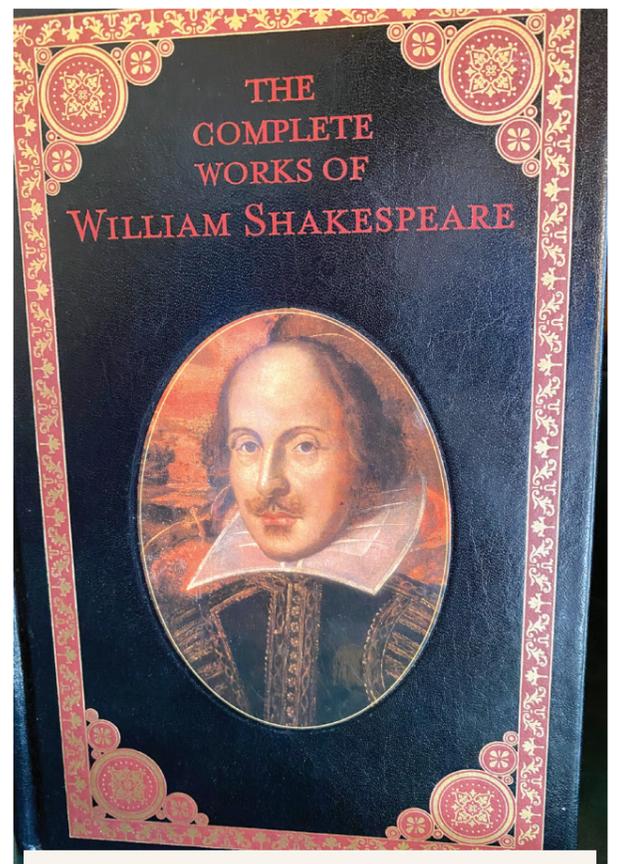
In my experience, honoring parents’ concerns about their children’s reading doesn’t have to be difficult or acrimonious. Early on in my career, when I taught in a private school in Stockton, the mother of one of my eighth graders visited me shortly before the start of the year.

She let me know that she and her daughter were Jehovah’s Witnesses, and she gave me a pamphlet that enumerated the topics—such as Halloween and Christmas—that she didn’t want her daughter exposed to. Given the pamphlet’s clarity, I could provide her daughter with the type of educational offerings that she favored. Her daughter received alternative material and assignments on occasion, and others in the class received the regular curriculum in its entirety.

Much of the news about school curricula and the content of school libraries has zeroed in on those seeking to restrict or ban material. Less discussed, however, is another demographic.

A few decades ago, I asked students to read a few books on their own each year and write reports about each one. They could choose works from a list that I provided or, if they had another title in mind, ask me if they could use that one.

Once an 11th grader wanted to know if she could



Not even Shakespeare can escape from censorship in some cases.

read Henry Miller’s *Tropic of Cancer* for her next report. Given the novel’s history—it was banned in the United States for quite a while, then the subject of an obscenity trial in the early 1960s—I told her that I could only agree if she brought a note from her parents signaling that they’d allow this.

The next day she handed me a letter from her father, letting me know bluntly that “my daughter has the right to read everything that she wants.”

Secretly, I was heartened about how that situation got resolved. After all, I’d read both of Miller’s *Tropic* novels back when I was in high school.

Steven Roesch is a retired bilingual teacher who’s lived in Fresno since 1985. Contact him at stevenroesch12@comcast.net.

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For more information, contact Mike Rhodes at 559-978-4502 or mikerhodes@comcast.net

Provide feedback.
E-mail editor@fresnoalliance.com.

Paulina Cruz Receives Way of Peace Award

BY COMMUNITY ALLIANCE STAFF

Staff and volunteers at the *Community Alliance* newspaper are proud of Paulina Cruz, our youngest staff member, who received the Youth Way of Peace Award at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence's 31st anniversary event.

Cruz is a writer for the *Community Alliance*, a Mexican immigrant and an anthropology major at Fresno State. When she graduates, she "wants to work with nonprofits, especially after working with the *Community Alliance*."

"I have had the opportunity through [the newspaper] to work with nonprofits and talk to nonprofits...I definitely want to continue doing work like that."

She strongly believes in independent printed media "because not everyone has access to social media." While the trend is for Gen X to get most of their news from such platforms as TikTok and Instagram, she reminds us that "not everyone has access to that and not everyone has money to pay for the Internet."

The *Community Alliance* is given away for free, through more than 100 distribution locations in the San Joaquin Valley and the Sierra Nevada mountains.

Cruz is also a *Community Alliance* distributor and was surprised to discover that Fresno State (one of her drop-off locations) is probably her most active distribution site. "Now people think that everything is online. They have these privileges that we don't even see



Fresno Center for Nonviolence Way of Peace awardees (left to right): Joshua Shurley, Rita Bell, Paulina Cruz, Connie Young and Roman Rain Tree. Photo by Peter Maiden

as privileges, that there are people out there that don't have the same access and they get left behind as we move digitally."

She says that she likes the *Community Alliance* because it provides news and analysis to people who do not have access to the Internet or don't want to get their information online.

Her message to young people interested in social justice issues is to get involved. "If you can do one small positive thing, that is better than nothing. That small positive thing means something."

"We're often taught to think in these big ways and big changes, but the truth is that is not really how change happens. It starts off small and then gains momentum."

To read past articles by Paulina Cruz, visit fresnoalliance.com.

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PAC PROGRESSIVE

The Central Valley Progressive PAC: Power to the People!

The next meeting of the CVPPAC will be on Saturday, August 12 at 3:30 p.m. Here is the Zoom link for the August meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/91876023472?pwd=cFVKZzhLcUliMvdlOHNSUXR1UU1uUTog> Meeting ID: 918 7602 3472 Passcode: 989427

This meeting will include a discussion about the CVPPAC endorsement process, which candidates we are considering and our Fall fundraiser.

For more information, contact:

Simone Cranston-Rhodes
CVPPAC President
Cell: 559-978-4504
E-mail: simone.rhodes@seiu521.org

Candidate Endorsement meeting
Saturday, September 9 at 2 p.m.
Location: TBA

We will be considering candidates in the following races: Fresno County Board of Supervisors District 2 & 3, Fresno City Council Districts 2, 4 & 6. And possibly others. You must be a CVPPAC member as of August 12 to vote in the PAC endorsement process.

Save the Date!
CVPPAC Fall Fundraiser: October 7

DO YOU WANT?

Join us as we continue our strategic plan to elect progressives to local office, build a labor/community alliance, demand clean air, clean water, police accountability and for all workers to earn a living wage. With your support we will win political power.

A BETTER FRESNO...



- YES, I want to join the CVPPAC
- Enclosed is \$100 for one year's membership.
- I would prefer to pay monthly (\$8.33).
- Student/low-income rate: \$20 a year.



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Make checks payable to: Central Valley Progressive PAC, P.O. Box 5845, Fresno, CA 93755. To pay with Paypal or credit card, go to www.cvppac.org.



SIERRA CLUB

TEHIPITE CHAPTER

ATTENTION, ADVOCATES FOR REDUCING SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY AIR POLLUTION

The Sierra Club Tehipite Chapter in Fresno is engaged in reassessing and developing an action plan to break the cycle of regulatory capture that reinforces the continuing problem with air pollution levels that exceed the Clean Air Act of 1964 and newer regulations and guidelines for safe air leading to at least 800 deaths from air pollution-caused diseases in Fresno County annually.

This month we highlight the absence of effective measures to stop the proliferation of illegal trucking yards in residentially zoned areas of Fresno County. The 2023 Fresno County Draft Environmental Impact Report fails to address this and the diseases and deaths caused by industrial air pollution. Residentially zoned areas in the City of Fresno face similar problems.

