

Culver City Democratic Club

Active Democrat



www.CulverCityDemocraticClub.com

Email: CulverCityDemClub@gmail.com • Find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/culvercitydems

Post Office Box 4254 • 6695 Green Valley Circle Culver City, CA 90230

General Meeting on Zoom — 7p.m. Wednesday, July 12, 2023

Program: Panel on reparations

President's Message by Jeff Schwartz

The ethics of NIMBYism

Dear Members and Supporters,
If you are reading this, you probably spend a lot of time in Culver City political spaces and have encountered the claim that there was once an era of joyful unity, before progressives and Trumpsters brought “divisiveness” to our city. A brief glance at [actual local history](#) will show this to be essentially false but, like most myths, [it contains some truth and does important ideological work](#).

It is true that both progressive and openly fascist voices were marginalized in the recent past, that the [Overton Window](#) was smaller. The 1993 Council [I wrote about in April voted unanimously to support CCPD hiring one of the cops who beat Rodney King](#), but in the very same meeting they voted to oppose [Proposition 187](#), which would have denied undocumented immigrants access to education and healthcare, a ballot measure the Culver City Chamber of Commerce endorsed. This Club participated in this center-right consensus: [the County Party once threatened to revoke our charter for endorsing a Republican](#).

This anti-partisan consensus came from a focus on local “quality of life” issues, what is sometimes called NIMBYism, for Not In My Back Yard. Today this is a term of scorn and applies primarily to anti-urbanists, but it describes the understandable desire to have things which are unpleasant kept far away. The myth of unity makes NIMBYism appear natural and inevitable by erasing conflict and alternatives. While progressives need to be relentlessly alert to these ideological moves, NIMBYism is not necessarily a

selfish or unethical position. Consider these examples.

The Culver City Homeowners Association was formed in the 1970s. The name may be a [red flag](#) now, but its original issue was to prevent the electric company from installing overhead power lines from the top of the Crest. The Homeowners prevailed, and those lines now run underground. Overhead power lines are not only ugly, they are [a possible health hazard](#) and, as the residents of [Paradise](#) found, a definite fire hazard. The CCHOA did not attempt to share their victory with others by advocating for underground power lines in other cities, but protecting their quality of life did not negatively affect anyone else.

More recently, [Culver City residents have fought against the changes to LAX flight paths which have brought more planes overhead, accompanied by noise and pollution](#). No one is proposing we should give up affordable and convenient air travel, it is not practical to relocate the airport to an uninhabited area, and a transition to electric planes is some time away. That makes this a zero-sum situation. If the planes don't go over Culver City, [they will need to go somewhere else](#), and that will almost certainly be over Inglewood and South LA. In this case, protecting the quality of life for Culver City residents means moving our problem into someone else's backyard, and that someone else will almost certainly be a person of color of lower socioeconomic status.

In the third case, people who are “not like us” are the problem being kept out

of our backyards. By now the history of exclusion in Culver City should be familiar: that [restrictive covenants](#), [exclusionary zoning](#), and [racial profiling](#) have been used to keep the city what local conservatives unironically call an “enclave.”

The foundation of morality is reciprocity: treating others as we would like to be treated. The latter two examples of NIMBYism fail to meet this standard. They are usually justified by the amorality of capitalism: [everybody's in it for their own good](#), so do unto others before they can do unto you.

This is not a personal failing; it is a rational response to our material conditions. Because our nation does not have an adequate social safety net and the services which do exist are compromised by the profit motives of the FIRE (Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate) sector, those of us fortunate enough to own property depend on its value to pay for our educations, healthcare, and retirement, and those of our families, [all things other developed nations provide free, funded through progressive taxation](#).

Anxiety about maintaining our class status and replicating it for our descendants leads to keeping the housing bubble inflated by limiting the supply of westside housing through zoning and limiting access to this supply through redlining, racial profiling, etc, preserving Culver City's status as an “enclave.” The increasingly competitive and expensive world drives us to direct the public sector towards defending and enhancing our

See NIMBY on page 2

from NIMBY on page 1

property values and class positions rather than helping those most in need.

In order to charge a growing premium for “good neighborhoods” and “good schools,” there must be “bad” ones. Neither equity nor equality are compatible with exclusivity and luxury. In *The Sum of Us*, Heather McGhee documents that housing costs 77 percent more in areas with higher-than-average test scores, that 65 percent of these areas are unaffordable for people with average incomes. McGhee further lays out how local control and funding of education enables richer and whiter areas to direct their resources towards their own schools, helping their children and elevating their property values.

