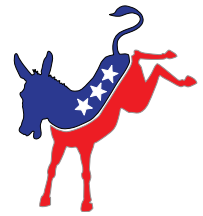


# Active Democrat



[www.CulverCityDemocraticClub.com](http://www.CulverCityDemocraticClub.com)

Email: [CulverCityDemClub@gmail.com](mailto:CulverCityDemClub@gmail.com) • Find us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/culvercitydems](http://www.facebook.com/culvercitydems)

Post Office Box 4254 • Culver City, California 90231-4254

**General Meeting on Zoom — 7p.m. Wednesday, March 9, 2022**

**Program: More candidate visits - Online endorsement vote**

President's Message by Jeff Schwartz

## Some book recommendations

Fellow Democrats, During the last couple of months, I've been working on revitalizing the Club's website, with help from newsletter editor Pete Rockwell and graphic designer/webmaster Karim Sahli. If you stop by [c-c-d-c.com](http://c-c-d-c.com), you will notice a simpler layout, which I hope will be easier to navigate and load more quickly, and fresh content from our meetings and newsletters appearing on the homepage, which should be easier to read and share. This content will also now automatically go on our Twitter and Facebook pages, creating a steady supply of material for those platforms and helping promote your good work.

As I was reformatting material from newsletter back issues for the website, I was impressed by how many interesting book reviews there were. I was not surprised: Democrats are the party of education, science, and creativity. Reading your reviews as I put them into HTML inspired me to devote this month's President's Message to my own book recommendations.

These books are almost all recent political history. As I've written here before, as shocking as Trump and his fascist movement are, they are not unprecedented. Seeing them as part of trends in state, national, and party politics may help us to understand and oppose them, and to prepare for the next threat.

My first choice is Manuel Pastor's *State of Resistance: What California's Dizzying Descent and Remarkable Resurgence Mean for America's Future*. With a subtitle like that, who needs a summary? When I began to get involved in politics I asked

my Facebook friends what to read. The last California or Los Angeles book I had read was Mike Davis' paradigm-changing *City of Quartz*, back in the '90s. *State of Resistance* was the main suggestion. Pastor teaches at USC and is close to Holly Mitchell. You may have seen him speak at her [inauguration as County Supervisor](#) or as part of [Culver City's General Plan Update process](#). In this book, he recaps California history since the 1960s, arguing that the nationwide right turn embodied by Ronald Reagan first went mainstream in California, where Reagan's 1968 Gubernatorial campaign grew out of the 1964 repeal-by-initiative of Pat Brown's attempts to desegregate housing. Pastor calls this initiative, [Prop. 14](#), a "racial proposition," and argues that similar appeals to white supremacy, such as [1994's Prop. 187](#) and [1996's Prop. 209](#), were a key part of Republican strategy. Even if they were bad policy or likely to be ruled unconstitutional, they brought conservatives to the polls and Republicans to the statehouse. [Prop. 13](#), arguably also a "racial proposition," was the prototype for a national "tax revolt" strategy. Republicans could not openly oppose Medicare and Social Security, but they could undermine their funding and exploit the resulting crisis. As Republican theorist Grover Norquist famously said, their goal was to make government small enough to "[drag it into the bathroom and drown it in the bathtub](#)." The violence of his imagery is appropriate to that of his desired policies.

Fortunately, Pastor argues, California has more recently been the incubator for progressive national politics. [Opposition to Pete Wilson in particular](#)

helped shape new approaches to labor, sustainability, immigration, education, LGBTQ+ rights, the drug war, and other major issues which, according to Pastor, model the next national wave. *State of Resistance* is a useful crash course in modern California political history and will help you stay optimistic for the struggles ahead.

Mike Davis and Jon Wiener's *Set the Night on Fire: L.A. in the 1960s* takes a holistic approach to the political and cultural movements of the 1960s. There are quite a few books which tell parts of this story, such as Elaine Brown's *A Taste of Power*, (no relation), Scot Brown's *Fighting for US*, and Lillian Faderman and Stuart Timmons' *Gay LA*, but Davis and Wiener travel across a wide range of scenes from the Venice Beach Beat poets, the beginnings of LA modern art at the Ferus Gallery on La Cienega, the Chicano Moratorium at colleges in the Valley, LGBTQ+ organizing at the Black Cat bar in Silverlake, the birth of LA's rock scene on the Sunset Strip, love-ins in Griffith Park, the founding of KPFFK and the *LA Free Press*, and more. These stories are often connected by the roles of the "Old Left," including the CPUSA, and of the LAPD and other police agencies, who harassed and suppressed every one of these movements.