Shutting Down the Proliferation of Illegal Trucking Yards in Residentially Zoned Areas, by Emily Brandt

There is overwhelming evidence of the impact of long-term exposure to diesel air pollution on human health causing severe loss of cognition in children and adults, cardiovascular, respiratory, liver, kidney diseases and decreasing life expectancy by 15-20 years in highly pollution-burdened areas of Fresno. Eight hundred people die annually from pollution-caused diseases in Fresno County though the DPEIR does not discuss specific elements of these diseases and outcomes, nor the need to calculate current conditions in present and future plans.

Extensive study of this problem now called "attainment" in areas like Fresno that consistently fail to meet Clean Air Act standards has led to a state of paralysis in which there is no effort at mitigation of current levels because current excesses have been enshrined in law FCOG 2019 Conformity Analysis. This creates the conditions for a never-ending position on SB 1000 Environmental Justice and SB 535 Disadvantaged Community lists for all cities that have not met Clean Air Act Standards for decades. Communities are not being protected—children are not being protected from severe cognitive loss over decades and from premature death and severe life-long illness by these practices and policies.

CalEnviroScreen 4.0 shows West Central Fresno at 90%+ pollution-burdened; many areas currently show readings of 90-100th percentile. The Fresno County DPEIR Section 4.3 and 4.8 include no measures to decrease the current toxic level of air pollution in West Central Fresno. These extremely high levels are generated not only by passenger vehicles as we are frequently told; they are caused by extensive historical land pollution from superfund sites which remain unremediated, toxic industrial polluters, battery dumps, the nearby (diesel) train switch yard, diesel freight and trucking yards that run hundreds of trucks 24 hours a day including those transporting hazardous materials.

Nothing in the EIR will reduce current toxic air pollution that is killing residents and making people of all ages sick. This 2023 DPEIR and the Fresno County General Plan which aim to expand industry and commerce in this area will add high-density housing, increase the toxicity of

these areas above the 100th percentile possible on CalEnviroScreen 4.0. Nothing is being done to lower currently toxic levels as plans are being made that will increase and raise those levels significantly.

According to CEQA (2021) 15002 (b) (h) (5), this project which will occur in areas that are at CalEnviroScreen 4.0 90-100th percentile pollution-burdened, are SB 535 Disadvantaged Communities and under SB 1000 Areas in need of Environmental Justice that implement immediate stoppage of existing mobile air polluters such as trucking yards springing up unimpeded and operating for years. The industrial project will include 188 spaces for diesel trucks, but this does not count or include all the illegal trucking yards in operation currently and in the process of starting up all over Fresno County and the City of Fresno.

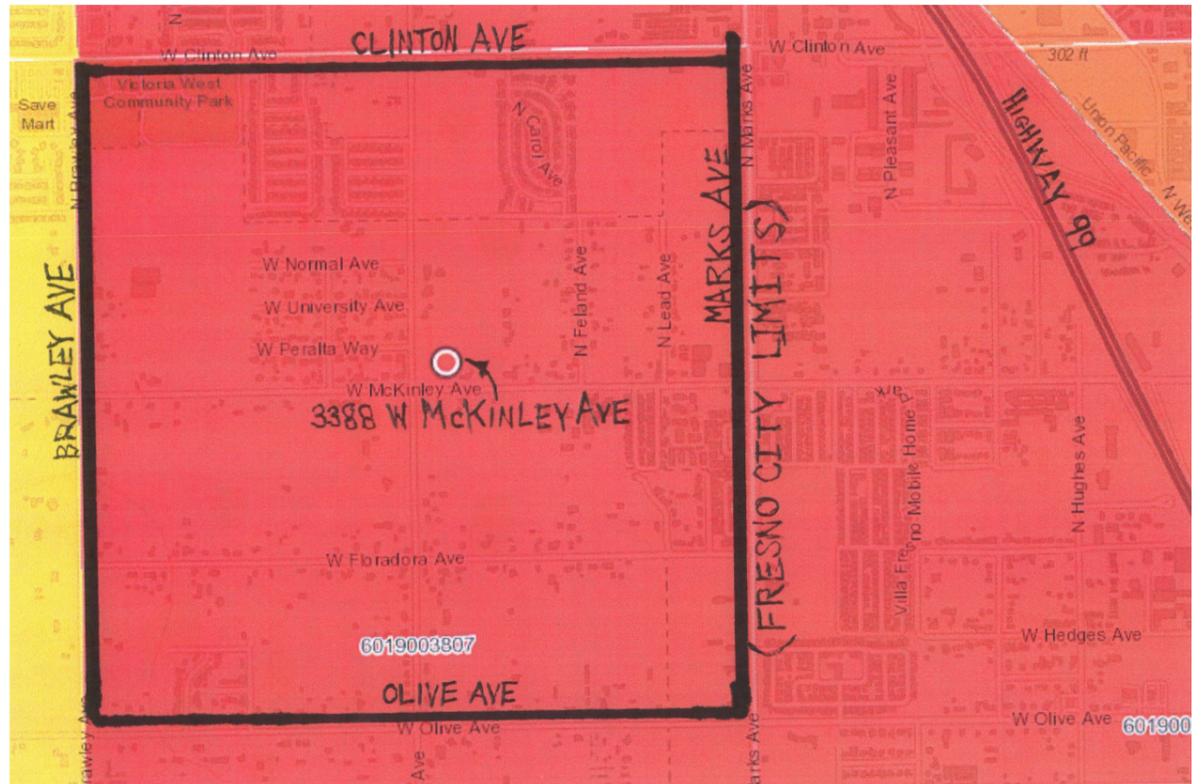
standards which do not save lives today. The San Joaquin Air Control District has been completely discredited for its practices and is currently charged with "cooking the books." In view of this dire and deadly situation, we must see this DPEIR document fail to be approved by all government agencies.

The graphic is a compilation of information from CalEnviroScreen 4.0 https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/11d2f52282a54ceebcac7428e6184203/page/CalEnviroScreen-4_0/

Please contact Emily Brandt, ebrandt76@gmail.com with questions or an interest in taking action on this problem.

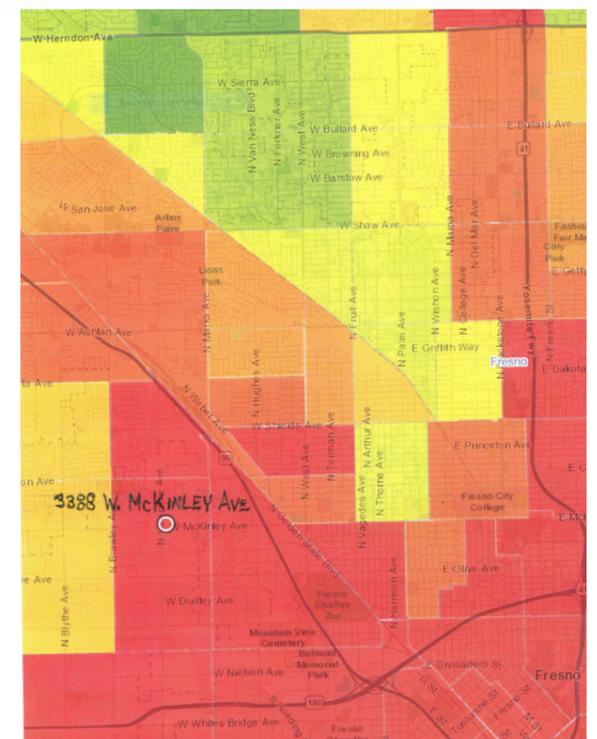
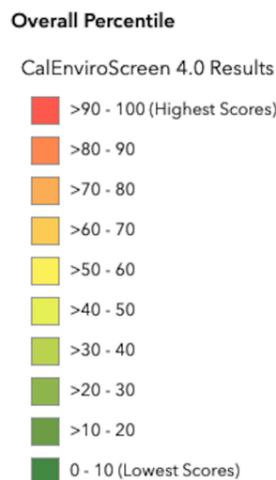


Exposures	Environmental Effects	Overall Percentiles
Ozone	Cleanup Sites	CalEnviroScreen 4.0 Percentile
Particulate Matter 2.5	Groundwater Threats	91
Diesel Particulate Matter	Hazardous Waste	Pollution Burden Percentile
Toxic Releases	Impaired Waters	79
Traffic	Solid Waste	Population Characteristics Percentile
Pesticides		92



REGION OF PROPOSED TRUCKING YARDS IN UNINCORPORATED WEST-CENTRAL FRESNO IN A RESIDENTIAL ZONING AREA

Making matters far worse is the fact that there is no consistent and even distribution of air sensors throughout this area. A vital step toward such improvements can be the establishment of air monitors throughout Fresno County that collect air pollution data enabling meaningful and effective action, an end to regulatory capture through effective legislation and legal authority in counties and cities to enforce zoning laws protecting residential communities from economic exploitation. CalEPA and CARB provide Cap and Trade GHG reduction plan mostly through performance-based



DHF Launches LYFE Bridges: Empowering Youth Through Higher Education and Career Programs



The Dolores Huerta Foundation Youth Program (LYFE - Liberated Youth for Empowerment) launched a higher education and career program for youth called LYFE Bridges. It aims to bridge young people's leadership experience in LYFE to their higher education and career planning.

