

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, March 13, 2024

Program: former LA City Council Member Mike Bonin

President's Message by Jeff Schwartz

The real estate empire strikes back

Fellow Democrats,

Our March program will be former LA City Council Member Mike Bonin discussing the article he co-wrote with Occidental College professor Peter Dreier for the February 12 issue of *The Nation*, entitled "[LA's Corporate Class Wants to Reverse Progressive Gains](#)." I encourage you to read it before our meeting and to bring your questions.

Bonin and Dreier recount the unexpected election of LA Council Member Nithya Raman in 2020. Raman did not hire consultants, did little direct mail, and organized first-time voters including many renters, ultimately winning more votes than any Council candidate in LA history. Landlords and conservative homeowner groups immediately launched a recall. When it failed to make the ballot, the Council leadership gerrymandered her district to reduce the number of renters and give her more conservative voters. Council Members including Nury Martinez and Kevin de León were caught discussing this on the notorious [Fed Tapes](#).

Raman's victory inspired Council Members Hugo Soto-Martinez and Eunisses Hernandez to run and win in 2022. Like her, they defeated establishment Democratic incumbents by running in a new lane on the left.

Kenneth Mejia ran for City Controller that year and won more votes than any candidate for any office in LA history with an innovative grassroots campaign that seemed inspired by [Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez](#), [Edward Tufte](#), and anime.

LA voters passed Measure ULA in 2022. Written in part by Peter Dreier, it taxes sales of property worth more than five million dollars to fund rent subsidies and eviction defense.

For Bonin and Dreier, these progressive victories in LA City were based on organizing renters. [Renters are a majority in LA. On average they are younger than homeowners and have been in their residence a shorter time. Over half of LA renters are what the Federal government calls "rent-burdened," paying more than 30% of their income on rent, and over 30% of LA renters pay more than half.](#) People newer to a place are less likely to be familiar with its politics or part of its networks. Those forced to spend a third or more of their incomes on housing will not be able to make large political donations or have much time to volunteer. However, if the majority can be roused to vote in their collective interest, the system built on their exploitation will shake.

This happened in LA, and the establishment is fighting back. One of the major funders of the City of LA backlash is Douglas Emmett Inc (ironically listed on the New York Stock Exchange as DEI). They are one of LA's largest landlords and are currently fighting to evict almost 600 residents from the Barrington Plaza apartments under the pretext of renovations, the largest eviction in LA in decades. [Then-Council Member Bonin opposed this when it was proposed in 2021, and Emmett began making massive political contributions to Traci Park \(Bonin's eventual replacement\), and against](#)

[Nithya Raman, Measure ULA, and Karen Bass.](#)

Bass' unsuccessful rival for Mayor in 2022, mall landlord/developer Rick Caruso, is another major figure in the backlash. Caruso only registered as a Democrat shortly before running and has [a long record of donating to anti-choice groups and other right-wing causes](#). As Chair of USC's Board, [he helped cover up numerous scandals](#), including the sexual abuse of patients by George Tyndall, a gynecologist working at the student health center.

Bonin and Dreier document real estate investors including Caruso and Emmett joining reliably reactionary groups including the Chamber of Commerce, the Police Protective League, the California Apartment Association, and the Apartment Association of Greater Los Angeles to stop the progressive movement. They focus on the formation of the Thrive Los Angeles Political Action Committee, which currently boasts [a website full of platitudes](#), has endorsed Raman's opponent Ethan Weaver, and whose largest donor is the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce.

Like Caruso, [Weaver is a former Republican and does not appear to have changed his worldview or sources of support](#). These candidates have recognized that it is impossible to be elected as a Republican in Blue cities like Los Angeles and instead are attempting to run as Democrats while opposing our platform and organizational base and using

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From MESSAGE on page 1

their wealth to move the party leadership to the right. After Rick Caruso sponsored the LA County Democratic Party's "Chair's Holiday Party" fundraiser in December, the endorsement committee, appointed by the Chair, recommended that LACDP endorse Weaver against Raman, a recommendation overwhelmingly overturned by the elected members. There has also been a proliferation of right-wing Democratic Clubs, such as the [Blue Wave](#), which appears to exist only to support Weaver.

The parallels between what Bonin and Dreier describe in Los Angeles and what we are experiencing in Culver City are probably already clear, but I will spell them out.

Meghan Sahli-Wells was elected to our City Council in 2012. Two years later she was joined by Thomas Small, and two years after that by Alex Fisch and Daniel Lee, creating the progressive majority that passed rent control and renter protections, began the process of closing the Inglewood Oil Field, moved the city to 100% clean power, and broke the Chamber of Commerce's century-long hegemony.

Members of the Culver City Community Coalition and the Culver City Action Network, most of whom were also members of this Club, formed Protect Culver City Renters to advocate for rent control. This group, which I am proud to have played a small role in, surveyed renters, drafted ordinances based on their input, and brought them to the Council with overwhelming evidence. They were adopted in 2019 and went into effect in 2020. Council Members Fisch, Lee, Sahli-Wells, and Small voted in favor, Göran Eriksson against.

Landlords and other housing profiteers immediately financed the oddly named Protect Culver City PAC, led by Ron Basillian, an [alt-right troll](#) fresh off a [90/10 loss](#) as Karen Bass's 2018 Republican opponent for Congress. [Their hired signature-gatherers lied to enough residents](#) to get Measure B, which would have repealed rent control, on the ballot. It was supported by Council Members Albert Vera Jr. and Göran Eriksson, and now-Council Member Dan O'Brien. Four of the six officers of Culver City

Democrats United, our local ["Blue Wave" affiliate](#), were part of [the anti-renter coalition](#), along with the Chamber of Commerce and [the lead author of the ballot argument against Measure E](#). Despite their best efforts to keep Culver City the worst place in LA County to be a renter, Measure B [was defeated in November 2020](#).