This is not malice or a conspiracy; it’s rational self-interest, so-called “common sense.” Homeownership united the members of the CCHOA and was the core of Culver City’s anti-partisan center-right consensus. It put financial weight behind the aesthetic and health aspects of issues such as the power lines and flight paths.

However, it is possible to use our relative wealth and privilege for good. This privilege includes a more representative City Council: five members for around 40,000 residents (one for each 8,000) compared to Los Angeles’ fifteen Council members, who each represent over a quarter million of its over 3,850,000 residents.

Culver City borders the Inglewood Oil Field, the nation’s largest urban oil field. A [coalition](#) including members of this Club such as Meghan Sahli-Wells, Daniel Lee, Suzanne DeBeneditis, and Khin Khin Gyi, has long been working to more strictly regulate it: to require greater distance between wells and homes, to prevent, document, and remedy spills, to restrict fracking, to monitor effects on our air and water, etc. When Alex Fisch was elected to our City Council in 2018, he determined that [the City had the power not only to regulate the portion of the oil field in Culver City, but to shut it down](#). When he left office last fall, [these plans were nearly completed](#). The Council appears to be continuing to advance them, but we should be alert to attempts to weaken or delay the agreement. Göran Eriksson has repeatedly voted against closing the oil

field and Albert Vera Jr. campaigned on closing it but [has abstained from crucial votes](#). I blame a combination of climate skepticism, free market absolutism, and loyalty to their fellow Chamber of Commerce member Sentinel Peak Resources, which runs the oil field. It is interesting to watch them and their fellow conservatives negotiate the contradictions between these beliefs and their NIMBYism, but I would rather not.

Meanwhile, the framework for shutting down the Inglewood Oil Field created and passed by progressive Council Members Fisch, Sahli-Wells, Thomas Small, Daniel Lee, and Yasmine-Imani McMorrin has been taken up as a model by the City and [County of Los Angeles](#), who control most of that property, as well as statewide. No matter what Eriksson and Vera do to stall or sabotage Culver City’s settlement now, [these laws](#) will supercede it. The oil field will be closed, and our members, endorsed candidates, and allies made that possible. This may have started as a NIMBY issue: not wanting to live next door to oil wells with all the accompanying health and safety risks, but it did not stop there. In this case acting in our self-interest not only benefits every person who breathes the air or drinks the water in the region but has already become an example for other communities.

The same is true for the Move Culver City complete streets project. While having fewer cars Downtown, faster public transit, and safer routes for bikes and other mobility alternatives create primarily local impacts, their effects radiate regionally and the project has become a national example. [The conservative Council majority has voted to roll back these gains](#) but, as with the oil field, this is an ineffective pose. [Several lawsuits](#) will prevent the rollback or at least delay it until they are voted out. Furthermore, their anti-Move resolution calls for “vehicle capacity to be added where it is needed,” but [the evidence already shows that no more car space is “needed,” that it will not significantly speed traffic, and that Move’s positive effects far outweigh any inconveniences](#). The value of projects like this is no longer debated. [Neoliberal icon](#) Pete Buttigieg [said this week](#) that “Protected bike lanes and bus lanes are not a frill ... they are a life saving measure.” However, even if they rip it out tomorrow, Move, like the oil field shutdown, has become a model

for others. At the California Democratic Convention in May, when people saw my Club pin or t-shirt, they often started talking to me about Move as an example of visionary mobility planning. In the last week of June, [the State Department of Transportation gave Move its top award for Excellence in Transportation](#). The conservative Council majority can [temporarily embarrass our city](#), but they cannot erase the example our progressive leadership has set.

It is not wrong to want a cleaner, quieter, or safer community, or even to want economic security, but we cannot pursue our desires without understanding how they affect others. If we are thoughtful and brave, our successes can help everyone. As McGhee writes, zero-sum situations are much rarer than we think. Much of our metaphorical backyard is shared.