In April, LYFE Bridges hosted its first college tour for 19 youths from across the Central Valley. They visited UC Santa Cruz, UC Berkeley, and San Jose State for two days.

Seventeen-year-old LYFE members Katherine C. said, "I loved getting to know the college campuses that I've never been to before, and I'm glad I got to see these schools as I plan to consider applying to some of them. Thank you so much for the opportunity! It's a great way to show students like me how college life is and what my future could look like. It's also a great opportunity for students who can't travel to colleges and see what these schools offer." Josselyne, another seventeen-year-old LYFE member, thanked DHF and shared, "I enjoyed the tours, and they helped me decide which university I will commit to. In the fall, I will be attending Berkeley. Everything was perfect!"

Through a partnership with the College Corps of Cal State Bakersfield, seven part-time mentors were brought on to assist students and families with questions about financial aid, scholarships, internships, employment, college applications, and career planning. DHF is excited to support the development of LYFE members' academic and professional careers and looks forward to sharing their journeys.



Dolores Huerta Foundation Urges Support for SB 274 to End Willful Defiance Suspensions in California Schools



The Dolores Huerta Foundation calls for support of SB 274, a bill that would end willful defiance suspensions in California schools. The bill, which passed the Senate earlier this year, is currently being reviewed by the Assembly Education Committee. We believe that students belong in classrooms, not out of school. Willful defiance suspensions are a form of discrimination that disproportionately impacts students of color and students with disabilities. SB 274 would help to ensure that all students have the opportunity to receive a quality education.

SB 274 would extend a previous bill, SB 419, which prohibited K-8 suspension and expulsions for students for willful defiance until 2024. Willful defiance is a subjective and overly broad category of suspensions that can be used to punish students for minor misbehavior, such as dancing, dress code violations, or not paying attention in class.

This bill is a common-sense measure that would help to keep students in school and out of the criminal justice system. Urge the Assembly Education Committee to vote yes on SB 274.

To contact your representative in the Assembly Education Committee, visit the California State Assembly website.

Get Vaccinated Today!

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To support the organizing work of the Dolores Huerta Foundation, please visit Give2DHF.org



Fresno Center for Nonviolence August 2023

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To see a more colorful version of our page go to our website.

Pictures of our 31st Anniversary on the afternoon of July 1, 2023, at the Community United Church of Christ. More pictures can be seen at: https://photos.google.com/share/AF1QipOLZQooRL1_dHanP9v21ZwIOIli2dDXy9De7SY2XQtT2x4_djTX2t0SqWBj09g7w?key=MzBPd21MNkp0VjNIZ1JYWFR0V2pQeVISVXJkN2Fn



(To the R)
In memory of our friend and mentor,
Maria Telesco, 1933-2022
Rest in Power.



(To the L)
Ragin Grannies get things rockin' with
song of Anti-War and Peace.



Special speaker, Susan Schnall, who spoke of her involvement in the peace movement since the days of her military service during the Vietnam War through her work with Veterans For Peace today, as well as the connections between the drivers of endless war then and now: the Military Industrial Complex and the corporate interests that benefit from ongoing conflict.



Recipients of the Way of Peace Awards, from the left: Joshua Shurley, Rita Bell, Paulina Cruz, Connie Young for the Environmental Collaborative of Central California, and Roman Rain Tree.



It's great to see a diversity of people coming together after the Pandemic.



(Above) Camille Russel and Dan Yaseen both enjoying the event while selling, Norman Solomon latest book, "War Made Invisible." Contact Peace Fresno for more information on how you may acquire one.



Below) Friends and members of Veterans for Peace.



88.1 FM KFCF



UP!

Our next show is Wednesday August 9th at 3pm.

Our August radio show will be with our host Joshua Shurley and his guest TBD later. For more information call on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at (559) 237-3223 or check our website at www.centerfornonviolence.org.

Our July's radio show with host Joshua Shurley and guest, valley activist Roman Raintree, who is also the newest addition to the Fresno Center for Nonviolence's board of directors. Roman has led the multi-year effort to rename S- Valley to Yokuts Valley. They discuss the recent name change, the politics behind the pushback to this effort, and the ongoing struggle to gain federal tribal recognition for the many indigenous

Peace & Social Justice Calendar August 2023

Sponsored by the Fresno Center for Nonviolence

Note: Contact the organizer for up-to-date information on whether meetings are in person or via Zoom.

TUE 01 National Women's Political Caucus (NWPC) 5:30 p.m. Los Amigos Restaurant, 5088 N. Blackstone Ave. Speaker: Mayra Campa, president of the Fresno County Young Democrats and district director for Fresno City Council Member Annalisa Perea. Topic: Working within Government and Political Systems: Insights from a Local Young Woman. For more info, contact 559-222-6212 or joanne@pbयोगa.com.

KFCF 88.1 FM: Nuestro Foro 7 p.m. Weekly radio show in Spanish hosted by Eduardo Stanley. For more info, visit kfcf.org.

WED 02 **KFCF 88.1 FM: Stir It Up!** 3 p.m. Community Alliance radio show hosted by Daren Miller. For more info, visit kfcf.org.

THU 03 **ArtHop Downtown/Tower District** 5 p.m.–8 p.m. Museums, studios, galleries and other venues open their exhibits free to the public. For more info, visit FACarthop on Facebook.

Fresno County Multi-Jurisdictional Housing Element Community Discussion 5:30 p.m. Teague Community Resource Center, 4718 N. Polk Ave. Fresno's eight-year housing plan has been updated with your feedback. The Public Draft is ready for you to review and leave your public comment. View the housing element update at fresnomjhe.com.

SAT 05 **Kennedy Club of the San Joaquin Valley** 9 a.m. Marie Callender's Restaurant, 1781 E. Shaw Ave. For more info, contact 559-435-4043.

MON 07 **Democratic Women in Action** 6 p.m. Marie Callender's Restaurant, 1781 E. Shaw Ave. For more info, contact 559-681-3140 or ggaston1234@aol.com or visit dwiafresno.org.

TUE 08 **Fresno County Multi-Jurisdictional Housing Element Community Discussion** 5 p.m. Nelson Elementary, 1336 W. Spruce Ave. Fresno's eight-year housing plan has been updated with your feedback. The Public Draft is ready for you to review and leave your public comment. View the housing element update at fresnomjhe.com.

Black American Political Association of California (BAPAC) 6 p.m. For more info, contact 559-287-1308 or bapacfresno@gmail.com.

Stonewall Democratic Club 6 p.m. Los Amigos Restaurant, 5088 N. Blackstone Ave. For more info, contact 559-709-8016 or conantm@aol.com.

WED 09 **KFCF 88.1 FM: Nuestro Foro** 7 p.m. Weekly radio show in Spanish hosted by Eduardo Stanley. For more info, visit kfcf.org.