Voters in that election also approved Measure RE, a real estate transfer tax like Measure ULA, although the proceeds of RE are not devoted to housing support but go to the General Fund. Measure RE was largely the work of former Mayor Alex Fisch, a lawyer and a deep student of housing economics and policy.

At the same time, then-Mayor Daniel Lee was fighting for a minimum wage for healthcare workers. Southern California Hospital, formerly Brotman Hospital, had long had a reputation for poor care and as a bad place to work. When it was bought by [Prospect Medical Holdings, a private equity firm](#), both declined further, as [private equity is focused on extracting money from its assets with no regard for their service quality and long-term viability](#). Lee attempted to put the City's weight behind the hospital's workers, who had risked their lives almost constantly during the first year of the pandemic without adequate resources or support, opposing a corporate "stakeholder" and Chamber of Commerce member.

For these transgressions Fisch and Lee were threatened with [a recall](#), whose supporters overlapped significantly with Measure B's. Like the recalls of Raman, Bonin, and District Attorney George Gascón, [it failed to make the ballot](#), thanks in part to this Club's [powerful opposition](#).

Fisch was also the primary author of 2022's Measure BL, which updated the City's business license fees for the first time in decades. It passed with over 60% of the vote despite dishonest campaigning by the Chamber of Commerce and the Downtown Business Association which claimed it would raise rates. In fact BL established a more progressive rate structure, in which larger businesses paid fees based on a higher percentage of their income while smaller ones paid a smaller percentage and the majority would pay nothing at all. BL reduced or

eliminated business license fees for the majority of Culver City businesses and the groups that claim to advocate for those businesses used their dues to lie to them and voters about that.

In Culver City, tenants of The Meadows, a large apartment complex in Fox Hills, are facing a "renoviction" like that at Barington Plaza. Like Emmett, The Meadows demanded an exemption from the relevant renter protection laws and are suing because it was not granted. I am not a lawyer, but as best as I understand it, their argument is: ["we bought this property before the laws were passed, so the laws don't apply."](#) and I am pretty sure that is not how laws usually work. This would have been a valuable argument for anyone who owned a bar in 1919, for example.

Where LA has Mall King Rick Caruso, Culver City has [Michael Hackman](#), a billionaire developer and landlord of studio properties. He owns the Culver Studios, which is leased to Amazon, as well as the Culver Steps, which combines office space (also leased to Amazon) with restaurants, a grocery store, and assorted beauty and health businesses. Outside Culver City his properties include the CBS Television City complex on Fairfax, just across from Caruso's Grove.

In the last Culver City City Council election, Hackman spent nearly \$600,000 funding a PAC to elect Dan O'Brien (No Party Preference - the only non-Democrat on the Council) and Denise Renteria (who became a Democrat shortly before running but [appeared with MAGA Senate Candidate Mark Meuser at a fundraiser for Protect Culver City](#)) and giving generously to every organization which backed these candidates, including the Culver City Chamber of Commerce PAC, the [Culver City Coalition](#) (not to be confused with the [Culver City Community Coalition—funny how these things keep happening!](#)), [Common Sense Culver City](#), and [Culver City Neighbors United](#). His PAC passed \$5000 of his money on to Protect Culver City, covering nearly all their 2022 campaign spending while keeping his name off their paperwork.

None of this is illegal, but it is ugly. As Bob Dylan said, ["Money doesn't talk, it swears."](#) We cannot outspend the billionaires, but we can at least expose them and their crew. The truth is on our side.

Why I support George Gascon for DA

by Representative Sydney Kamlager-Dove

I am grateful to represent Culver City. I am grateful to be your Congressperson, and I am grateful to have the opportunity to continue to support George. I supported him when he ran the first time and I'm supporting him now.

George and his family immigrated from Cuba. He served in the US Army, and he earned his Bachelor and Law degrees while actively serving as a rising star in the LAPD. I think it is important to be supporting someone who knows and understands the culture within that department that works so closely with the DA's office when that's what you're trying to change.

The theme of George's campaign and his platform is courage. And we need folks now who are willing to run and serve who have courage. Who have the courage to change the status quo. And we have had a status quo in the DA's office that has been destructive, that has been punitive, that has been discriminatory, and that has been lazy. It is so lazy to just lean into "Oh, that's how this group is." "This is the easiest way to score political points." "Oh, this is the easiest way to rack up wins." It is much more difficult and courageous to say, "I am going to try to change the culture of this Department."

And we know that when George got in, he shared his platform and it blew everybody's hair back. Oh my God! And then we heard, "This is going to impact crime. Crime is on the rise. George is here/crime is up." And we know that's not true. We know that crime is down. And when you hear Orange County DA Todd Spitzer saying crazy things about what's going on in LA County, because of George, you need to say to him "Hey, Boo. You got the same numbers in Orange County." It's not a George thing. It's a national thing. And don't be mad at George because he's taking a contrarian view to what it means to be a DA. And he's looking at ways to systemically change both the culture and the practices that are happening in the DA's office.