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[To Join the Culver City Democratic Club CLICK HERE for the Club’s ActBlue page.](#)

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**For more information on
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(310) 398-5328.**

**Comments expressed in the
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of the authors and do not
necessarily represent
the position of the
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Californians need CalCare, not Sacramento stall tactics

by *Sandy Reding, RN*

As a nurse, one of the most frustrating feelings in the world is when patients refuse or delay health care because they are afraid of the cost. We see it all the time: Patients faced with life-threatening or life-altering injury or illness who, instead of being allowed to simply focus on getting better, are instead anxious about surprise bills that can themselves be life-threatening or life-altering. That's why nurses believe in guaranteed health

First, there's no point in beginning negotiations on these waivers right now. In fact, it's legally required that a law establishing CalCare would need to pass before the federal government would even approve them. Yes, eventually we will need federal waivers, but not now. Without CalCare already established under law, the new bill will only add more unnecessary red tape to the process, potentially stymying any progress we can make in the short term.

a deadly pandemic that has taken more than 100,000 Californians from us. The pandemic has demonstrated that we need bold, urgent action to address the health care crisis in our communities, and it will remain an on-going issue given the impacts of long Covid.

Nurses know what our patients need. We are patient advocates at the bedside, on the strike line, and in the halls of political power. We know our patients need single-payer health care yesterday instead of the crisis of care the hospital industry has created by putting profits before patients. We know our patients need lawmakers to champion this goal with urgency, expediency, and the expert wisdom of health care providers like us, our patients, and our communities.

If you believe we need to pass guaranteed health care for all Californians now and want to let Sacramento know you won't stand for stall tactics. The Senate Health Committee will vote on SB 770 on Wednesday, April 19. You can take action by calling Health Committee Chair Susan Talamantes-Eggman today and ask her to vote NO on SB 770. Call Chair Eggman at: 916-651-4005

And if you want to show your support for guaranteed health care for all Californians, please sign our petition calling on the legislature to stop making excuses and pass CalCare NOW: <http://calcarepetition.org/>

Sandy Reding is a registered nurse and a president of California Nurses Association



care for all, and it's why our union supports California Assembly Bill 1690 (AB 1690), which would create CalCare, a universal, single-payer health care system for all Californians. We have fought for decades and backed similar legislation year after year to win such a system.

Nurses know that passing legislation to create CalCare is of life-and-death urgency and the most critical step towards guaranteeing health care for all Californians.

That's why we don't support the approach proposed in SB 770, which would put the bureaucratic cart before the health care horse. Last month, lawmakers introduced SB 770, a bill seeking to spur state agencies to start negotiating for waivers from the federal government to establish a state single-payer system. This could delay significant legislative progress on CalCare until 2028 — five more years of waiting for policy that Californians need now!

While we consider the author, Senator Scott Wiener, an ally and a friend to nurses, we strongly disagree with the approach taken in his bill, for a number of reasons.

Our fear is that this bill may be used as yet another stall tactic from elected officials who want to shout their support for CalCare on the campaign trail, but won't vote where their mouth is once in office.

Second, this approach is not necessary. No changes in federal law and no new state laws are required to secure the waiver authorities necessary to implement a single-payer system in California. In fact, the Affordable Care Act already has provisions to make the establishment of a state-level single-payer system easier. Legislative efforts to address waivers before CalCare takes shape are an unnecessary bureaucratic hurdle to add to the already complicated process of making a single-payer system a reality in the Golden State.

Finally, pursuing this approach would cause unacceptable delay, at a time where transitioning away from our for-profit insurance system to CalCare is more critical than ever. The last thing our patients need is more red tape getting between them and the health care they need. There are 3.2 million Californians with no insurance and millions more underinsured, and we're still in the middle of

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

Unions, environmental advocates press to reform California referendum process

by Suzanne Potter

Assembly Bill 421 came about after the oil industry gathered signatures to repeal a law blocking new drilling in neighborhoods.

Asm. Isaac Bryan, D-Los Angeles, who introduced the bill, said the current system incentivizes signature gatherers to mislead voters.

“The oil companies then spent nearly \$25 million in 90 days to gather the signatures to pause the law, so they could apply for new drilling permits and put it on the referendum,” Bryan recounted. “And there was hours of documented

video evidence that many of the signature gatherers were just outright lying to people.”

Currently, it is legal to word a referendum in a confusing way, in which a “yes” vote would overturn the law in question. Under the proposed bill, voters would simply decide whether to keep or repeal the law. The California Chamber of Commerce opposes the measure, arguing it would make signature gathering more expensive and should require a constitutional amendment.

Bryan added the bill would require signature gatherers to wear a badge with their

name, identification number and photo.