KFCF 88.1 FM: Stir It Up! 3 p.m. Fresno Center for Nonviolence radio show hosted by Josh Shurley. For more info, visit kfcf.org.

Fresno County Multi-Jurisdictional Housing Element Community Discussion 4:30 p.m. Ted C. Wills Community Center, 770 N. San Pablo Ave. Fresno's eight-year housing plan has been updated with your feedback. The Public Draft is ready for you to review and leave your public comment. View the housing element update at fresnomjhe.com.

THU 10 **Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)** 7 p.m. Online/In person, 1584 N. Van Ness Ave. For more info, contact 559-360-8054 or taca_03@ymail.com.

FRI 11 **NWPC Women's Equality Day Celebration: Women Rising Up!** 5:30 p.m. Pardini's Restaurant, 2257 W. Shaw Ave. Keynote speaker: State Senate President Pro Tem Toni Atkins. Emcee: Sabrina Ashjian, president of California NWPC. Honorees: Veva Islas, president of the Fresno Unified School District Board of Trustees; Lee Ann Eager, Fresno Economic Development Corporation; Simone Cranston-Rhodes, political organizer, SEIU 521; Destiny Rodriguez, State Center Community College District trustee; and Assembly Member Dr. Joaquin Arambula. \$125/person. To register, visit nwpcfresno.org or brownpapertickets.com.

SAT 12 **Central Valley Progressive PAC** 3:30 p.m. Via Zoom. For more info, contact 559-978-4504 or simone.rhodes@seiu521.org.

MON 14 **Black Women Organized for Political Action (BWOPA)** 5 p.m. Via Zoom. For more info, contact swgamble@aol.com.

TUE 15 **Central Valley Partnership** 5:30 p.m. Location TBD. For more info, contact 559-967-1940 or agrariandemcracy@gmail.com.

KFCF 88.1 FM: Nuestro Foro 7 p.m. Weekly radio show in Spanish hosted by Eduardo Stanley. For more info, visit kfcf.org.

WED 16 **KFCF 88.1 FM: Speaking Truth to Empire** 3 p.m. Hosted by Dan Yaseen. For more info, visit kfcf.org.

San Joaquin Valley Democratic Club 6:30 p.m. Denny's Restaurant, 1110 E. Shaw Ave. For more info, call 559-312-3925.

THU 17 **ArtHop Metropolitan/Fresno Metro Area** 5 p.m.–8 p.m. Museums, studios, galleries and other venues open their exhibits free to the public. For more info, visit FACarthop on Facebook.

Clovis Democratic Club 6 p.m. Seven Cafe & Grill, 25 Clovis Ave. For more info, contact 559-322-9740 or jenikren@gmail.com.

Sierra Club Tehipite Chapter 7 p.m. Woodward Park Regional Library, 944 E. Perrin Ave. Free and open to the general public. To register in advance or for more info, visit sierraclub.org/tehipite.

West Fresno Democratic Club 9 a.m. Democratic Party HQ, 1033 U St. For more info, contact 559-930-4909 or westfresnodemclub@gmail.com.

SAT 19 **Chicano Youth Center Celebration of 50 Years of Liberation: Huelga General 1973** 4 p.m. Room 188, Old Administration Building, Fresno City College. Keynote speaker: Dolores Huerta.

Acknowledgement of the families and individuals from the Central Valley who helped with the Farmworkers Boycott and Strike during 1973, especially all those who went to jail. Live music by Mujeres Valientes, Agustin Lira and Patricia Wells and Trio Romances. Short documentary on Huelgistas who were involved in this historic event. \$30 donation. For more info, contact 559-908-4692 or chicanoyouthfresno@gmail.com.

California Latina Democrats-Fresno 6:30 p.m. Via Zoom. For more info, contact chaircalatinadems@gmail.com.

MON 21 **California Association of Retired Americans (CARA)** 10 a.m. SEIU Local 521, 5228 E. Pine Ave. For more info, contact 559-360-5955 or 559-704-8384.

TUE 22 **KFCF 88.1 FM: Nuestro Foro** 7 p.m. Weekly radio show in Spanish hosted by Eduardo Stanley. For more info, visit kfcf.org.

WED 23 **KFCF 88.1 FM: Stir It Up!** 3 p.m. WILPF radio show hosted by Jean Hays. For more info, visit kfcf.org.

THU 24 **Peace Fresno** 6:30 p.m. Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 1584 N. Van Ness Ave. In person/via Zoom. For more info, call 559-355-9717.

FRI 25 **El Concilio de Fresno Noon.** Julia's Mexican Restaurant (Banquet Room), 2160 H St. For more info, contact 559-360-9797 or eddiev@elconciliodefresno.org.

MON 28 **Fresno County Democratic Women's Club** 11:30 a.m. Marie Callender's Restaurant Garden Room, 1781 E. Shaw Ave. \$25/person. For more info, contact 559-435-4043.

Submit upcoming community activities to calendar@fresnoalliance.com by the 15th of the month preceding publication.

KENNEDY CLUB OF THE SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY
Founder: Lawrence J. Kelly

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Education & Discussion Meetings
 7:00 pm, 3rd Tuesday of the Month
 Fresno Center for Nonviolence

Business Meetings
 6:30 pm, 4th Thursday of the Month
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Lest We Forget: Another Anniversary

BY RUTH GADEBUSCH

It was Aug. 26, 1919, more than a century ago, that women received the vote with the certification of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Where do we find ourselves today? Still waiting for the full equality that was expected.

True, we finally have a female vice president but still we wait for the Equal Rights Amendment that seems increasingly necessary in the political climate of today. First proposed by Alice Paul in 1923, it was passed by Congress only to fail the necessary state approval. Efforts to extend that expiration date still flair up from time to time.

Perhaps it is time to return to the original proposal setting in motion complete new Congressional action. On the other hand, what hope is there of getting out of Congress in the partisan politics of today? Still another part of me asks, "If not now when? If not us, who?"

California that likes to think of itself as progressive, which it largely is, has yet to have a female governor. We are the first state to have had two women U.S. Senators at the same time, but we now face the possibility of not even one. It isn't that women are better than men, but one's gender or race should not be an impediment.

On a closer to home scale, where are the women in our local jurisdictions? None on the Board of Supervisors. One on the Fresno

City Council. The Fresno Unified School District board does better, but unfortunately many continue to think the school system is easier and more appropriate for women. Obviously, I do not subscribe to that idea but my reasoning will have to wait for another column.

I will note that we have a woman as superintendent of Fresno County schools, and they are thriving. Or perhaps better, under her guidance as under the previous men. We can rejoice in having had Karen Humphrey as our first woman mayor paving the road for Ashley Swearengin later.

For any minority group to secure rights in life requires the help of those who already hold the power. My contention is that one does not have to be a member of a group to have empathy for another and to support their needs. In fact, the religion that so many Americans ostensibly support for their political guidance tells us that having done it unto the least of these you have done it unto me. Need I tell you who that "me" is and that the reference was to doing good?

Indeed, many men secure in their own person supported the vote for women just as women advocating for equality today need and receive their support. The minister of the church where the women of Seneca Falls, N.Y., had reserved space that hot July day might have "forgotten" to unlock the church door but other access allowed the husband of Lucretia Mott to preside over the meeting. No woman would dare do so.

In a more unfortunate case, the husband of Elizabeth Cady Stanton skipped town when he realized his wife was serious about women voting. Little did any of them envision today's world.

President Woodrow Wilson's support was secured when the women declared that if this nation could send our sons to fight for freedom of foreigners surely American women should have as much freedom as French men.



Despite the fight for the vote in this country not reaching the rawness of that in Great Britain, a source of inspiration, many suffered dearly for the privilege we have today; however, rights do not continue without vigilance to preserve them.

Our challenge is to preserve what has been achieved and to ensure that no one is excluded. A big order!