A non-book LA history recommendation is *City of Ghosts*, on Netflix. Suitable for all ages, it's the animated story of four children who investigate ghost sightings. Unlike Bill Murray and company, they befriend the ghosts, who tell stories of their neighborhoods, from Venice to

**See MESSAGE on page 2**

**MESSAGE from page 1**

Boyle Heights. The ghosts are voiced by real people who draw on their own stories, such as drummer [JMD](#) in the Leimert Park episode.

Culver City's own Kelly Lytle Hernandez summons some much less friendly ghosts in her [City of Inmates: Conquest, Rebellion, and the Rise of Human Caging in Los Angeles, 1771-1965](#). It retells the history of Los Angeles from colonization through the Watts Rebellion by asking which groups of people were the focus of the carceral system and why. You will never look at a child's Mission project the same way again. Many of us have learned from Black Lives Matter and other abolitionists [how little policing focuses on crimes against people or property](#). Hernandez's [Million Dollar Hoods Project](#) has been an important contributor to this work. *City of Inmates* does this historically, showing how issues around race,

class, sexuality, immigration status, and employment drove the construction of LA's jails, sometimes literally, with inmates sentenced to work crews building more jails. Do not skip the introduction, where she explains that the LAPD has destroyed almost all of its archives (because police are exempt from most public records laws) forcing Hernandez and her team to figure out how to reconstruct missing information from alternative sources. As an author and librarian myself, I bow to her research skills.

Finally, I cannot recommend Rick Perlstein's four books on the Republican Party highly enough. In [Before the Storm: Barry Goldwater and the Unmaking of the American Consensus](#), [Nixonland: The Rise of a President and the Fracturing of America](#), [The Invisible Bridge: the Fall of Nixon and the Rise of Reagan](#), and [Reaganland: America's Right Turn, 1976-1980](#), he maps both the post-Civil Rights Act realignment of

the parties and the Republican Party's transition from a Northern ruling-class party to a rural populist one. Most of us lived through at least some of this history, but no one remembers it in this much detail or with this much insight. There is a very good chance that, if you have heard me sound like I know something about American history between 1964-1980, I was summarizing something from these books. Some have read this series as telling a story of decline, terminating in Trump, but one important thing it revealed for me was not only that there have always been [Trump-like elements](#) in the American right, but that [nostalgia for an era of "civility" is misplaced](#).

Back to the present, this month's meeting will feature visits from another batch of June primary candidates. There will also be time for members to make one-minute speeches on our endorsements. I look forward to seeing you there!

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# Make California a blue beacon for women

by *Cynthia Hart*

Roe v. Wade has protected the basic humanity of American women for forty-nine years. Its end is expected by June. How can we prepare for that dark day? In [“Women who had Abortions before Roe v. Wade”](#) *New York Times* columnists Ilana Panich-Linsman and Lauren Kelley say that we should first study what came before.

## OPINION

Some of us can consult our memories for that. I remember “necessary” marriages of high school kids who were far too young for the responsibilities of marriage and parenthood. (These ended in divorce.) There were “bad girls” shipped away somewhere to carry a child for nine months and then give it away like a stray kitten. (The “Roe” of Roe v. Wade tried to kill herself after they took her newborn without even letting her see it.) And then, of course, there were back alleys and coat hangers and caustic substances. I remember hearing about women throwing themselves down staircases trying to induce a miscarriage. (which doesn’t necessarily work) because really WTF are you supposed to do when you’re shackled to your body and they tell you that your life doesn’t matter?

But it doesn’t take a long memory to imagine how dangerous things might get for women of reproductive age. Just look at what is happening right now in religiously oriented hospitals. Katherine Stewart writes in the *Washington Post* of her own harrowing experience of having a miscarriage and nearly bleeding to death in the emergency room of a religious hospital. By the way, in some parts of the country, it isn’t only Catholic hospitals who practice medicine that way. Read [“Why was a Catholic Hospital Willing to Gamble with My Life?”](#)

That was depressing.