“Folks should have to have adequate training and also be registered,” Bryan contended. “So that it’s clear that, if they are violating the ethics of signature gathering, that can be reported in a way that’s accountable.”

The bill would require petitions to identify the referendum’s top three donors, and mandates at least 10 percent of signature gatherers be community-based volunteers. The bill has already passed the State Assembly. Its next stop is the State Senate Elections Committee.

Reprinted from the Public News Service

Save Medicare from ACO REACH

by Cynthia Hart

What is ACO REACH and why did the California State Assembly just overwhelmingly [pass a resolution \(AJR 4\)](#) against it? I first heard about this bit of alphabet soup at a CDP Senior Caucus Meeting ([at minute 31:19](#)). It began, like so many bad ideas, with the Trump Administration.

Over 63 Million Americans - including nearly 6.6 Million Californians - receive health care coverage through Medicare. Beneficiaries have the option of enrolling in “Traditional” Medicare (TM) or they can enroll in a managed care plan, typically offered by private insurers, also known as Medicare Advantage (MA). TM generally allows patients to see any doctor who is enrolled in Medicare, and the program is able to keep its administrative costs to a minimum by generally paying providers directly.

But Trump thought it would be a really swell idea to privatize Traditional Medicare by enrolling millions of Medicare recipients in private (for-profit) direct contracting entities (DCEs) without the recipients’ consent, or even knowledge. Instead of paying providers directly for care, Trump’s Medicare sends payment

to the DCE’s as middlemen who are then allowed to keep what they don’t pay in health services. The DCE program was launched without congressional approval, oversight, or even discussion. What could possibly go wrong?

The Biden Administration responded to the predictable protests against the DCE program by renaming it Accountable Care Organization (ACO) Realizing Equity, Access, and Community Health (REACH) model. (One doctor quipped that the “REACH” means that the middlemen “reach” into your wallet!)

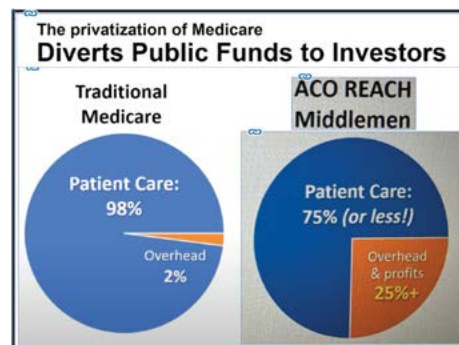
The REACH payment model creates dangerous incentives to restrict care. Traditional Medicare pays doctors and hospitals directly for care, but the REACH payment model pays ACOs a monthly payment to cover a de-

finied portion of each senior’s medical expenses. ACO’s are then allowed to keep as profit and overhead what they do not pay for in health services, a powerful financial incentive to ration seniors’ care.

The REACH payment model not only threatens seniors’ care; it would drain Medicare of billions of dollars of needed revenue each year. Traditional Medicare spends 98 percent of its budget on patient care, but REACH ACOs could spend as little as 60 percent of Medicare payments on care, keeping up to 40 percent of revenues for their own profit and overhead.

Assembly Joint Resolution 4 (AJR 4) calls on President Biden to end ACO REACH immediately, thereby eliminating corporate profiteering of Traditional Medicare. AJR4 passed the Assembly with an overwhelming number of votes including that of our AD55 Assembly Member Isaac Bryan who was a co-author. It has now gone to the State Senate.

At our July 12, 2023 meeting, Club members will be asked to authorize the Corresponding Secretary to send letters in support of AJR 4.



New CCDC t-shirts are here!



We are now accepting orders for Club t-shirts in a new design, refreshed for our 70th anniversary.

Shirts are 100% cotton, union made in Boyle Heights.

They come in small, medium, large, and extra-large and, for the first time, we have Men's (boxy) and Women's (fitted) cuts.

Place your order by donating \$20 (or more!) via [Act Blue](#) and emailing us at CulverCityDemClub@gmail.com your desired size and cut. We will deliver in Culver City and nearby; other orders will be mailed.

We also have a few shirts remaining with the previous design (now known as "heritage" or "throwback") shown below.



HAPPY

INDEPENDENCE DAY

Come to the Culver City Democratic Club

Fourth of July Picnic

Blanco Park • 5687 Sawtelle Blvd. • Culver City

July 2, 2023 • 1:00p.m. — 4:00p.m.