Now if you'll notice people are not talking a lot about George right now. Do you know why? Because practices are actually working. I have the inside scoop on what George is doing because my husband works in this crazy system, and he delivers



Sydney Kamlager-Dove introduced Los Angeles District Attorney George Gascon at a fundraiser in Culver City.

the news. "You know. Something's happening in the DA's office. I'm not getting the same kinds of reactions from prosecutors that I was under Jackie Lacey."

I'll tell you something else. These people who are running against George: they don't know what the job is about. You will hear them say "I'm going to prosecute more misdemeanors." That's City, my friends, not County. Do your research, if you're running for a job!

You hear people say "All of these things are going to change." Many of these people are disgruntled employees in the system. I'm going to say it, so George doesn't have to. And they are upset with the changes that George has been fighting to enact. That we voted him in to enact. You hear them say, "I don't like this. I don't like that I have to actually look at the charges. That I have to make some decisions about if they're warranted. I have to have a discussion if there is real evidence. I have to check my own bias against this person and my relationship with the LAPD and my relationship with

the court and I don't want to do that because it is so much easier to demonize these defendants than talk about some of the root causes."

Of course, you cannot say because this person lived this life that they bear absolutely no responsibility. But you can change how you look at the information to figure out a way to be restorative and rehabilitative and humane in how we decide to ask someone to be accountable.

And that's what we have in George and that's why I'm supporting him and my family is supporting him and I know you all are supporting him. I hope you will tell others about the importance of supporting him because right now more than ever, we need courage in the DA's office. And that person with that courage is the next and continuing DA of Los Angeles County, George Gascon.

This article is a transcription of Representative Representative Sydney Kamlager-Dove's introduction of George Gascon at a recent Culver City fundraising event.

Evidence presents itself—arguments against Measure E have nothing to do with Measure E

by Judith Martin-Straw

first published in *Culver City Crossroads*

As happens in the run-up to every election, *CulverCityCrossroads* gets a lot of letters. It's always a compliment when a publication gets a lot of correspondence; it means that people care enough to write down their thoughts and share them. Even hate mail, in its own way, is evidence that the institution has value. Letters can give you a great overview on a situation—let's say the school bond measure.

The campaign against the school bond—Measure E on your March ballot—lost all credibility for me in one moment.

The people who advocate for an organization called “SAVE CCUSD” spent more than a year talking about how the schools were falling apart, how the need for repairs was urgent, and how critical it was that we take care of the physical safety of our students. They even persuaded a local television news broadcast to come onto a campus and do a feature on how the ceiling tiles were falling out.

I heard the words “ceiling tiles” so many times over the course of six months, if it had been a drinking game, everyone would have been unconscious. The relentless scolding at school board meetings, reaching over to city council meetings...never mind that the district and the city are two utterly separate entities that are legally not allowed interact without strict protocols. Not even considering the lawn signs, the social media posts, and the tone of apocalyptic hysteria ...Holy Wow.

But when the bond to repair the school facilities was approved for the March ballot—ceiling tiles and all—there was an instant, completely nonsensical pivot to oppose it.

For me, the moment came when one of these self-appointed saviors stated—at a public meeting—that if this bond was not used to build a swimming pool for our students, then it was unworthy of support.

This was one of the same people pointing out how shameful, how disgraceful it was that our students had

these ceiling tiles falling on their heads. For more than a year.

So fix the schools, fix the schools, fix the schools—okay, here's how we can fix the schools—OH NO YOU DON'T!

The people who oppose the bond—and, this is simply journalistic observation—have a dozen wild conspiracy theories as to where this money will be spent. They are broadcasting false information about past issues—that have nothing to do with the bond—and fantasizing future catastrophes—that have nothing to do with the bond.

So, the push against the school bond has nothing to do with school bond. It's just a citizen's vigilante committee. Their long term campaign to blame the school board and the district administration for the disrepair of the schools loses any credibility when those repairs are on the ballot, and they are screaming in opposition.

The fact is that Culver City has always passed school bonds. Every time we have put one on the ballot, it succeeded. We like having good schools. It's good for the community in general. This is a fact.

The correspondence that *Crossroads* receives, (and again, this is a standard) addresses both pro and con. That people opposing the bond have gone to the trouble to use alternative names, set up

a new email address, and disguise themselves in order to keep pushing these unsupported narratives is what is most revealing. While most of this faux correspondence has been caught in the filter, some gets through.

If you won't stand behind your statements, then your statements don't stand. Might as well put on clown make-up and say how serious you are.

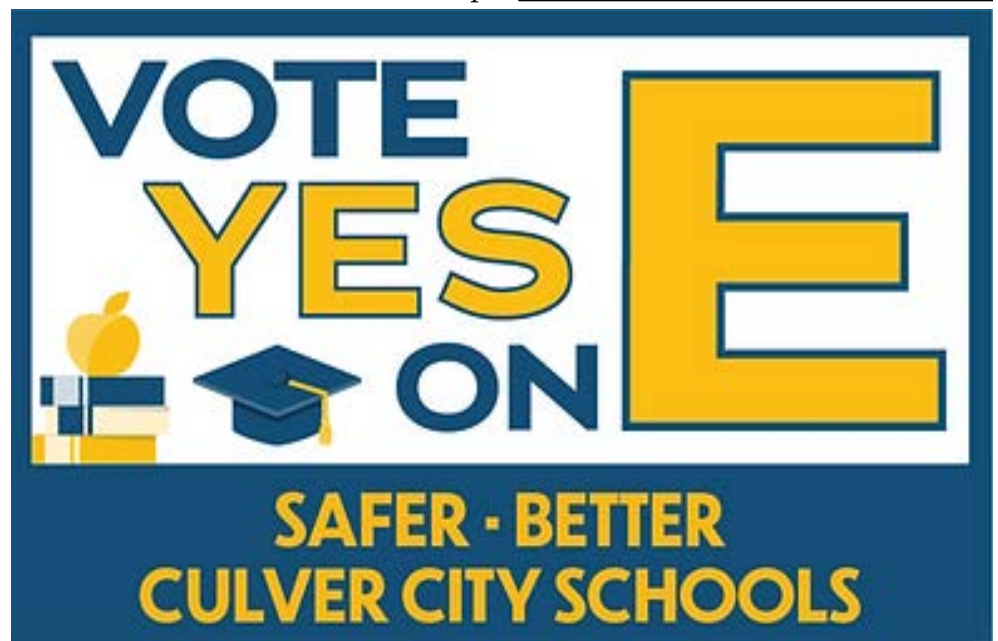
We have not had to pull a single letter on the pro-bond correspondence because it wasn't from a real person. Real voters are in favor—as they have been historically.

