



From Assemblymember Jean Fuller

## The Fuller Connection

Serving Constituents of the 32nd Assembly District



Vol.1 Issue 6

July 2007



### The Fuller Connection

Welcome to *The Fuller Connection*. This e-newsletter provides updates and information on what is happening in the State Capitol and the 32nd Assembly District. As your Assemblymember, I am committed to providing my constituents with the necessary tools to stay informed. Please feel free to contact me on any issues that may be of interest to you, as I highly value your input on these important matters. It is an honor to serve as your Assembly

representative.

I proudly represent portions of Kern and San Bernardino Counties, including Bakersfield, Ridgecrest, Tehachapi, Taft, Kern River Valley and the Frazier Mountain communities.

### In This Issue...

- Legislation May Lead To Higher Gas Prices
- Californians Deserve A Responsible Budget
- Tax Increase Is No Health Care Cure
- Celebrating America's Independence
- Partners In The Community
- UC Merced Enrollment Increases
- Around The District

### Legislation May Lead To Higher Gas Prices

Assembly Democrats engaged in finger pointing and partisan political stunts at a time when Californians are demanding some relief from the high prices of gasoline.

On June 21st, Democrats passed three measures (Assembly Bills 868, 1552 and 1610) out of the Assembly as their solution to rising gas prices in California. The bills require new government studies and reports, force businesses to release confidential information, and establish burdensome inspection requirements on the refining industry. Rather than address the record-high cost of gasoline in the state, the measures could cause prices to climb even higher.



These three pieces of legislation will do nothing but create a massive new state bureaucracy and make it even more difficult to produce oil and gas in the state. Rather than increase the size of our state government, lawmakers should focus on solutions that will encourage more fuel supply in California, promote alternative energy sources and lower prices at the pump.

Lawmakers could immediately lower the price of gasoline by reducing government taxes imposed on every gallon of gas sold in the state. Right now, Californians pay state and local sales taxes on top of an 18.4 cent federal excise tax and an 18 cent state excise tax added to every gallon. These taxes significantly drive up transportation costs and make it more difficult for families to drive to work and drop-off their children at school.

Additionally, while California is ranked fourth in the nation for oil production, costly requirements imposed by the state Legislature have caused refining capacity to decline significantly and production to decrease to the lowest levels since 1943. Lawmakers should instead work together to encourage more domestic production of fuel, including alternative sources that emit less pollution and reduce our dependence on foreign oil and gas.

### Californians Deserve A Responsible Budget

Republican and Democrat legislative leaders are continuing to negotiate so we can adopt a responsible and balanced budget for next year. Throughout the process, Assembly Republicans have been very clear about the direction lawmakers should take in crafting a final budget plan that makes sense for our state.



We believe the Legislature's top priority should be to craft a fiscally-responsible budget that makes progress in eliminating both the operating deficit and our long-term financial problems. We must embrace fiscal discipline as our guiding philosophy because year-after-year the state spends more money than it brings in. And I will stand firm in rejecting any attempt to raise taxes on hard-working Californians to pay for the poor spending choices of

### Tax Increase Is No Health Care Cure

Last month, lawmakers in the State Legislature approved Assembly Bill 8, a plan that would impose a \$5 billion tax increase on businesses to pay for universal health insurance coverage in California. I have opposed this costly bureaucratic health plan from the beginning because it would devastate the state's economy and hurt hard-working Californians.



AB 8 would require businesses with two or more workers to pay a new 7.5 percent jobs tax to provide mandatory health care for their workers. Imposing a \$5 billion tax hike on businesses would make it especially difficult for small enterprises to keep their doors open. More significantly, the measure does not lower costs, provide more affordable choices, or make it easier for businesses to afford the

Sacramento politicians.

To restore fiscal order, lawmakers must refrain from embracing costly new programs that expand the size of our government. To date, Democrats have irresponsibly increased the operating deficit by \$1.1 billion during the budget subcommittee process -- growing it to nearly \$2.7 billion. This means we would spend nearly \$2.7 billion more than we would bring in next year, if we adopt their costly new programs. Expanding the size of government would reverse the progress we have made in recent years to reduce the size and severity of the state's deficit.