A majority of the Supreme Court today does not appear to be inclined to worry too much about an inclusive population with freedom to make personal decisions. It seems all too inclined to enhance their exalted lifestyles with little thought to why someone would provide them with lavish gifts. It even seems that ways to limit voting have more appeal than expanding the vote to "those ignorants over there somewhere." What a sad state of affairs; all the more so with their lifetime appointments.

Due to my devotion to the public schools as the only agency in this nation designed to create a togetherness within the varied population comprising the nation, I divert here to state my objection to using public money to support private schools, religious and otherwise, to teach whatever notion a particular group might subscribe to. Let

ONE WOMEN'S VIEW

them use their own money for that.

Yes, my public school beliefs demand a separation of church and state as well. Taxes are for the good of the whole. Schools are meant to provide the knowledge that allows for wise decisions, not someone's narrow view. Whatever faults or failures we might find with the system, our responsibility is to improve it, not destroy it. After all, humankind has not found a better system of government on this planet.

On this anniversary of the 19th Amendment, there are too many to be named and thanked for their vision and effort to develop the rights and privileges we have today. I urge you to consider our responsibility to fulfill their dreams for the good of all of us.

Especially must we give thought as to who and what party is worthy of our votes in the coming months, even getting active in making them worthy. We must embrace those tackling the weaknesses in our system learning from the past. We cannot change the past, but we can direct the future. The time is now.

Ruth Gadebusch, an emeritus member of the Board of the Center for Civic Education and a former naval officer, has served various former and current organizations including the Fresno Unified School District board, the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, the Women's Symphony League, the Fresno Community Council, the YWCA, the American Association of University Women, the National Women's Political Caucus and now at 90-plus maintains an active interest in the League of Women Voters, the First Congregational Church and various other community activities.



Monthly meeting the first Tuesday of the Month. Check the web site or Facebook for details.

Fresno, National Women's Political Caucus is a pro-choice, multicultural, intergenerational, and multi-issue grassroots organization dedicated to increasing women's participation in the political process and creating a true women's political power base to achieve equality for all women.

NWPC Fresno recruits, trains and supports pro-choice women candidates for elected and appointed offices at all levels of government regardless of party affiliation.

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Los Motivos de Trump; Sobre Aviso no hay Engaño

POR MIGUEL ANGEL BAEZ

El ya fallecido cantautor argentino Facundo Cabral solía contar que su abuelo, un Coronel, había sido un hombre valiente que sólo le tenía miedo a los pendejos. Un día le preguntó ¿por qué? y su abuelo le dijo: porque son muchos, no hay forma de cubrir semejante frente. Y son peligrosos porque al ser mayoría eligen hasta el presidente.

Aunque en este país un candidato a la presidencia no necesita la mayoría de votos para ganar unas elecciones, sí requiere de una gran base que por lo menos lo ponga en la contienda. Donald J. Trump la tiene. Y eso sí que es peligroso.

No es para nada descabellado pensar que Trump pueda llegar nuevamente a ser elegido presidente, a pesar de los cargos criminales que existen en su contra.

Además de los cargos por fraude que enfrenta en Nueva York y el juicio civil que lo encontró culpable de abuso sexual contra E. Jean Carroll, Trump también ha sido imputado por los pagos presuntamente irregulares para silenciar a la actriz porno Stormy Daniels durante la campaña presidencial de 2016.

Si eso no fuera suficiente, el ex presidente también enfrenta cargos federales por presuntas violaciones de la ley de espionaje por la retención no autorizada de documentos clasificados. El mismo Trump anunció además haber recibido una carta donde se le avisa que está siendo objeto de investigación en relación al ataque al Capitolio en enero de 2021 y sus esfuerzos por revocar los resultados de las elecciones que perdió contra Joe Biden.

Prácticamente no hay quien le haga sombra en las preferencias dentro del partido Republicano. Incluso entre quienes se han postulado a la candidatura y que pretenden dar esa imagen de fuerza y dureza que tanto gusta al electorado más radical del partido, cuando se trata de confrontar a Trump, doblan las mantas.

Para muestra un botón. El gobernador de Florida, Ron DeSantis, segundo en las encuestas republicanas, presume entre sus cartas políticas las estrictas y controvertidas leyes que ha firmado en su estado.

Entre otras, DeSantis aprobó una ley que prohíbe los abortos después de seis semanas de embarazo; terminó con el requerimiento de unanimidad del jurado en casos de sentencia de muerte; firmó una nueva ley que permite la portación de armas de fuego sin permiso a cualquier que pueda legalmente tener una arma en Florida.

Demás, prohibió la instrucción sobre orientación sexual e identidad de género en las escuelas, así como el uso de fondos estatales y federales para programas de diversidad, igualdad e inclusión en los colegios. Y la como la más ambiciosa ley anti-inmigración indocumentada en el país, la cual obliga a empleadores con al menos 25 trabajadores a utilizar el sistema E-Verify para determinar la elegibilidad para laborar legalmente en el país.

Es este mismo político que presume medidas que criminalizan al trabajador inmigrante y despoja de asistencia médica a grupos ya de por sí desfavorecidos, quien por otro lado declara que si llega a ser presidente, consideraría un perdón para Trump.

Ese mensaje de fuerza y firmeza que pretende proyectar al anunciar leyes como las descritas, queda en entredicho cuando el tema es Donald J. Trump.

Desde el primer día analizaría todos los casos de personas que han sido víctimas de persecución política”, dijo DeSantis ante la pregunta directa sobre si perdonaría a Trump, quien por cierto lleva años defendiéndose de todas las acusaciones argumentando que es un perseguido político y víctima de una cacería de bruja.

A estas alturas creo que es más que evidente que la estrategia de Trump para evitar ir a la cárcel, es ser presidente. Pero mientras eso sucede primero necesita ser candidato para poder argumentar que se le persigue por sus aspiraciones políticas y no por sus presuntos delitos. No hace falta ser un genio para deducir esto, cuando el mismo se encarga de reafirmarlo en cada comparecencia pública. Alguien debería decirle que tiene derecho a guardar silencio.

Pero ni sus propios colegas de partido saben que hacer con él. La ambición de poder o el miedo les paraliza. Ise contra Trump significa echarse en contra una base numerosa de votantes que los republicanos en el poder no están dispuestos sino que dejan a un lado su propia honorabilidad y dignidad para defender a un hombre que recientemente fue encontrado culpable de abuso sexual.

Desde la presidencia le será más fácil salir de esta ocasión fue su Procurador General, Bill Barr, quien salió en su defensa elaborando ese infame y tendencioso resumen sobre el reporte de Robert Mueller, quien había sido asignado como fiscal especial en la investigación. Con dicho resumen de cuatro páginas Barr prácticamente exculpaba al presidente, quien no tardó en publicar en sus redes sociales que el informe lo había exonerado por completo.

Más tarde, cuando el propio Mueller fue llamado a dar su testimonio ante el Congreso, fue claro en señalar que en su informe “el presidente no fue exculpado de los actos que el propio Mueller envió una carta a Barr para expresarle su desacuerdo por la forma en la que había descontextualizado su informe creando más confusión y desconfianza en la opinión pública, justo lo que se quería evitar al nombrar a un fiscal independiente.

La historia sobre el informe la conocemos. Muller no concluyó que el presidente hubiese cometido un crimen, pero tampoco lo exoneró. De hecho describió numerosos vínculos entre el gobierno Ruso y la campaña de Trump, así como intentos de obstrucción para evitar que la investigación siguiera su curso.

Pero, como lo reitero más tarde en su comparecencia, es política del Departamento de Justicia, William “Bill” Barr, quien ayudó al ex presidente Trump a eludir la justicia.

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Acusa al gobierno de Biden de utilizar al Departamento de Justicia de los Estados Unidos como arma contra él por ser su rival político y al mismo tiempo promete a sus simpatizantes que de ser elegido asignará un fiscal especial para ir contra el “corrupto presidente”, su rival político.

Si es capaz de amenazar ahora que todavía no es el candidato oficial, que no será capaz de hacer si llega a la presidencia, además de perseguir a sus enemigos políticos.