When you see the light bulb graphic, and the words “Dear Editor,” that means someone has an idea. We try to support all correspondence, because good ideas can come from anywhere. But it also means it's just an opinion – this is someone's idea. We don't check their spelling, or their grammar or their facts.

Maintaining a local news platform that is respected and accessible to all does not mean it will be flawless. Offering real people a real connection in the community is vital. It's essential to democracy.

We have evidence for that.

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



The case for letting 16-year-olds vote in Culver City elections

by *Julia Rottenberg*,
President of *Vote16 Culver City*

In 2022, just 16 voters decided the future of youth enfranchisement in our city. At Vote16, our measure to expand the



voting age received 49.95% of the city-wide vote and more “YES”s than any city council candidate that year. The 16-vote margin, along with roughly 50% of voters not participating in the election at all, indicates that 2022’s result was inconclusive.

We think voters deserve a second chance to voice their opinion.

To get back on the ballot in 2024, we need to petition, but, we’re a student-led campaign and people under 18 aren’t allowed to collect signatures without an adult present. This is where you come in!

We hope you can pitch in to support us. Attached are two forms: [one if you want to independently gather signatures](#) (personally disperse sheets among friends, family, etc.), and [another if you want to canvass with us](#) (doorknock around the city, accompanied by a student volunteer). Everything helps—we need 4,200 signatures by mid-July, which is about 160 a week!

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From the editor

by *Pete Rockwell*

You’ll notice that some things in this month’s newsletter also ran in the February issue, and that’s because the election isn’t over yet. Absentee ballots started arriving in early February (I got mine on February 2) and election day is Tuesday, March 5.

Taxpayer ‘protection’ or taxpayer ‘deception’?

Michael Hiltzik of the *LA Times* has another great column. This one is about a new scam by the proponents of 1978’s Proposition 13, which destroyed the way public schools in California were financed. The right wing has decided to call this monstrosity the “Taxpayer Protection and Government Accountability Act.” Sounds great, right? Who doesn’t want to protect taxpayers and make government accountable? If the courts don’t prohibit it from going on the ballot, we’ll be voting on it in the November election.

We should all read [Michael Hiltzik’s column](#). It contains a link to the [text of the initiative](#) itself.

Senior Center Newsletter

Here’s a link to the [newsletter of the Culver City Senior Center](#), a great institution at Culver and Overland that provides an amazing assortment of activities for members, including a huge lunchroom with low-priced meals, and lots of different types of classes and events. If you are 50 years old or older you can join the Senior Center for twenty dollars a year. If you click on the link above and look on page 9 you can see a photograph of some members of the Senior Center’s acting class (including me) taken at a Valentine’s Day party that the class put on in February. All the people in the Senior Center were invited, and the actors provided entertainment. The newsletter also has a schedule of classes and events.

Alexei Navalny, the heroic Russian dissident, died recently in prison. He had been sent there by Vladimir Putin. President Biden imposed new sanctions on Russia and accused Putin of having him murdered. Some time ago, Alexei Navalny was asked what words he wanted to leave his supporters in the event of his death. I found what he said inspiring: “Don’t give up.”



Culver City Democratic Club members at Los Angeles District Attorney George Gascón’s fund raising event in February. Left to right are Bubba Fish, Triston Ezidore, Megan Sahli-Wells, Michelle Weiner, Nancy Barba, Jeff Schwartz, Leah Pressman, District Attorney George Gascón, Cynthia Hart, Karim Sahli, and Donna Kent.

Dear Editor—parents @ La Ballona plead for bond support

This letter to the editor was first printed in Culver City Crossroads.

As members of the La Ballona Elementary community, we are in support of Measure E to renovate and improve our outdated and unsafe facilities. As we shelter from the rain this weekend, the custodial staff and principal at La Ballona are dreading what the days of wet rain will bring.

Will the main courtyard flood from a clogged drain and turn the line-up area into a lake? Will the roof leak into the teacher's lounge through the already missing ceiling tiles onto the working areas (where lesson plans are created and copied)? How big will the waterfalls get with this rain where two busted rain gutters dump right in front of the newly decorated library and special education office? Will the exterior of the second floor wall give way where the rain pipe has worn out a dent in the wall across two stories?

If the rain lasts until Wednesday, music classes will be difficult for our students who practice on a stage that is in the same room as indoor P.E. class and groups of students gather for cafeteria time. It is impossible to hear the plucking of a stringed instrument, let alone the instructor's voice. Against the windows in this very "cafetorium," mold grows on the molding just a couple of feet away from the tables where children eat their lunch.