So, what can we do about it? Federal legislation in this area could save women’s lives. [The Women’s Health Protection Act of 2021](#) (H.R.3755 and S.1975) is the latest incarnation of a bill first proposed in 2013 that would encode the protections of Roe into law. The House



passed its bill by 218-211 in September 2021. The Senate bill is filibuster-bait—dead on arrival.

That was depressing.

But what do you need to find your way on a dark day? You need a beacon. A Blue Beacon. California. And for that we have the [California Future of Abortion Council](#) (CA FAB) which is a coalition of forty organizations that came together with the support of our Governor, Lt. Governor, Attorney General, Assembly Speaker, and State Senate President Pro Tempore to find a way to make our state a sanctuary for women.

The [Guttmacher Institute report](#) estimates that a total ban on abortion in other states could increase the number of women coming to California for help by 2,923 percent. We need to be ready to welcome the refugees. To that end, the CA FAB has generated 45 recommendations. Some of these include:

- Funding this work as if women’s lives matter;
- Developing infrastructure including telemedicine services, an internet landing page to provide accurate information, and training so that medical students learn about miscarriage management and abortion;
- Legal protections for doctors that provide services (even to those patients who come from Texas);

- Legal protections for patients from prosecution for abortion or pregnancy loss;
- Legislation to ensure that no Californian would be denied the right to access abortion care because of co-pays and other cost-sharing arrangements;
- And, for pity’s sakes, can we finally repeal the already-invalidated parental consent law in this state?

We can make a down payment on the CA FAB’s long “to-do” list by supporting SB245, the [Abortion Accessibility Act](#) which would eliminate cost barriers to reproductive health care.

State Senator Toni Atkins, President Pro Tempore, said “This is crunch time, but we will not be dragged into the past. California will keep leading for the future.”

## RIGHT TO LIFE

I will choose what enters me, what becomes flesh of my flesh. Without choice, no politics, no ethics lives. I am not your cornfield, not your uranium mine, not your calf for fattening, not your cow for milking. You may not use me as your factory. Priests and legislators do not hold shares in my womb or my mind. This is my body. If I give it to you I want it back. My life is a non-negotiable demand.

by *Marge Piercy*

## Di’s Corner:

by *Diane Rosenberg*

Update on Club member Charlotte Gunter: She is doing well. Still has caretakers and goes for physical therapy for her shoulder. Misses everyone/everybody and looks forward to the day when we all can get together in person.

On Wednesday, at the February 9 General Meeting on Zoom, the new 2022 Executive Board was sworn in. The installing officer was Culver City Mayor Daniel Lee. The new board are:  
**President: Jeff Schwartz**  
**1st Vice President: Freddy Puza**  
**2nd Vice President: Will Herrera**  
**Recording Secretary: Shannon Theus**  
**Corresponding Secretary: Cynthia Hart**  
**Treasurer: Eric Fine**  
**Membership Secretary: Diane Rosenberg.**

## Join or Renew Your Culver City Democratic Club Membership!

The Culver City Democratic Club provides an important resource for local Democrats. Your support helps us sponsor events, advocate for Democratic candidates and promote Democratic values. Please take this opportunity and donate today. Member - \$30; Student Member - \$20; Supporting Member - \$75; Sustaining Member - \$125; Lifetime Member - \$500.

### Choose an amount:

Your contribution will benefit Culver City Democratic Club (CA).

\$20	\$30	\$45	\$75
\$125	\$500	\$	

### Make it monthly!

Yes, count me in for <input type="text" value="12"/> months
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No, donate once

## Joining the Club or renewing your membership

When you go to [the Club's ActBlue page](#) to renew your membership (or join for the first time) you'll see what appears in the box above. There are various dollar amounts listed in the text on the left, with corresponding buttons on the right that you can click on.

### Why \$45?

Most of the choices are labeled in the text, but not the \$45 amount, although there is a button for that. Here's the explanation for the \$45 amount: Membership in the Club is normally based on the calendar. For \$30 you will become a member for the current year, starting on January 1 and continuing through De-

ember 31. (If you pay \$30 in any other month, you will still only be a member for the rest of that calendar year.) In the second half of the year, starting in July (if you have not yet paid dues for the current year) the Club offers a year and a half membership for \$45. Starting in July, if you pay \$45 you will become a member for the rest of that year and all of the following year. It only works that way in the second half of the year.