Pero sobre aviso no hay engaño. Trump está avisando en tiempo y forma el tipo de gobernante que será si gana. Después no vale quejarse.

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El ex procurador de justicia, William “Bill” Barr, quien ayudó al ex presidente Trump a eludir la justicia.

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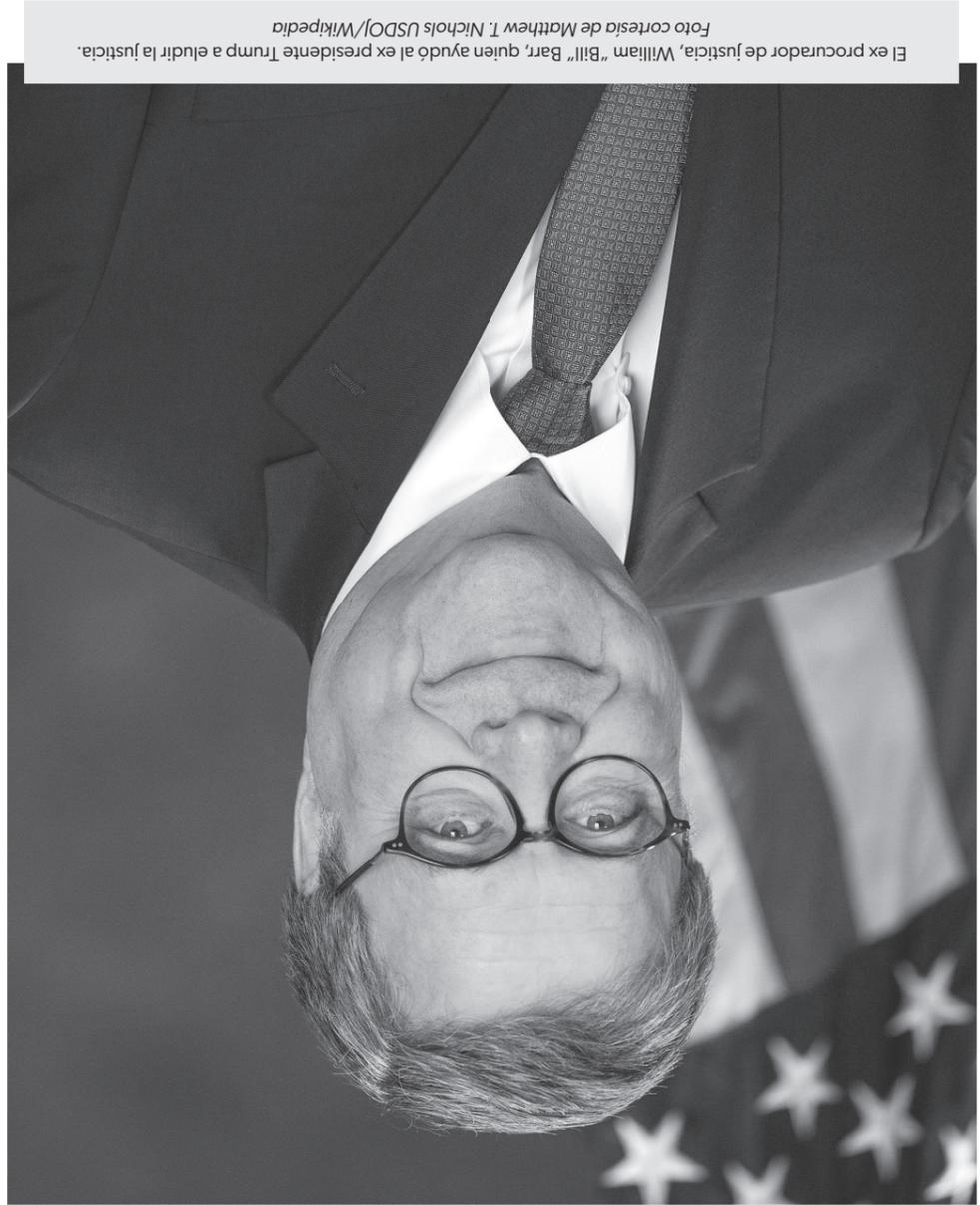


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Alianza Comunitaria es una voz independiente para los trabajadores y grupos progresistas del Valle de San Joaquín. El objetivo de este periódico mensual es construir un poderoso movimiento progresista en apoyo a la justicia social, ambiental y económica; y también a los derechos de los inmigrantes y al de los trabajadores para lograr un salario justo. Buscamos exponer las injusticias políticas y sociales y conectar las diversas redes de activistas que trabajan en nuestra comunidad.

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California: Campesinos

Involucrados en Investigaciones Laborales Recibirán Ayuda Legal Para Migración

Continúa de página 20

María Elena De La Garza, directora ejecutiva de la Junta de Acción Comunitaria del condado de Santa Cruz. "Felicitamos al estado por apoyar este programa piloto, que ayudará a garantizar que los servicios legales estén disponibles y accesibles a través de asociaciones con organizaciones comunitarias confiables en todo California".

Los funcionarios estatales no respondieron preguntas sobre cuándo comenzaría el programa este año, con qué organizaciones comunitarias se asociaría o cuántos casos se espera que procese el programa piloto.

El financiamiento para el programa piloto provendrá de los \$45 millones que el estado asigna anualmente para los servicios de inmigración del Departamento de Servicios Sociales de California, dijo Erin Hickey, vocera de la Agencia de Desarrollo Laboral y de la Fuerza Laboral de California. El estado todavía está completando contratos con proveedores de servicios de inmigración seleccionados, dijo.

Deportación diferida

Los funcionarios estatales dijeron que el programa piloto se alinea con una nueva política de la administración Biden que facilita que los trabajadores indocumentados que son víctimas de violaciones de los derechos laborales soliciten una acción diferida de deportación.

California, ¡Cuidate del Calor!

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Un recurso importante es ubicar un centro de enfriamiento cerca de donde vives. Estos centros funcionan durante las horas de mayor calor y en algunos casos disponen de agua para que los usuarios se mantengan hidratados. Aparte de estos centros, cualquier persona puede visitar centros comerciales o cualquier sucursal de la biblioteca pública.

Aparte de los aumentos en los fallos de sistemas, el calor extremo está generando otros problemas de salud que hace que muchas personas visiten salas de emergencia o experimenten problemas o incomodidades que pueden transformarse en enfermedades o lesiones.

El Privilegio Blanco Aún Existe en la Academia

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ingresar a la escuela de su elección porque otros estudiantes de color fueron aceptados, y no que fue por los innumerables casos de "puestos heredados" a quienes se les permitió la admisión porque su familia había donado a la universidad.

Es vergonzoso que esta decisión impida en el futuro que los estudiantes de color avancen en su carrera académica y más allá de ella.

El capital social que se otorga a los blancos acomodados es un regalo que solo viene después de tener ascendencia europea. La exclusividad de la educación superior que viene con generaciones de redes y conexiones es un privilegio. Levantará decadas para que las personas de color logren una fracción de eso.

Después de la decisión de la Corte Suprema, tres grupos de derechos civiles presentaron una demanda contra Harvard en la que alegan que la política preferencial hacia solicitantes de pregrado que tienen lazos familiares en la escuela, una práctica conocida como admisión heredada, beneficia abrumadoramente a los estudiantes blancos.

Y hablo desde mi propia posición de privilegio, porque soy una graduada de tercera generación. Era sobreenfrendido para mí tener recursos disponibles, algunos tan simples como tener familiares que conozcan el proceso de admisión.

A pesar de ser una recién graduada de una institución que sirve a hispanos, mi educación superior comenzó en otra parte, en una universidad privada en el norte de California.

Aquella institución, predominantemente, blanca fue mi primera mirada a la vida fuera de la seguridad de mi educación cultural. Mientras lidiaba con el choque cultural de ver entre los estudiantes que muy pocos se parecían a mí, noté que muchos compañeros de clase ni siquiera estaban poniendo el mismo esfuerzo en sus estudios.