The smell of moist, old carpets in Building A reminds the staff of what happened in 2022, when major water pipes burst on the second floor and damaged the entire wall and floor structures beneath it. That was a tough two months!

Sunny days are not taken for granted at La Ballona, because outdoors is a great place for outdoor eating, learning, and play spaces. Many of the classes overflow onto sun-soaked tables arranged on concrete and black asphalt without natural shade. Teachers do not have private office space and may have no choice but to conduct IEP meetings via zoom from the garden area, or private zoom calls regarding students' confidential information on a bench or a stairwell.

Outdated "portable classrooms" arranged around the edges of the asphalt blacktop accommodate art class and intervention classes as well as our youngest preschool and Transitional Kindergarten students. Custodial staff does not have space to properly store cleaning supplies. PTA does not have space to store supplies for community events and after school clubs.

However, as outdated as our school appears, La Ballona is rich with its dual-language immersion program and English-medium program, consisting of a talented team of teachers, including OT and interventionists, classroom aides, librarian, school counselors and education coaches enthusiastically supporting a largely English learning community (>40%) and historically underserved populations. Despite the disadvantages compared to other schools in the district, there is a valiant effort to nurture the education on campus and to embrace social-emotional learning.

It is because of our diverse, highly engaged community of teachers, administration, students and families that we are motivated to listen closely to the needs of the school and to advocate for their great ideas.

We request to have respectful working spaces for our counselors, learning intervention services, special education services, classroom spaces for reading, science and the arts.

Without the funds from Measure E, none of these improvements will be possible. And our kids at La Ballona will continue to learn, play, and grow in unsuitable conditions, rain or shine.

Sincerely,
Dr. Huong Nghiem-Eilbeck
Angela Graves
Fabien Ricard
Stephen Jones

This letter was signed by over 100 parents and school community members of La Ballona Elementary. Signatures were withheld by request of the organizers, but were included in the communication with CulverCityCrossroads.



**This is
a very
important
election
year
FUNDRAISING
VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED**

**We invite Club
members to help
plan fundraising
events for the
Culver City
Democratic Club**

If you're interested,
please email Ways
and Means Committee
members Will Herrera
herreraw@ucla.edu
or Ronnie Jayne Solomon
ronniejaye@aol.com

No experience is needed,
but any event planning
experience is surely
welcome.

Bills we endorsed in the California Legislature

At our February meeting, the Club voted to endorse the following bills and the legislative committee will submit letters in support as they make their way through the legislative process to various committees.

AB 1810 (Isaac Bryan, Tina McKinnor, and Mia Bonta)—Menstrual Products in Prisons. Currently menstrual products are provided to inmates who need them “by request.” This bill would require prisons to provide menstrual products to inmates without having to request them. [Mother Jones](#) article from 2017. Current California law and data about compliance [here](#) (page 14, item 6). Isaac Bryan [speaks](#) about the law which passed the Public Safety Committee with bipartisan support in February.

ACA 16 (Isaac Bryan)—The Green Amendment. The Green Amendment will amend the state constitution to affirm the right to clean air, water, and a healthy environment for every Californian. If this passes, a proposition will appear on the ballot in 2024 so that Californians can decide to follow Pennsylvania, Montana, and New York in enshrining and codifying environmental protections into its constitution. To guarantee the highest level of protection, the amendment, once approved by the voters, would become part of the rights section of our state’s constitution. Read more about green amendments in articles from [American Bar Association](#), [The Guardian](#), the National Caucus of Environmental Legislators [website](#), a Green Amendment advocacy [website](#), and in Bloomberg Law [here](#) and [here](#).

AB 2200 (Kalra)—This bill is the current year’s version of CalCare, with some improvements. In 2022 and 2023, our Club supported Calcare by endorsing AB 1690 and AB 1400 and by passing a [resolution](#) in favor of single payer healthcare. California’s current fragmented system of privately financed, for-profit health insurance, administered primarily by employers—where there is strong incentive to minimize or outright deny necessary care and public health emergency preparation in order to maximize industry profits—is unsustainable and expensive. It can’t be reformed, and must be replaced with a “unified publicly-funded single-payer

healthcare system” (which is part of the California Democratic Party platform). A single-payer system would enshrine health care as a human right in the state of California by guaranteeing comprehensive, high quality care to all Californians, including the freedom to choose who provides that care. The care would be free for patients, and would cost less overall than our current system.

The Club has also voted to continue to support the following two-year bills that were introduced in 2023 and endorsed by the Club.

ACA 5 (Low)—The California Right to Marry. This proposition—endorsed by the Club in 2023—will appear on the ballot in November of 2024. Voters will decide whether to overturn the 2008 amendment to the California state constitution that defined marriage as being “between a man and a woman.” A “yes” vote would repeal the amendment and a “no” vote would keep the amendment. Our club has endorsed a “yes” vote. Proposition 8 was invalidated by the [U.S. Supreme Court](#) ruling in [Obergefell v. Hodges](#) in 2015, which protected same-sex marriage under the Due Process and Equal Protection Clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment. However, if *Obergefell* is overturned by a reactionary Supreme Court, same-sex marriage would no longer be allowed in California unless we have this amendment in place.

ACA 8 (Wilson)—Ending slavery in California. Again, the Club supported this proposition in 2023, but the legislature failed to pass it. This bill is now part of

the [Reparations Packet](#) of bills introduced by the California Legislative Black Caucus. Currently, the California Constitution prohibits slavery and involuntary servitude, except as punishment of a crime. This measure would abolish slavery in any form, including forced labor compelled by the use or threat of physical or legal coercion. If it passes this year, it could appear on the ballot as a proposition on the 2024 ballot.