The Club supplies the charcoal for the barbecue, watermelon, cups, plates, knives, forks, and spoons, ice, and soft drinks.

It's on July SECOND!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our Club website: www.culvercitydemocraticclub.com
 Club email address: CulverCityDemClub@gmail.com
 Follow us on Twitter: [@CulvCityDemClub](https://twitter.com/CulvCityDemClub)
 Instagram: [CulverCityDemClub](https://www.instagram.com/CulverCityDemClub)
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July 2 • 1-4 PM
Independence Day Picnic
Blanco Park, Culver City

July 10 • 7 PM
[Culver City Council Meeting](#)

July 12 • 7 PM
[CCDC General Meeting via Zoom](#)

August 25-27
Fiesta La Ballona
Veteran's Park, Culver City
Club members asked to volunteer for our Club booth
RSVP to CulverCityDemClub@gmail.com

Bills which may become law: where are they now?

by *Cynthia Hart*

This year, our Club voted to support a number of impactful bills making their way through the state legislature. Most are still active, some may have another chance next year, and two have already bitten the dust.

Bills that are not voted out of the legislative house in which they originated by “house of origin day” (which was June 2nd this year) are usually pronounced dead. A bill that appears headed for that fate can be ordered by its author to the “inactive file.” That allows the bill to become a “two year bill” that can have another vote in January 2024.

Bills that get trapped in the Appropriations Committee’s Suspense file are going nowhere.

Here is a look at where some of our favored bills stand **as of this writing** and any votes or authorship by our district’s representatives in Sacramento.

CIVIL LIBERTIES

AB 93 (Bryan) Criminal Procedure: consensual searches. This bill will prohibit police officers from asking for consent to search a person or their vehicle without an evidence-based legal justification. **FAILED**
Bryan—introduced the bill

ACA 8 California Abolition Act.

The California Abolition Act would amend Article 1, Section 6 of the California Constitution to prohibit slavery and involuntary servitude without exception.

Active in Assembly

Bryan—co-author

Smallwood-Cuevas—co-author

AB 793 Privacy: Dagnet Digital

Surveillance. This bill seeks to protect the privacy of those who seek abortion care, gender-affirming care, or simply engage in First Amendment-protected activity from a type of dragnet digital surveillance demand known variously as “reverse warrants”, “keyword warrants”, or “geofence warrants”.

Active in Senate

Bryan—voted “Yes”

ACA 4 (Bryan) Elections: eligibility to

vote. This bill would extend the right to vote to incarcerated people. Expanding the franchise will more closely connect people in prison with society, potentially

reducing recidivism.

Active in Assembly

Smallwood-Cuevas—co-author
Bryan—voted “yes” in Assembly
Appropriations Committee

ACA 5 (Low; Principal Co-Authors include Smallwood-Cuevas) Marriage equality.

This measure would express the intent of the Legislature to amend the Constitution of the State relating to marriage equality. It’s a state constitutional amendment designed to rescind Proposition 8, the discriminatory ban on same-sex marriage that was struck down in federal district court in 2010. **Active in Senate**

Smallwood-Cuevas—co-authored
Bryan—voted “Yes”

DEMOCRATIC REFORM

AB 421 Proposition Reform. This bill would require that 10 percent of the signatures be gathered by unpaid volunteers. It would require that the paid gatherers register with the State, obtain an ID badge to be worn while gathering, and receive mandatory training.

Active in Senate

Bryan—Introduced the bill

Smallwood-Cuevas—co-authored

AB 83 The Get Foreign Money Out of California Elections Act.

Robert Reich [explains here](#).

Two Year Bill (Persevere. We have 6 months to change minds!)

Bryan: Voted “Yes” in Assembly
Elections and Appropriations
Committees

HOUSING, TENANT PROTECTIONS, HOMELESSNESS

AB 309 (Lee) Social Housing.

Re-introduces AB2053 which would add social housing to the State’s toolkit to address the shortage of affordable homes for all income levels in California.

Active in Senate

Bryan—voted “Yes”

AB 745 (Bryan) Re-entry Housing and Workforce Development Plan.

Re-introduces last year’s AB 1816, which would create the Reentry Housing and Workforce Development Program to provide grants for innovative or evidence-based housing, housing-based services, family reunification services,

women services, and employment interventions to allow people with recent histories of incarceration to exit homelessness and remain stably housed.

Two Year Bill (We have 6 months to change minds!)