[Estos eran] estudiantes que no solo veían sus clases de un modo altanero, como si supieran que serían rescatados, sino que no tenían ni idea de cómo participar en una conversación intelectual. Miré a mí alrededor y pensé: "Estos no pueden ser lo mejor de lo mejor".

Cuando me enteré de que algunos de mis compañeros compartían su apellido con el nombre de un edificio de dormitorios o de un salón académico, me di cuenta de que no estaban allí por sus méritos académicos. De hecho, muchos ni siquiera querían estar allí, sino que simplemente estaban completando un trampolín antes de regresar a una vida libre de preocupaciones antes de que llegue la próxima oportunidad.

Todo esto sirve para decir que mi experiencia no es algo infrecuente. No estaba preparada para la constante frustración de ser testigo de las disparidades de privilegio en la academia, mientras yo trataba de demostrarles a todos (incluyéndome a mí) que pertenecía a aquel espacio.

Pienso en la experiencia de las dos mujeres de color en la Corte Suprema, las juezas Kentaji Brown Jackson y Sonia Sotomayor. Los logros académicos y profesionales de ambas mujeres reflejan la perseverancia y la tenacidad que las personas de color deben desarrollar. Me pregunto entonces cuántas veces, si es que alguna vez, sintieron que no pertenecían al lugar. Pero más me pregunto cómo se sintieron al saber que tendrían que esforzarse doblemente para estar en la misma habitación que las personas que simplemente nacieron en ella.

Al emitir la opinión disidente en este caso, la jueza Sotomayor escribió: "En el fondo, los seis miembros no elegidos de la mayoría actual están alterando el statu quo en función de

Para esto, se recomienda a las familias que tomen precauciones con las personas de mayor riesgo, como ser, los mayores de 65 años, mujeres embarazadas, personas enfermas, etc.

En el Valle de San Joaquín, muchos hogares tienen acceso limitado al internet, o algunas personas no saben usar computadoras o navegar por internet.

"Tenemos que ayudarnos entre nosotros", dice Melara. "Si tú puedes manejar la computadora, ayuda a la tía, o a la vecina... En tiempos difíciles la solidaridad juega un papel crucial".

Naturalmente, el uso del portal en español www.cuidatedelcalor.com es gratis y muy fácil de navegar.

Eduardo Stanley es el editor de Alianza Comunitaria y se lo puede contactar en editor@fresnoalliance.com

Nicole Foy es la reportera del Valle Central del equipo de California Divide de la agencia noticiosa CalMatters. Regresó al Valle Central en 2022 después de varios años como reportera de investigación en Texas e Idaho, enfocándose en las comunidades latinas, la agricultura y la inequidad. Mientras estuvo en Idaho, fue becaria de la Universidad de Stanford, liderando un programa de becas de periodismo John S. Knight de la Universidad de Stanford, liderando una colaboración bilingüe de noticias sobre COVID-19. Se graduó de la Universidad de Biola y es cofundadora de Voces Intership of Idaho, que establece estudiantes latinos de Idaho en pasantías pagas en salas de redacción.

La asambleísta Esmerelda Soria, demócrata de Merced y nueva presidenta del Comité de Agricultura de la Asamblea, dijo que esta es una forma bienvenida de garantizar que los trabajadores agrícolas entre sus electores del Valle Central no sean explotados. Aunque otras organizaciones que sirven a los trabajadores agrícolas brindan tipos similares de asistencia legal, dijo, la financiación rara vez se ajusta a la necesidad.

"Creo que en ausencia de una reforma migratoria integral, California reconoce que tenemos un sistema que no funciona", dijo Soria a CalMatters. "Especialmente en la región que representa, los trabajadores agrícolas son realmente la columna vertebral de una de las economías agrícolas más grandes del país".

de discrecionalidad procesal.

estatales ya tienen personal que trabaja con funcionarios federales de inmigración en casos de trabajadores agrícolas con los proveedores de servicios legales. Otras agencias laborales estatales de contacto asignada al programa piloto ayudará a conectar a los trabajadores agrícolas con los proveedores de servicios legales".

Una persona que deben tener en cuenta los trabajadores indocumentados", importante que en una investigación activa, y esa solicitud fue exitosa", dijo Hickey. "Este es un proceso que la primera agencia estatal en solicitar una acción diferida del DHS para los empleados de Agricultura de la Asamblea, dijo que esta es una forma bienvenida de garantizar que los trabajadores agrícolas entre sus electores del Valle Central no sean explotados. Aunque otras organizaciones que sirven a los trabajadores agrícolas brindan tipos similares de asistencia legal, dijo, la financiación rara vez se ajusta a la necesidad.

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Debido a que el Departamento de Seguridad Nacional federal no puede responder a todas las infracciones de inmigración, ejerce la "discreción procesal" para decidir a quién tratar de deportar.

Los funcionarios estatales dijeron que no solicitarán el estatus migratorio de los trabajadores, pero los no ciudadanos a los que se les otorgó esta acción diferida pueden ser elegibles para una autorización de trabajo.

"La Oficina del Comisionado Laboral del Departamento de Relaciones Industriales... fue la primera agencia estatal en solicitar una acción diferida del DHS para los empleados en una investigación activa, y esa solicitud fue exitosa", dijo Hickey. "Este es un proceso importante que deben tener en cuenta los trabajadores indocumentados".

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Contacto: Eduardo, 559-304-3714, eduardostanley@comcast.net



Anasazi Ochoa es una escritora independiente graduada de la Universidad Estatal de California, Long Beach, donde estudió Periodismo y Estudios Chicanos/Latinos. Anasazi espera seguir una carrera en la producción de noticias de TV y radio.

está en su contra.

Si esto suena amargado, es porque lo estoy. No estoy tan enojada porque estas barreras se hayan creado para mantener detrás a las personas de color. Eso es algo que he aprendido a aceptar en mi experiencia. Me enoja más que la gente se atreva a cuestionar cualquier intento de superar estas barreras.

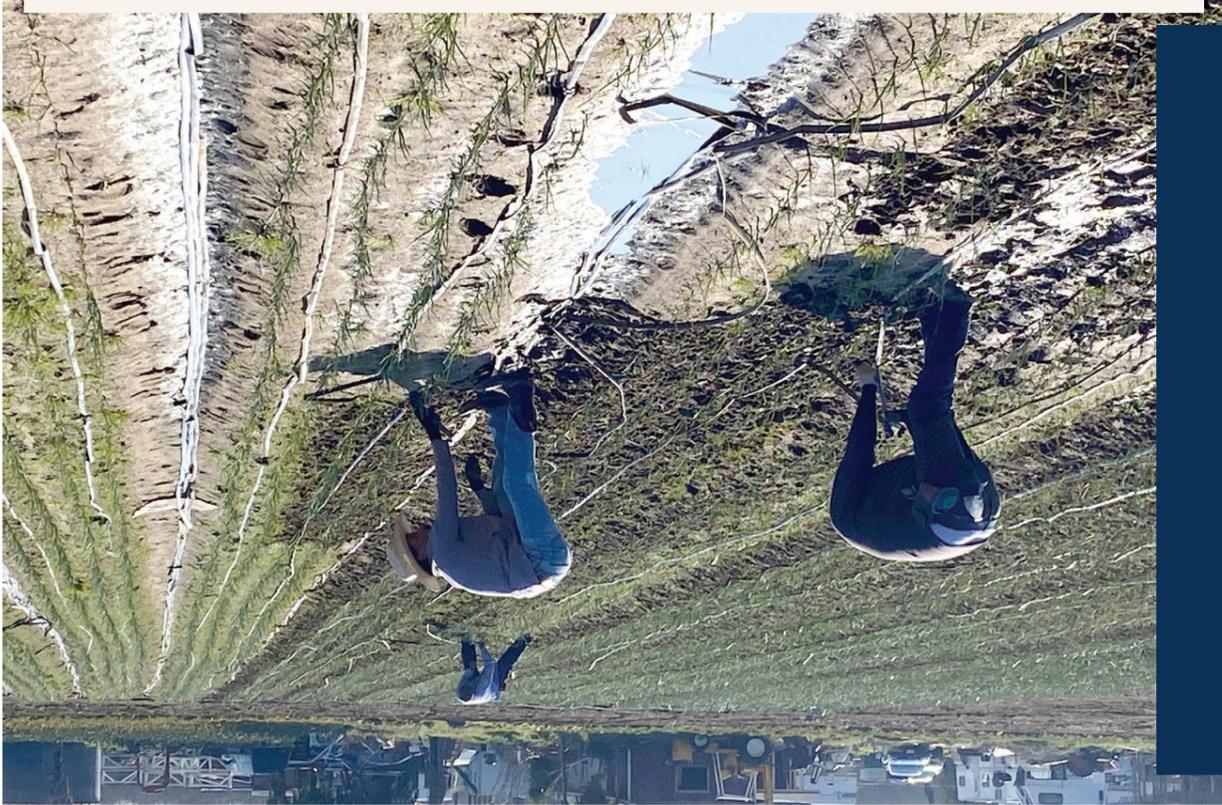
Si, soy más que una contratación producto de una iniciativa de diversidad. Pero si mi única oportunidad de demostrar que soy más que una chica de piel café simbólicamente contratada es precisamente siendo contratada como una chica de piel café, no puedo darme el lujo de poder rechazarla.