SB 252 (Gonzalez, Stern, Wiener)—This bill will require the agencies that invest the pension funds of state employees and teachers to divest billions of dollars from fossil fuel companies.

SB 238 (Wiener)—Health care coverage: independent medical review. The bill would require a health care service plan or a disability insurer that denies a health care service for an individual up to 26 years of age to automatically submit within 24 hours a decision regarding a disputed health care service to the Independent Medical Review System, as well as the information that informed its decision, without requiring an enrollee or insured to submit a grievance.

The legislative committee is in the process of reviewing new bills on housing, civil rights, energy policy and the environment, education, and transportation introduced in 2024. These will be presented to our Eboard and our membership to consider at our March meeting.

Be sure to look for a list of bills that will come before the Club for an endorsement vote in the message that the Club sends out ahead of our March meeting.

Endorsed by the Culver City Democratic Club



NITHYA

LIFTING L.A. TOGETHER

L.A. CITY COUNCIL • DISTRICT 4

([click here for website](#))

Our Culver launches community outreach

by *Our Culver*

Prioritizing a truly progressive agenda in Culver City is only possible when residents are informed and educated on local policy choices. That's especially true now that big money donors have waded into local politics to prioritize their economic interests over our communities' needs.

Culver City is currently drafting its 2024-25 city budget. Last year the city spent more than \$175 million from its General Fund, and Our Culver is committed to helping our neighbors, friends, and families understand just what's in the budget — and who it prioritizes.

Did you know that in 2023-24, Culver City budgeted less than 7% of the total General Fund for Parks, Recreation, and Community Services (which includes our Senior Center)? That's less than we spend on City Administration.

On April 13, Our Culver is hosting a Town Hall meeting to share more about our upcoming budget and how it impacts our diverse community, young people, and families. To support this educational event we're planning to go door to door

and talk to people, too. Progressives can't match the money corporate donors

Why doesn't Culver City spend more on its neighborhood parks?



are spending in Culver City but we can do the grassroots work needed to help people understand local policy choices they aren't yet paying attention to.

Affordable housing, transportation that connects our city, environmental sustainability, and equity are all possible when people learn about them in conversations with neighbors who care.

Weekends from March 10 to April 6, Our Culver members will go door-to-door

talking to neighbors about the budget and the choices it reflects. We'd like you to join us.

Sign up here to learn more and how you can help build an educated and empowered Culver City.

What is Our Culver? We are friends, family, neighbors, and coworkers fighting together for a brighter future for Culver City and beyond. Educating our community on alternative solutions to status quo policies is the core of our mission. We are a 100% volunteer-based organization working to create an affordable, sustainable, and welcome city for everyone.

Sign up for our door to door outreach Our Culver Outreach

or to learn more visit ourculver.org.

To receive the Our Culver newsletter click here: Either ourculver@gmail.com or <https://www.ourculver.org/>.



Join or Renew Your Culver City Democratic Club Membership!

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

Join the Culver City Democratic Club for a \$30 donation!

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

VOTE BY MARCH 5

GEORGE TURNER
SEAT #39
FOR LA SUPERIOR
COURT JUDGE



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THE DEFENDERS OF
JUSTICE
FOR SUPERIOR COURT

VOTE
MARCH
BY 5TH



Culver City
DEMOCRATIC CLUB

ENDORSEMENTS

President	Joe Biden
Senate	Barbara Lee
Congress	Ted Lieu (CD36)
Congress	Sydney Kamlager (CD37)
State Assembly	Isaac Bryan
State Measure 1	Yes
County Supervisor	Holly Mitchell
District Attorney	George Gascón
Superior Court Office 39	George A. Turner
Superior Court Office 48	Ericka Wiley
Superior Court Office 97	La Shae Henderson
Superior Court Office 124	Kimberly Repecka
CCUSD Measure E	Yes
LA County Democratic Party Central Committee (AD55):	
Leah Pressman, Freddy Puza, and Jeff Schwartz	

SAVE THIS CARD!
IT'S YOUR GUIDE FOR MAIL-IN BALLOTS
OR IN-PERSON VOTING!



RE-ELECT GEORGE GASCÓN Los ANGELES COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Endorsed by

Culver City Democratic Club

L.A. County Federation of Labor

Planned Parenthood Los Angeles

L.A. County Democratic Party

The Los Angeles Times

Asian Democrats of Los Angeles County

Democrats For Israel Los Angeles

Feel the Bern Democratic Club of
San Fernando Valley

Muslim Democratic Club of
Southern California

Westside Young Democrats

Burbank Democratic Club

Santa Clarita Valley Democrats

Miracle Mile Democratic Club

Glendale Democratic Club

Progressive Democrats of
the Santa Monica Mountains

L.A. County Democratic Party

Stonewall Young Democrats

San Fernando Valley Young Democrats

Black Los Angeles Young Democrats

California Black Women's
Democratic Club

Stonewall Democratic Club

California Working Families Party

Dolores Huerta
(Labor Leader and Civil Rights Activist)

Mike Bonin
(Former LA City Councilmember)

Meghan Sahli-Wells
(Former Culver City Mayor)

Cara Robin
(President, West LA Democratic Club)

*Titles for identification purposes only.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our Club website: www.culvercitydemocraticclub.com