Bryan—introduced the bill

AB 920 (Bryan) Unhoused as a protected category. This bill would make being an unhoused person a protected category under California’s anti-discrimination statute.

In Appropriations Committee’s “suspense file” (FAILED)

Bryan—introduced the bill

SB 567 (Durazo) Builds on the Tenant Protection Act (AB 1482).

This bill expands protections from no-fault evictions, lowers the amount that rent may be increased to inflation or 5 percent, whichever is lower (like Culver City), makes statewide tenant protections applicable to single family homes, condos and mobile homes, and creates new enforcement mechanisms.

Active in Assembly

Smallwood-Cuevas—co-authored

SB 4 (Wiener) Planning and zoning: housing development: higher education institutions and religious institutions.

This bill makes it easier for churches and non-profit universities to build housing if they so choose.

Thanks to previous council’s support for affordable housing, Culver City approved a project like this, Jubilo Village, that will bring nearly 100 homes affordable to people making between 30% and 80% of the area median income. **Active in Assembly**
Smallwood-Cuevas—voted “Yes”

HEALTHCARE

AB 1690 (Kalra) Universal health care coverage.

Known as CalCare, this bill re-introduces AB 1400, which would establish the intent of the Legislature to guarantee accessible, affordable, equitable, and high-quality health care for all Californians through a comprehensive universal single-payer health care program that benefits every resident of the state.

Two Year Bill (The struggle continues!)
No votes have been taken on this bill.

See BILLS on page 7

from BILLS on page 6**SB 238 (Wiener) Health care coverage: independent medical review.**

This bill mandates an automatic referral to the state's existing independent medical review process every time a private insurance company denies a child mental health treatment.

Active in Assembly

Smallwood-Cuevas—voted "Yes"

PUBLIC TRANSIT**AB 610 (Holden)**

Free Youth Transit Pass Program. This bill re-introduces last year's AB 1919, which would create a five-year Youth Transit Pass Pilot Program to provide grants to transit agencies to create or expand free fare transit programs for college and K-12 students.

Active in Senate

Bryan—voted "Yes"

CLIMATE PACKAGE

SB 253 requires all large corporations that do business in California to more fully disclose the greenhouse gasses emitted by their corporate supply chain.

Active in Assembly

Bryan—co-author

Smallwood-Cuevas—voted "Yes"

SB 261 helps protect consumers from the massive potential financial losses associated with the climate crisis by requiring companies to disclose these risks. **Active in Assembly**

Smallwood-Cuevas—voted "Yes"

SB 252 would require the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) and the California State Teachers' Retirement System (CalSTRS) to divest from investments in fossil fuel companies by 2031.

Two Year Bill [[Bill McKibbin article](#)]

Smallwood-Cuevas—voted "Yes"

Di's Corner:

by *Diane Rosenberg*

Update on club member Charlotte Gunter: She is still in the Rehab. Recovering nicely. Still looking forward to going home. Her attitude is still positive. And misses everyone.

The club is saddened by the passing of long time member Joel Peck. He passed away on May 14, 2023. Our condolences go out to his wife Paulette Benson, his daughter, Shira, son-in-law A.J., and son James.

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**Join the
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for a \$30 donation!
After July 1 you can join the club
or renew your membership for
18 months for a \$45 donation**

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

AB 421 is one of the most important bills in Sacramento

In and around Culver City we have the largest urban oil field anywhere in the country. And it's been killing us for years. So last year we passed a bill that took two decades of organizing. It would prevent oil drilling within 3200 feet of where we eat, sleep, play, or go to school. After the governor signed it the oil companies spent twenty-five million dollars on a referendum that will be on the ballot next year. If it passes it will overturn the new law that would stop oil drilling where people live, and until the ballot proposition is voted on the new law restricting oil drilling will not go into effect. The oil companies are using this period of time to apply for new oil drilling permits.

A new bill sponsored by Isaac Bryan, AB 421, would make it harder for rich cor-

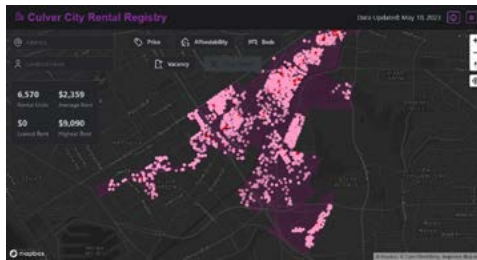


Assembly member Isaac Bryan spoke about the Inglewood oil field and his current bill in the legislature—AB 421.