### Lifetime Membership

Lifetime membership, which is \$500, makes you a member for life. The Club instituted lifetime membership in 2016. In the box to the right we've listed all of the Club's lifetime members. As you can see from the footnote at the bottom of the list, John Riordan was made an honorary lifetime member by the Executive Board because every year at our Awards Luncheon he would donate a hundred dollars cash that the Club would use for the grand prize in a raffle. He did this for so many years that the Board decided to make him an honorary lifetime member.

### Sustaining and Supporting

Joining or renewing as a Supporting Member (\$75) or a Sustaining Member (\$125) is simply a way of supporting and sustaining the Club for a given year.

### Hardship Rate

A Democrat who can't afford the regular \$30 yearly dues, but who would like to join, should call Membership Secretary Diane Rosenberg at (310) 398-5328 to work out a hardship rate.

### Lifetime Membership

The following members donated \$500 to the Culver City Democratic Club to become Lifetime Members:

**Paula Amezola De Herrera**

**Karen Bass**

**Isaac Bryan**

**Tom Camarella**

**Stephen Dunwoody**

**Alex Fisch**

**Esmeralda Fucci**

**Cynthia Hart**

**Justinian Jampol**

**Sydney Kamlager**

**Andrew Lachman**

**Patricia Levinson**

**Disa Lindgren**

**Holly Mitchell**

**Melina Pillar**

**Leah Pressman**

**John Riordan\***

**Pete Rockwell**

**Meghan Sahli-Wells**

**Jeff Schwartz**

**Ronnie Jayne Solomon**

**Albert Vera, Jr.**

**Jewett Walker**

**Michelle Weiner**

**Herb Wesson**

*[\*The Executive Board voted to make John Riordan an Honorary Lifetime Member in recognition of the hundreds of dollars he donated to the Club over many years.]*

## JOIN THE CLUB OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

For information on becoming a member of the Culver City Democratic Club call Diane Rosenberg at (310) 398-5328 *OR*



[Click here to join the Club or renew your membership online](#)

# It's 2022 and we still don't have the Equal Rights Amendment!

by Cynthia Hart

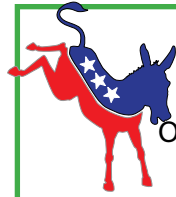
"There is only one group, as you well know, against whom laws can still be passed patently depriving American citizens of their civil and human rights and that is women." —President Jimmy Carter

President Carter spoke those words in 1980, and they are still true in 2022. Still true even though 38 states have now ratified it. Even though the House has passed House Joint Resolution 17 to remove the time limit for ratification. Even though, the Senate version, Senate Joint Resolution 1, has 51 co-sponsors (including two Republicans and the Filibuster Twins Manchin and Sinema). Even though SJR1 has been in the Senate for consideration since last Women's History Month. Equality of rights under the law can still be abridged on account of sex.

A year seems like a long time, but the ERA's journey really began at [Seneca Falls in 1848](#). The suffragists that met there knew that the vote, while necessary, was never going to be sufficient to give women full citizenship. According to the [Alice Paul Institute website](#) the original ERA was written by Alice Stokes Paul only three years after the 19th Amendment gave women the vote nationwide. The mother of the ERA died in 1977, never seeing ratification—just as Susan B. Anthony and Lucretia Mott died before ever casting a legal vote.

This is a cross-generational relay race. We must never give up. Absent the Amendment, any gains that women make can and will be erased by a shift in the political winds. For more information see: [www.equalrightsamendment.org](http://www.equalrightsamendment.org).

Please join me in emailing our Senators, [Dianne Feinstein](#) and [Alex Padilla](#). Remind them that we're still waiting.