Club email address: CulverCityDemClub@gmail.com

Follow us on Twitter: @CulvCityDemClub

Instagram: CulverCityDemClub

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

Women's History Month

March 3 • 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM

Barbara Lee Speak for US! Los Angeles GOTV Rally

[RSVP for details](#)

March 5

Last Day to Vote in March Presidential Primary

March 7

State of the Union Address

March 11 - 7 PM

[Regular City Council Meeting](#)

Culver City Council Meeting

March 12 - 7 PM

[CCUSD School Board Meeting](#)



March 13 • 7 PM

CCDC General Meeting via Zoom



March 18 • 7 PM

[Regular City Council Meeting](#)

March 20 • 7 PM

[City Council Meeting \(Budget\)](#)

March 25

Cesar Chavez Day
(Observed)

March 29

Vietnam Veteran's Day

March 31

Transgender Day of Visibility

<https://nationaltoday.com/transgender-day-visibility/>

April 20 • 9 AM-Noon

Ballona Creek Renaissance

[Earth Day Cleanup](#)

Ongoing

Grassroots Democratic Headquarters

Offers volunteer opportunities to flip the House!

Choose from in-person or virtual phonebanking,
textbanking, postcarding and canvassing

<https://linktr.ee/grassrootsdemh4>

Di's Corner:

by *Diane Rosenberg*

Update on Club member Charlotte Gunter: Charlotte is still in rehab. Her attitude is still positive and she misses everyone, and looks forward to when we all can be together in person.

At our Executive Board meeting on Sunday, February 11, the Executive Board passed a unanimous resolution thanking Club member Eric Fine, who has stepped down from the office of Club Treasurer after serving in that office for over twenty years.

At our General Meeting on February 14, the new Club officers were sworn in for the year 2024. The Installing Officer was former Club First Vice President Freddy Puza, who now serves as a member of the Culver City City Council. The Club thanks Freddy for doing the honors.

Barbara Lee for US Senate

by *Alex Fisch*

Barbara Lee is the rare candidate who brings grassroots progressive passion and values together with the pragmatism necessary to get legislative results. She had the courage to stand alone in Congress, presciently calling out the Authorization for Use of Military Force of 2001 as a blank check for war. But she also managed to get Pete Wilson to sign sixty-seven of her bills into law while in the California legislature. Barbara Lee would distinguish herself in the Senate as a powerful and effective advocate for ordinary Californians, and an important voice in the Senate for progressive values.

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

In LA—vote for Streets For All

by *Olga Lexell*

A Culver City resident might wonder: why should I care about [Measure HLA](#), a City of LA ballot measure that Culver City residents can't even vote in? The simple answer is that Culver City doesn't exist in a vacuum, especially when it comes to transportation. Very few people who live in Culver City only stay in Culver City.

Right now, we have a beautiful transportation corridor downtown that connects much of the heart of our City. But it's hard to go further east or west until Los Angeles does its fair share to meet the moment. The opening of the Venice Blvd. mobility lanes was a boost to Move CC's connectivity, but it's not enough. Culver City residents deserve a connected transportation network that enables you to travel across Los Angeles without a car. Measure HLA would require LA to upgrade roads that connect to Culver City's network: Sepulveda, Overland, Motor, MLK, La Brea, Obama, and many more.

VOTE BY MARCH 5
ERICKA WILEY, SEAT #48
FOR LA SUPERIOR COURT JUDGE



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Re-elect Holly J. Mitchell for L.A. County Board of Supervisors, District 2

by Disa Lindgren

In 2006, I had the great good fortune to get to know Holly J. Mitchell. She was the Executive Director of Crystal Stairs, one of the largest nonprofit child and family development agencies in California. At that time, Holly was also the Public Policy Chairperson of the CA CCR&R Network (Network), the membership and advocacy organization where I work, which Crystal Stairs belongs to. I helped to staff the public policy committee meetings that Holly facilitated during her tenure on the Network Board of Directors, so I had a front row seat to observe her prodigious leadership skills. I will never forget the in-person yearly conferences where Holly presided over member meetings of 80 people, who discussed and then voted on adopting the organization's annual policy agenda. Holly handled everything about these meetings with brilliance, a keen listening ear, wit, the ability to get people to focus, and tremendous competence. I have never seen anyone manage so many people, often with passionate differences of opinion, with such skill and compassion.

After leading Crystal Stairs for seven years, Holly J. Mitchell distinguished herself in the state legislature as our elected representative for a decade. As a State Assemblymember and Senator, Holly helped to author and pass over 90 bills impacting all Californians for the better. Now, as the 2nd District Superintendent of the LA County Board, Holly continues

to fight for our most vulnerable community members, championing equity and justice, and working for systemic change. Holly has accomplished a great deal, passing a countywide guaranteed universal income program and making L.A. County the first in the nation to phase out urban oil drilling. We need Holly's continued leadership, which is always guided by a spirit of compassion and respect.

I respect and appreciate Holly J. Mitchell so much, because she is deeply committed to the causes that the Culver City Democratic Club cares about, because she represents all of her constituents with integrity, and because she understands how to govern to effect positive social change. Vote to re-elect Holly J. Mitchell for Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, District 2!



U.S. SENATE
Barbara LEE
speaks for me

Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell, who served as the Grand Marshall for this year's MLK parade, decided to forgo the traditional car escort in favor of riding her bike. You can (sort of) see Club members Bubba Fish, Leah Pressman, and Kelly Kent behind her with the dozens of other advocate-escorts who rode with her.