We should also reject any proposed changes to existing programs that would increase spending and create risky new financial obligations that California cannot afford. Rather, lawmakers should get serious about our spending priorities in order to meet the needs of California's families without increasing the bloated size of the deficit. Assembly Republicans are working hard to ensure that the priorities shared by our communities -- such as vital public safety initiatives -- remain in the final budget agreement.

As negotiations continue this month, I will work with colleagues on both sides of the aisle to craft the on-time, balanced budget the people of California deserve.

### Celebrating America's Independence



The Fourth of July is a celebration of freedom, democracy and independence. It is a day to exhibit our patriotism and to honor our country.

On July 4, 1776 the founders of our nation declared themselves independent from England's monarchy so they could live free. They no longer wanted to live under an oppressive government that left them over-taxed and underrepresented. Instead, they wanted a nation where the will of the people ruled through democracy. The founding fathers risked their lives to achieve independence, and the freedoms they fought for in the American Revolution are the backbone of our nation.

I celebrate this Independence Day with gratitude to our brave men and women who continue to protect our country. I hope you will join me in thanking our troops for defending us and spreading freedom throughout the world. It is because of the strong resolve of American soldiers that other nations now enjoy many of the same freedoms as the United States.

This day is about so much more than enjoying time with family and friends at parades and picnics. Above all else, it's a time to celebrate the ideals that make our nation the envy of the entire world - a government of the people, by the people, and for the people.

As we celebrate America's birthday, it is my wish that Old Glory continues to fly proudly at home and throughout the world as a beacon of freedom far into the future.

rising costs of health care. Forcing businesses to pay a costly new jobs tax would force them to consider raising prices on their customers, laying off employees, or leaving California entirely.

Instead, I support market-based health care reforms as a way to strengthen California's future in a fiscally-responsible manner. These reforms included giving individuals and businesses the power to decide what benefits are included in their health plans, eliminating bureaucratic laws that stand in the way of walk-in neighborhood health clinics, and changing the state's outdated tax laws so Californians can enjoy the benefits of health savings accounts.

It is disappointing that lawmakers rejected fiscally-responsible health care reforms in favor of big government solutions that will bust the budget and hurt California's businesses. I believe that empowering citizens to take control of their health care will lower costs and reduce the number of uninsured. We should not make the mistake of starting a new, under-funded bureaucracy when the state is facing a multi-billion dollar deficit and soaring health care costs.

I'm confident that together we can find a viable solution for our state's health care challenges, while resisting the temptation to embrace overreaching proposals that Californians cannot afford.

### Partners In The Community

#### *The Assistance League of Bakersfield*

The Assistance League of Bakersfield is a nonprofit organization that puts caring and commitment into action through community-based philanthropic programs. 'Operation School Bell,' the League's signature philanthropic operation, provides new clothes to needy school children. Since founded in 1956, the organization has clothed over 130,000 local youngsters. Last year, over 2,200 children were outfitted with new clothing.



Other philanthropic programs include 'Operation Hugs,' which supplies the Bakersfield Fire Department, the California Highway Patrol and local hospitals with teddy bears for traumatized children. 'Operation Opportunity' provides job-appropriate attire for adults who are training to enter or re-enter the work force. Operation 'I'm in Charge' offers elementary school children the opportunity to take self help courses in personal safety.

The majority of the Assistance League's operating funds are raised through the Bargain Box Thrift Shop on 1924 Q Street in Bakersfield, where members sell used clothing and household items donated from the community. In addition, the Assistance League has embarked on two new fundraisers for this year. A cookbook containing over 450 recipes submitted by League members will go on sale in September, and a Masters Golf Tournament package, with only 500 tickets to be sold for \$100 each, will be raffled. The winner will receive two passes to the 2008 Masters Golf Tournament on April 13 and 14, a three-night hotel stay, a rental car, privileges to the 1080 Club, and \$500 towards travel.

Anyone interested in volunteering for the Assistance League of Bakersfield is invited to attend an information meeting at the Chapter House on Wednesday, August 29 at 10 a.m. Please call

(661) 323-0838 to make a reservation.

## UC Merced Enrollment Increases

Student demand for admission to the University of California 's newest campus in Merced has risen dramatically in the university's third year. The number of new Kern County students has increased 216 percent over last year, which means more local students and businesses will be able to take advantage of the educational and research opportunities provided by the university.