[Click here for a video of his talk.](#)

porations to use California's ballot referendum process to undo the laws that the people's representatives pass.

Rents charged by landlords should be made public—Let’s start with Culver City



Screenshot from the Culver City Rental Registry tool, showing a map of rental units in Culver City.

by Stephen Jones

I’m excited to share a project I’ve been working on for some time: an interactive map of the Culver City Rental Registry, accessible to the public at <https://ccrentals.org>. In 2020, Culver City began requiring landlords to register their rental units with the city, in part as a way of ensuring compliance with the city’s rent control and tenant protections, and now anyone can access that information.

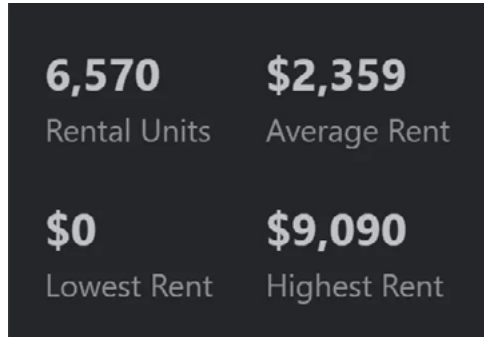
I want to emphasize that **this tool is not affiliated with or authorized by the City of Culver City**. The city has chosen, as a matter of policy, not to make the rental data public. However, the dataset can be obtained by any member of the public who files a public records request. I filed my first request for rental registry data on August 4, 2022, and I’ve been working on making this data public ever since. (As an aside, city staff members have been incredibly helpful in fulfilling the requests and helping me understand the data.)

Public rental information has the potential to shift the information asymmetry between landlords and tenants. When a tenant rents an apartment, the landlord knows the rent history of that apartment and what other tenants are paying for similar apartments. In contrast, the tenant often only knows the price offered by the landlord and what the tenant paid for their prior apartment. As a result, the tenant is at a distinct negotiating disadvantage from the start of the landlord-tenant relationship.

This asymmetry is one part of a power imbalance that lets landlords set the terms of tenancy, increase rents, and evict tenants. Along with policies like rent control and robust tenant protections, making rental information public

might shift the balance a little more in the tenant’s favor.

At the very least, a tenant will now be able to check whether their landlord is reporting accurate rent data to the city.



Basic stats on registered rental units in Culver City

Diving into this data, I tabulated some basic stats on rentals in Culver City. The average rent is \$2,359 across the 6,570 rental units registered with the city. The highest rent in the city is an eye-popping \$9,090—that massive monthly chunk of change will get you a 2-bed/2-bath apartment in the Ivy Station complex, a unit that has apparently been vacant since it was built. There are also 246 units that somehow continue to rent for \$1,000 or less.



Map showing the 246 units that rent for \$1,000 or less (excluding nonvacant units and units that are deed-restricted to be affordable housing). There are some in almost every neighborhood.

I also looked at the way rent has changed over the short history of the registry. Looking at the period March 2020 to March 2023, rent for single family homes and condos grew by 6.5%, whereas rent for apartments grew slightly less at 5.0%.

You may recall that, due to a limitation in

California state law, the city’s rent control ordinance only applies to apartments with a certificate of occupancy dated before February 1, 1995. The rent for those pre-1995 units grew by 5.3% from March 2020 to March 2023. In contrast, the rent for units built in 1995 or later grew by 0.7% over the same period, perhaps suggesting that newer units don’t experience as much rent growth and aren’t in as desperate need for rent control yet — of course, this will become less true the further we get from 1995.

• • •

I want to caution that this data does have limitations. If you are looking for a vacant place to rent, this isn’t going to be much help. Many vacant units are not registered and the data is not updated often enough to be useful for apartment hunting, though it might be useful to explore neighborhood rents before you try to negotiate with a new landlord.