Letter from a CCUSD parent

Dear Editor,

Many residents do not realize that the state of California does not have dedicated funds for school facilities—any consistent funding for CCUSD must come from Culver City. This is why a School Bond, Measure E, will appear on the March 5th ballot. Bonds like Measure E can only go on ballots in even years—2024 is our shot.

Whether or not you have students in our Culver City schools, you have likely heard that our facilities are in serious disrepair. To give a few examples from the past two years of our own family's experience:

Last year my Lin Howe student spent an unanticipated three months having class in the District Annex due to massive flooding of multiple classrooms.

This past December, a literal duck pond ("Lake Panther") formed on my youngest's middle school campus after a fairly average rainfall. This is not a new situation.

Students at the high school are taking classes in roughly 20 "temporary" trailers that were installed in the 1980s.

There is not sufficient indoor lunch space for high school or middle school students in case of inclement weather. Many kids eat lunch standing up under overhangs when it rains.

My high schooler's band class is crammed into a former welding studio that was never intended for music—in fact, no facilities for music have ever been built at the high school despite a growing and well-regarded music program.

I am certain that most families in CCUSD have similar stories regarding their own experiences with our school buildings.

I will be voting YES on Measure E because we are long past the luxury of delay. Our kids, teachers, and staff deserve better than this.

Sincerely, Bronwyn Schrecker Jamrok
Former CCUSD PTA Officer &
Current School Volunteer
Yes on Measure E Committee Member,
www.excellentculvercityschools.org

Why I endorse Measure E

by Dr Kelly Kent, President, CCUSD Board of Education

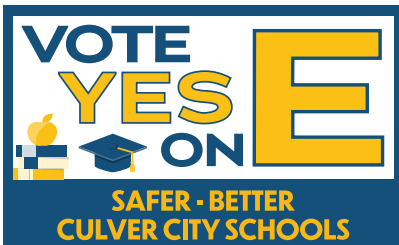
I support Measure E, because it is essential to our students and staff. Currently every dollar we spend on building repair and maintenance draws from the dollars we use for teaching and learning. Once we pass this bond, we will have a fund that can not only support our facilities upkeep without taking away from our curriculum and instruction dollars, but we will also be able to build new infrastructure to support more innovative learning environments! I'm Pro-Measure E, because I'm Pro-Student!

Join or Renew Your Culver City Democratic Club Membership!

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

Join the Culver City Democratic Club for a \$30 donation!

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



Vote Yes on Measure E

for Safer, Better Culver City Schools



We are proud that our local Culver City Unified School District is ranked among the best and most diverse public school districts in LA County.

Unfortunately, most neighborhood schools date back to the 1950s and haven't had significant renovations in decades. Crumbling ceilings and foundations, leaky roofs and old wiring must be fixed.

Our students also need safe, modern classrooms, science labs, instructional technology, and libraries; or they will be at a disadvantage in competing for college and careers.

We can't count on the state government to fix these problems for us. We must take action to improve our local schools today!

Vote YES on Measure E – Repair and Improve Culver City Schools

Join us in passing Measure E for Safer, Better Culver City Schools

YES! I endorse Measure E. Please add my name to your growing, public list of supporters

Name

Title

Organization

(For identification purposes only.)

Phone

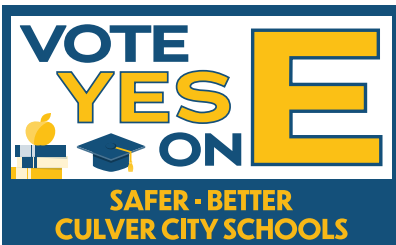
Email

I will Donate

Please make checks payable to:
Committee for Excellent Culver City Schools – Yes on E
P.O. Box 1153, Culver City, CA 90232

ExcellentCulverCitySchools.org

Have additional questions or comments?
Contact the campaign at
excellentsculvercityschools@gmail.com



Vota Sí en la Medida E

para Escuelas Más Seguras y Mejores en Culver City



Nos enorgullece que nuestro Distrito Escolar Unificado de Culver City se encuentre entre los mejores y más diversos distritos públicos del condado de Los Ángeles.

Desafortunadamente, la mayoría de las escuelas de la comunidad fueron fundadas en la década de 1950 y no han tenido renovaciones significativas en décadas. Los techos y fundaciones se están desmoronando, techos que gotean y el cableado eléctrico es muy antiguo y debe ser arreglado.

Nuestros estudiantes también necesitan aulas modernas y seguras, laboratorios de ciencias, tecnología educativa y bibliotecas actualizadas; de lo contrario, estarán en desventaja al competir para un cupo en universidades y carreras profesionales.

No podemos depender del gobierno estatal para solucionar estos problemas por nosotros. ¡Debemos tomar medidas para mejorar nuestras escuelas locales hoy!

Vota Sí en la Medida E – Para Reparar y Mejorar las Escuelas de Culver City
Únase a nosotros para aprobar la Medida E para Escuelas Más Seguras y Mejores en Culver City

¡Sí! Apoyo la Medida E. Por favor, añada mi nombre a su lista pública de patrocinadores

Nombre _____

Título _____

(solo con fines de identificación)

Organización _____

Teléfono _____

Correo Electrónico _____

Donaciones

Por favor, haga los cheques a nombre de:
Comité por Escuelas Excelentes de Culver City - Sí a la E
P.O. Box 1153, Culver City, CA 90232

ExcellentCulverCitySchools.org

¿Tiene preguntas o comentarios adicionales?
Póngase en contacto con la campaña en
excellentsculvercityschools@gmail.com