The surge of Kern County students is largely due to UC Merced's expanded academic offerings: the university began with nine majors and now has seventeen. Also, as more students from the Valley attend the university each year, the campus has experienced growth in all its educational and extracurricular opportunities. In just the past year, the campus has seen:

- The advent of competitive club sports teams.
- The opening of a new recreation and wellness center.
- 80 new student clubs and organizations.
- The rise of brand-new on-campus housing.
- Expanded research opportunities for undergraduates.
- Plans for a medical school and business school.

The growth of UC Merced is great news for Kern County families and local businesses. The location of the campus in the heart of the Central Valley increases educational access for high school students and contributes to the economic growth of the region. In the southern San Joaquin Valley, where unemployment and poverty rates substantially exceed California averages, campus construction has supported thousands of jobs, stimulated new business development and pumped millions of dollars into the local economy each year. In addition, faculty research initiatives and administrative projects have brought in more than \$30 million in grants and contracts since 2003, primarily from federal agencies.

UC Merced opened on September 5, 2005 as the 10th campus in the University of California system and the first American research university of the 21st century. The campus has a special mission to increase college-going rates among students in the Central Valley . The university is expected to grow rapidly, topping out at approximately 25,000 students within 30 years. For more information, please visit [www.ucmerced.edu](http://www.ucmerced.edu).

## Around The District

### *Art Council Of Kern: Celebrating 30 years of Arts Excellence*

On June 22nd, I attended the art council of Kern's 30th Anniversary. They displayed artwork showcasing the past 30 years of fine art in Kern County.



### *Ridgecrest Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner*

On June 9th, I attended the Ridgecrest Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards Dinner. Several awards were given to the outstanding businesses that contribute so much to the economic landscape of the Indian Wells Valley.

### *Governor's Town Hall Meeting*

On June 14th, I attended Governor Schwarzenegger's Town Hall Meeting, where we discussed our state's healthcare system, the importance of funding our schools, and the call for a new conveyance system for our state's water supply.

### *Kern Veterans Memorial Foundation Patriotic Celebration*

On July 1st, I attended a patriotic service at the Olive Drive Church in Bakersfield. The service was followed by a "Flags of Honor" ceremony in which the public participated in placing over 500 full size flags on the front lawn of the church.

### *July Events:*

**KERN VETERAN'S MEMORIAL "FINAL STEP" CEREMONY.** Tuesday, July 3rd at 10:00 a.m. Aera Energy will be presenting a check to the community, which will complete the funding for the memorial. Location: Truxtun Avenue and S Street (in front of the Amtrak Station), Bakersfield.

**GRAND OPENING OF DESERT VALLEYS FEDERAL CREDIT UNION.** Saturday, July 7th at 10:00 a.m. There will be a free

community BBQ, special prizes and a \$50,000 raffle. Location: 100 E Ward Ave, Ridgecrest.

WINE TASTING FESTIVAL. Friday, July 20th at 5:30 p.m. Proceeds from live and silent auctions will benefit the Tehachapi Performing Arts Center Foundation, the Taar Housing Affordability Fund, and the Chamber of Commerce Building Fund. Cost: \$60. Location: Stone Oaks Ranch, 20950 Oak Glen Ave, Tehachapi. Contact: Greater Tehachapi Chamber of Commerce at (661) 822-4180 or [www.tehachapi.com](http://www.tehachapi.com).

KERVILLE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE. Monday, July 23rd at 3:00 p.m. I will speak to the general membership meeting about pertinent issues in the district. Location: Kernville Chamber Building, 11447 Kernville Rd., Kernville. Contact: (760) 376-2629 or [www.kernvillechamber.org](http://www.kernvillechamber.org).

**The Fuller Connection  
Archive Issues:**

[Volume 1 , Issue 5](#)  
[Volume 1 , Issue 4](#)  
[Volume 1 , Issue 3](#)  
[Volume 1 , Issue 2](#)  
[Volume 1 , Issue 1](#)

**Subscription Info:**

[Subscribe](#) to this eNewsletter

[Unsubscribe](#) from this eNewsletter

**State Capitol**

Room 3098  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
Phone: (916) 319-2032  
Fax: (916) 319-2132

**Bakersfield District Office**

4900 California Ave. Suite 100 - B  
Bakersfield CA, 93309  
Phone: (661) 395-2995  
Fax: (661) 395-3883