Pero lamentablemente nuestra realidad requiere que las personas de color aprovechen cualquier oportunidad que se les presente para salir adelante en un mundo que siempre primer lugar.

universidades y las iniciativas de diversidad en el lugar de trabajo no serían necesarias en por el contenido de su carácter y no por el color de su piel, la acción afirmativa en las daltonicos que afirman defender con tanta vehemencia, que las personas son juzgadas El caso en cuestión es: si la sociedad estadounidense realmente reflejara los valores tanto en la vida cotidiana como en las leyes".

pero no lo es. Y también en función de sus preferencias por una apariencia de daltonismo, sus propias preferencias políticas en cuanto a cómo debería ser la raza en Estados Unidos,

LLAMAZA COMUNITARIA LA VOZ DEL MOVIMIENTO PROGRESISTA DESDE 1996



California pagará por ayuda legal para migración para trabajadores agrícolas indocumentados que estén involucrados en investigaciones estatales de robo de salarios u otras violaciones laborales. Foto de Eduardo Stanley

California:
Campesinos
Involucrados en
Investigaciones
Laborales
Recibirán Ayuda
Legal Para
Migración

POR NICOLE FOY

(Nota del editor: Esta nota fue publicada originalmente por CalMatters, una organización no-lucrativa de noticias).

California comenzará a pagar por ayuda legal para temas de

migración para trabajadores agrícolas indocumentados

que estén involucrados en investigaciones estatales de

robo de salarios u otras violaciones laborales, anunció esta

semana la oficina del gobernador Gavin Newsom.

El programa piloto de \$4.5 millones proporcionará a

los trabajadores agrícolas que calificquen referencias para

obtener ayuda legal con su estatus migratorio.

Se cree que aproximadamente la mitad de la población

de trabajadores agrícolas de California es indocumentada.

El miedo a la deportación y las dificultades para encontrar

trabajo pueden desanimar a los trabajadores a presentar

denuncias laborales o servir como testigos en casos que

alegan problemas como temperaturas inseguras en el lugar

de trabajo, robo de salarios o represalias del empleador por

sindicalizarse, dijeron las autoridades.

“Los trabajadores agrícolas son la columna vertebral de

nuestra economía, y no nos quedaremos de brazos cruzados

mientras los malos actores usan la amenaza de deportación

como una forma de explotación”, dijo Newsom en un

comunicado de prensa. “En ausencia de que el Congreso

modernice nuestro sistema de inmigración roto y obsoleto,

California continúa nuestros esfuerzos para apoyar a las

familias inmigrantes”.

Las investigaciones laborales estatales sobre el robo

de salarios y otras infracciones a menudo tardan años en

resolverse, reveló una investigación de CalMatters el año

pasado. A veces los trabajadores abandonan sus procesos.

“Ahora es el momento de asegurarnos de que los derechos

laborales de los inmigrantes se mantengan y respeten”, dijo

oficina de Newsom.

trabajadores incluyen revisión de casos, asesoramiento

legal y representación por parte de un abogado, según la

Los servicios legales gratuitos que recibirían los

Trabajadores Agrícolas Unidos, que hablaron a favor del

Comunitaria del Condado de Santa Cruz o la Fundación de

ya ofrecen servicios de inmigración, como la Junta de Acción

referencia directa a organizaciones de servicios legales que

califiquen para el nuevo programa estatal recibirán una

Los trabajadores agrícolas en investigaciones laborales que

Respetando los derechos de los inmigrantes

California, ¡Cuidate del Calor!

POR EDUARDO STANLEY

La ola de calor que padece la mitad del planeta—la otra

mitad está experimentando frío extremo—no se detendrá

y ya es lo “normal” en nuestras vidas. El calentamiento de la

tierra es producto, en gran parte, de la actividad humana de

destrucción del medio ambiente: desde la extracción y uso

de combustible y gas hasta de destrucción de la naturaleza,

fuentes naturales de oxígeno y balance térmico.

Para colmo, este calentamiento está produciendo más

días seguidos de mucho calor y parece que cada año se

rompen récords de días con temperaturas que superan los

45° C donde tradicionalmente el promedio de temperatura

oscilaba los 39-41°.

Esta ola de calor ha producido un fuerte aumento en la

mortandad de personas, algo que preocupa a líderes de

países de todo el mundo. Pero también afecta el trabajo y

las actividades sociales.

Ante esta situación, el gobierno de California decidió

actuar.

“El gobernador (Gavin) Newsom lanzó la iniciativa

‘Cuidate del Calor CA (llifornia)’, una herramienta para

proveer información y recursos prácticos a la población” dijo

a Alianza Comunitaria Yurina Melara, Secretaria de Prensa de

la Oficina del Gobernador. “Hay dos herramientas prácticas

que ofrece el sitio internet www.cuidatedelcalorca.com,



Grietas de barro debido a la sequía causada por el cambio climático. Foto cortesía de The Commons

primero, crear un plan de acción en base a cada persona o

familia; segundo, cómo encontrar ayuda en situaciones de

emergencia”.

El portal también ofrece información y enlaces de

utilidades, como al servicio meteorológico para que

podamos seguir los niveles de temperatura en nuestra

ciudad.

“Allí puedes encontrar información sobre qué hacer si no

tenes aire acondicionado o si este no funciona”, asegura

Melara. Y agrega, “Algunas personas se llimitan en el uso del

aire acondicionado debido al alto costo de la electricidad...

tu cuenta de electricidad”.

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El Privilegio Blanco Aún Existe en la Academia

POR ANASAZI OCHOA, CALO NEWS

(Nota del editor: Esta nota fue publicada originalmente en Calo News)

La reciente decisión de la Corte Suprema en el caso Students for Fair Admissions, INC. v. President and Fellows of Harvard College, pretende que las pocas oportunidades

creadas para estudiantes de color, especialmente para los

afroamericanos y latinos, ya no son necesarias.

El presidente de la Corte, John Roberts, declaró en la

opinión de la mayoría que “permitir que la discriminación

social del pasado... constituya la base de preferencias

raciales rígidas, sería abrir la puerta a reclamos contrapuestos

de ‘alivio correctivo’ para todos los grupos desfavorecidos”.

La disonancia cognitiva de este tribunal

predominantemente conservador, especialmente si se

toma en cuenta que históricamente solo ha habido cuatro

justices del Supremo en su historia, es nada menos que una

vergüenza nacional.

Es vergonzoso que a los asiático-estadounidenses

involucrados en el caso se les hiciera creer que no pudieron

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