UnitID	UnitType	UnitStatus	UnitAddress	UnitRent	UnitDate	UnitOwner	UnitStatus	UnitStatus	UnitStatus
MULL 0 0 1	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 2	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 3	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 4	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 5	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 6	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 7	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 8	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 9	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 10	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 11	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 12	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 13	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 14	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 15	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 16	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 17	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 18	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 19	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 20	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 21	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 22	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 23	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 24	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 25	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 26	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 27	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 28	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 29	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 30	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 31	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 32	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 33	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 34	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 35	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 36	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 37	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 38	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 39	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 40	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 41	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 42	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 43	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 44	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 45	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 46	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 47	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 48	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 49	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 50	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 51	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 52	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 53	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 54	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 55	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 56	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 57	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 58	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 59	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 60	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 61	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 62	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 63	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 64	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 65	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 66	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 67	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 68	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 69	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 70	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 71	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 72	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 73	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 74	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 75	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 76	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 77	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 78	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 79	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 80	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 81	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 82	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 83	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 84	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 85	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 86	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 87	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 88	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 89	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 90	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 91	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 92	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 93	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 94	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 95	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 96	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 97	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 98	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 99	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	
MULL 0 0 100	Residential	0	0	0	0	NO	MULL	MULL	

The data is messy, includes errors, and has some glaring holes.

The data also includes many errors. Remember, this is all self-reported by the landlords themselves. If you dig in, you’ll find inconsistent unit labels, rents that are obviously incorrect, and owner names that are left blank. I spent hours cleaning the data, but — to repeat the legal warning from the tool — please do not rely on the accuracy of this information for business decisions or other actions without first validating the data.

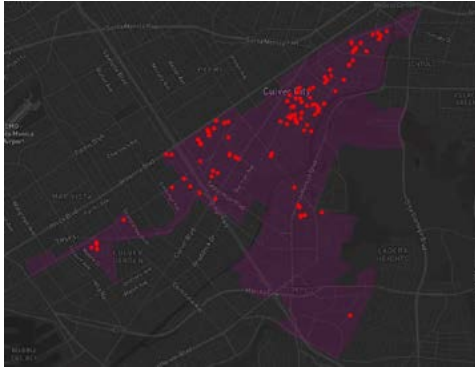
Finally, there’s also an issue of what is not captured in the registry: whether there’s been a change in tenancy that would allow a landlord to increase rent above the rent control threshold.

In the tool, I’ve included a feature that uses a red highlight to show rent increases.

See LANDLORDS on page 9

from LANDLORDS on page 8

es that exceed the allowed threshold, termed “High Rent Increases.” But it isn’t useful for finding violations of rent control because the change in tenancy information is not there. Most of those red dots merely represent big rent hikes following a vacancy, not rent control violations.



Map showing units where landlords reported making a relatively high rent increase.

This is a limitation the city must be facing, too. I’ve suggested they capture information in the registration process that would allow them to more conclusively determine when a big rent increase is a violation. City staff is in the process of evaluating potential changes to the registry—[searching by landlord name](#) is now a publicly available feature on the city’s site, for example—but changes in tenancy aren’t yet captured.

Nevertheless, this tool still shows how housing in our city becomes unaffordable as landlords raise rents after a vacancy. A 2-bedroom apartment can go from \$2,450 to \$2,523 to \$3,195 in just three years (that’s a real example).

More changes in law and policy—and, in my view, significant state and federal funding to build social housing—will be required to make housing truly affordable in Culver City. But maybe if a tenant knows better what previous tenants paid and what neighbors are paying (and landlords are aware that this data is public), there can be a little more resistance against that upward trend.

Once again, you can access the Culver City Rental Registry interactive map at <https://ccrentals.org>. If you have feedback on how the tool might be improved to further help tenants, please email me at info@ccrentals.org.

[This article was first printed in Medium.]



At the Juneteenth celebration with Supervisor Holly Mitchell, Council member Freddy Puza, and former Mayor Meghan Sahli-Wells

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



One year after Roe v. Wade was overturned, Congresswoman Sydney Kamlager-Dove (CA-37) spoke on the House Floor to call out the criminalization of women and girls. Below is a transcript of her remarks and a link to the video.

To watch her full remarks, [click here](#).

“I rise today nearly one year after Roe v. Wade was overturned to condemn the continued sanctioned assault on women.

“In the year since this decision, more women have been prosecuted for their pregnancy outcomes, and more laws have been introduced to further criminalize us than ever before.

“Is it okay to arrest a woman for having a stillbirth?

“Is it a crime to assist a pregnant child of rape or incest to get an abortion?

“Is it reasonable to classify abortion as a homicide?

“No.

“Women’s bodies have suffered endless surveillance and control for long enough.

“It is time that we stand up and talk about this, and it must end now”

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