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our Club website: [www.culvercitydemocraticclub.com](http://www.culvercitydemocraticclub.com)

Follow us on Twitter: @CulvCityDemClub

Instagram: CulverCityDemClub

and Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CulverCityDems>



**March 1 thru 31**  
Women's History Month

### **WEDNESDAY, March 2 - 7 PM** **Congressional District 37** **Candidate Forum**

**March 7 & 8**  
[Culver City Council Budget Meetings](#)



**March 9 - 7 PM**  
[CCDC General Meeting via Zoom](#) [CLICK TO REGISTER](#)  
(Endorsement Vote to follow via Election Buddy)



**March 14 - 7 PM**  
[Culver City Council Meeting](#)

**March 19 - 11 AM - 4 PM**  
[Culver City Walk 'n Rollers](#)  
Wende Museum - 10808 Culver Blvd  
[www.walkmorebikemore.org](http://www.walkmorebikemore.org)

**March 28 - 7 PM**  
[Culver City Council Meeting](#)

**March 31**  
Cesar Chavez Day

**April 13 - 7 PM**  
CCDC General Meeting via Zoom

**To volunteer for CADEM's Voter Protection Hotline go to:**  
<https://cadem.org/voter-protection-team/>

**For Volunteer Opportunities to help keep Congress Blue, go to:**  
<https://www.mobilize.us/cadems/>



# IT'S OUR *Birthday* AND YOU'RE INVITED!

**Saturday**  
**March 19**  
**11am-4pm**

**The Wende Museum**  
**10808 Culver Blvd.**  
**Culver City 90230**

What started as a walk to school day at one school has grown to an organization that serves thousands of kids in dozens of cities each year.

*Celebrate with us!*



Thank you to our sponsors:



*FREE Activities for all ages*

- Bike Skills Course
- Bike Repair and Workshops
- Bike Demos
- Family Rides
- Group Walk
- Live Art Exhibits
- Art Stations
- BMX Exhibitions
- Roller Skate Demos
- Plus food and music!



**FOR DETAILS AND TO REGISTER: WWW.WALKMOREBIKEMORE.ORG**

## What we know about the June primary ballot, so far

The deadline to get on the ballot is March 11. This information is mostly from the LA County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk's office. If the candidate has a website I made their name a link. Only Democrats are on this list. —*Editor*

**U.S. Senate will be on the ballot twice, once for the new term and once for the current term that expires next year, so you should vote twice for that office.**

### U.S. Senate

[Alex Padilla](#) (Incumbent)  
Akinyemi Agbede  
Joaquin Beltran  
Douglas Howard Pierce

### U.S. Senate

(unexpired term ending January 3, 2023)

[Alex Padilla](#) (Incumbent)  
Joaquin Beltran

### U.S. House of Representatives 37th District

[Sydney Kamlager](#)  
[Daniel Lee](#)  
[Jan Perry](#)

### CA State Senate 28th District

[Jamaal A. Gullledge](#)  
[Lola Smallwood-Cuevas](#)  
[Cheryl C. Turner](#)

### CA State Assembly 55th District

[Isaac Bryan](#) (Incumbent)

### Governor

[Gavin Newsom](#) (Incumbent)  
Anthony "Tony" Fanara  
Jesseca Harvey  
Armando "Mando" Perez-Serrato  
Phong Tran

### Lieutenant Governor

[Eleni Kounalakis](#) (Incumbent)  
William Cavett "Skee" Saacke

### Secretary of State

[Shirley N. Weber](#) (Incumbent)

### Controller

[CDP Progressive Caucus Controller Forum Video](#)  
[Malia Cohen](#)  
[Ron Galperin](#)  
[Yvonne Yiu](#)

### Treasurer

[Fiona Ma](#) (Incumbent)

## Attend the Culver City Democratic Club's Candidate Forum for the U.S. Congress—37th District Wednesday, March 2 - 7p.m.

[Click here to join on Zoom](#)



Sydney Kamlager



Daniel Lee



Jan Perry

## Watch the video of the Club's Candidate Forum for the State Senate—28th District on the CCDC YouTube Channel

[Click here watch the video](#)



Lola  
Smallwood-Cuevas



Jamaal A.  
Gullledge



Cheryl C.  
Turner

### Attorney General

[Rob Bonta](#) (Incumbent)

### Insurance Commissioner

[CDP Progressive Caucus Forum Video](#)  
[Ricardo Lara](#) (Incumbent)  
[Marc Levine](#)

### Superintendent of Public Instruction:

[Tony Thurmond](#) (Incumbent)

### State Board of Equalization 3rd District

[Tony Vazquez](#) (Incumbent)  
John Mendoza

### L.A. County Assessor

[Jeffrey Prang](#) (Incumbent)  
Anthony Lopez

### L.A. County Sheriff

[Santa Monica Democratic Club Sheriff Debate Video](#)  
[Alex Villanueva](#) (Incumbent)  
[Robert Luna](#)  
[Cecil Rhambo](#)  
[Eric Strong](#)  
[Eli Vera](#)

# Bernie Sanders comments on Putin's invasion of Ukraine

As you know, invading Russian military forces are moving across Ukraine. What we are witnessing is the most massive military operation in Europe since World War II.

There must be no ambiguity in acknowledging that what the whole world is seeing is nothing less than a blatant violation of international law and of basic human decency.

This war will likely kill thousands of people, and create millions of refugees.

At a time when the global community is already struggling with the global pandemic and climate change, this war could plunge Europe into long-term economic and political instability.

Make no mistake about it, the effects of this war will be felt here in the United States and countries throughout the world.

No matter what flimsy justification Putin may offer, this war is clearly an act of pre-meditated aggression against Ukraine and its people.

So where do we go from here?

Now is the time to maintain unity with our allies and impose severe sanctions on Vladimir Putin and his government.

Now is the time to isolate the Russian economy and freeze access to the billions of dollars that Putin and his oligarch cronies have stashed in European and American banks — the billions they have stolen from the people of Russia.

Now is the time to stand in solidarity with the incredibly brave Russian people who are bravely resisting this aggression by holding huge anti-war protests in 40 different Russian cities. In an authoritarian country like Russia, protest is an extraordinary act of courage.

In the midst of all this horror, one area that American leadership can be very helpful, is in providing aid for those refugees fleeing war.

Now is the time to work closely with our international partners in providing humanitarian relief for the Ukrainian



**The Colosseum in Rome illuminated with the colors of the Ukrainian flag**

people, and we must also commit to accepting more refugees here in our own country.

Many of you are no doubt wondering what you can do to help to end this terrible conflict.

In my view, the most important thing

we can do right now is stand in solidarity with the Ukrainian people against this war, and with the Russian people who are risking so much to demonstrate against this corrupt, reckless president who started it.

Putin and his oligarch friends seek a divided world and the destruction of democracy.

We seek a different world.

At the end of the day, it will be that common humanity based on the principles of justice that brings us together and enables us to prevail.

In solidarity,  
Bernie Sanders

## A few ways to help Ukrainians

A senseless war of aggression is underway. [You can do something.](#)

*by Timothy Snyder*

Ukraine has been invaded by Russia. All day long people have been asking me what to do. You can show solidarity. You can give an organization a little bit of your money. It will not stop a war. But it will help Ukrainians to help themselves. And it could save lives.

Ukraine is not a rich country. The average household makes less than \$7000 a year. A little money, sent in the right direction, can make a meaningful difference. And it might give you a sense that you have done the right thing, at least in a small way, at the right moment.

Russia and Ukraine are different in many ways. Russia is a militarized country which spends its hydrocarbon earnings on weapons, and intervenes beyond its borders on a regular basis. Ukraine has small armed forces with much less impressive weaponry. In Russia, everything is centralized by the state and controlled by one person (we see the result); in Ukraine decentralization and informality are the rule. Ukraine's army is partly crowdfunded.

[Timothy Snyder is the author of [On Tyranny](#)]

**NGO that arranges life-saving equipment for Ukrainian soldiers:**

<https://savelifeline.in.ua/en/donate>

**Hospitallers working at the frontline:**

<https://www.facebook.com/hospitallers/posts/2953630548255167>

**Ukrainian Women's Veteran Movement:**

[https://www.uwvm.org.ua/?page\\_id=3437&lang=en](https://www.uwvm.org.ua/?page_id=3437&lang=en)

**NGO that assists internal refugees:** <https://unitedhelpukraine.org/>

**NGO that assists internal refugees, especially from Crimea:**

<https://www.peaceinsight.org/en/organisations/crimea-sos/?location=ukraine&theme>

**NGO that aids traumatised children:**

<https://voices.org.ua/en/>

**Foundation that assists healthcare and education in eastern Ukraine:**

<https://razomforukraine.org/projects/zhadan/>

## A modest proposal

Another way to help Ukraine? [Use less of Russia's leading export!](#)



# I wonder if we can once again collaborate for the greater good, just as we did to shut down our oil field?

by *Dr. Suzanne De Benedittis, Phd*

Are Regional Housing Needs Allocations (RHNA) a formality intended to fulfill a state checklist to avoid penalties and loss of funding? Or are these allocations meant to be realistic options to get housing built asap within what is now a 7-year cycle; especially housing for our most economically challenged, to keep them from becoming homeless?

From the Culver City dais what I hear from the majority is the longing for our city to be designated “pro-housing.” I too am in strong support of this. The conundrum for me is, with the Housing Element that was just submitted, how can we achieve this goal in a timely manner as the homeless count keeps growing?

## OPINION

As a pragmatic social analyst, I have heard little if any mention of using the air space above our overabundance of small retail on our many transit-oriented corridors (TOC). It’s been done successfully in Old Town West Covina. May I suggest we do so here too? Perhaps we can ask West Covina how they achieved this.

I think housing regulations and legalities for these would be the same as for condominium rental or ownership. And if need be, by eminent domain, or invoking the legal precedent of “split estates” (used for underground ownership of mineral property rights) the air space for critically needed housing can be acquired. This would not only revitalize, but also economically help struggling small retail. The air space above our TOC retail can provide critically needed housing without the destruction of critically needed green space/permeable land of which Culver City owns less than one percent.

Can you envision the following with me? Housing that addresses all of the California Department of Housing and Community Development’s demands plus providing the following benefits:

- Mixed-use and mixed incomes housing for diverse ethnicities at all the

RHNA levels to dwell as neighbors in the same communities.

- Equity and reparations, so that all residents are afforded the opportunity to buy, rent, or rent-to-own.

- Directly utilize our transit corridors and public transportation, reducing vehicle miles traveled.

- Builds eco-friendly housing with net-zero energy waste, plus additional carbon sequestration with its tree canopy and rainwater capture; adding to, rather than taking away permeable green space.

- Provides union jobs with local hire and job production for formerly incarcerated youth.

- Creates mobility lanes and removes street parking by moving it to parking lots on bridges that straddle the air space between the side streets, thus creates mobility lanes and space for outdoor dining without losing parking.

A project such as this will not only revitalize our struggling small retail businesses and promote housing diversity, environmental, mobility, social, and economic benefits, it will also address the underlying causes of the housing crisis and growing homelessness, which is the lack of low-priced housing compounded with the growth of economic inequality.

The California Department of Housing and Community Development’s [Project-ed Housing Needs - Regional Housing Needs Allocation](#) indicates that our city can apply for “subsidies, financing, or other mechanisms that ensure affordability.” Please consider the options.

On a personal note, from my 44 years as a Culver City resident/homeowner, I have never witnessed the city as polarized and bitter over how our General Plan Update and Housing Element are being addressed. Prolonging this strife saddens me, as more of the poor slip into the streets each day. We have a highly educated, dedicated population who want to be involved, who want much more public outreach from our city asking for our input. Yes, we want participatory democracy (a term I’ve used to chide

former city councils). Sixty seconds of perfunctory listening to us to meet legal requirements while actively engaging unaffiliated “expertise,” and welcoming the use of experimental algorithmic bots to help decide Culver City’s coming 25 years is not participatory democracy.

From my history steeped in psychology, communications, and social analysis, I know we can heal this division. And we can become a model for other cities if we choose to unite to pursue the option presented herein, or an even better actionable option to provide housing as a human right NOW—beginning with our poorest residents—while also accommodating the various demographics while enhancing environmental sustainability.

Council, how can I use the gifts I’ve been blessed with to help you bring this about NOW? How can we all help unify our city?

Dear Culver City people, would you like to collaborate to bring about this social good that will benefit all of us now and into the future? People are dying on our streets. If someone has a better, ready-to-implement plan to address these needs, let’s unite and work it out to provide critically needed housing NOW!

Let’s collaborate for the greater benefit of all!

We became a model for ending urban drilling. We can now become the model for humane, eco-enhancing housing! Shall we?

Respectfully,  
Dr. Suzanne De Benedittis, Phd

**Comments expressed in the newsletter are the opinions of the authors and do not necessarily represent the position of the Culver City Democratic Club**