

SAN RAMON VALLEY DEMOCRATIC CLUB

Newsletter: November 2011



Come join us to celebrate the holidays with your fellow democrats and our local elected officials

San Ramon Valley Democratic Club, Tri-Valley Democratic Club, Diablo Valley Democratic Club

**Congressman Jerry McNerney, Congressman Pete Stark, Senator Mark DeSaulnier, Assemblywoman Joan Buchanan
And other local elected officials**

Are pleased to host a holiday party on;

**Saturday, December 10, 7:00 Pm – 9:00 PM
IBEW Hall
6250 Village Pkwy
Dublin, CA**

Here is your chance to meet and talk with your elected representatives in a relaxed venue and enjoy the company of fellow democrats.

Our elected officials are bringing the main dishes, our clubs are providing wine, water and soft drinks.

All we ask of you is to bring an appetizer, side dish or dessert.

We will also have a bin for food donations to our local food banks.

Please RSVP no later than Wednesday, December 7, to:

Jim Donnelly (925) 570-9289
Ellis Goldberg (925) 451-4303

james.r.donnelly@comcast.net
ellisg237@aol.com

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Presidents Corner

This is our month of Thanksgiving and I just want to take the time to share with you some of the things I'm thankful for. I'm thankful for the life that I have lived, for all of the wondrous places I've visited and lived and most especially for the people I've met. My wife, son and I have been fortunate to have lived in four different countries on three different continents. These times in our lives were sometimes a challenge but always a learning and enriching experience. I got to better understand what were the values that I hold dear, to appreciate more of what we have in the United States and also what was not so important in the overall scheme of life. This is a great country that we live in with so many things that make it the most sought after place to live on this planet. First among those are our freedoms, our freedom to speak our minds, our freedom to assembly and redress our government, our right to vote and our human rights. I could go on and on and I haven't even begun to mention the natural wonders that abound in these 50 United States. It is impossible to count. Last week Coni and I spent three wonderful days in Yosemite for our annual fall recharge time. Just standing and looking at this magnificent scenery puts our lives and how we fit in the overall scheme of things in perspective.

On top of this I had had the opportunity to spend two weeks in Denmark in October, visiting my daughter and friends made when we lived there in the early 1980's. I also got in some quality fishing time and time to just breathe in the nature. Coni and I were also able to get away to Alaska for a week to celebrate our 45th Anniversary and to also get in some fishing. California fishing will never be the same and I will never catch a bigger fish than the halibut I caught up there (~ 175 lbs).

As much as I love this country I am also very concerned with the direction I see it going. We have a congress that has become almost totally dysfunctional, a wealth inequality that is greater than it has been since the depression and we have a segment of our society that refuses to pay the bill and to keep this country great. Look around you at our infrastructure (roads, bridges, airports, dams, sewage treatment systems, etc.), at our schools and libraries, at our care facilities for those less fortunate. What do you see? I see a crumbling society that will not pay the taxes that are the entry ticket to a civilized society. It is so different from when I was growing up I have to wonder 'What Happened?' We used to be the world leader in so many areas. We had the best schools, the best roads, airports, etc. When I entered the environmental profession in 1971 we were the leading edge in environmental protection. We passed laws to address some of our most serious environmental challenges (The Clean Water Act, The Clean Air, the Rodenticide, Pesticide, Fungicide Registration and Control Act, and so on). We were the world leaders in applying technologies to reduce pollution and its attendant health effects. Now our congress almost every day passes legislation to weaken or do away with these laws, all in the big lie that by doing so they will create jobs. These laws have created millions of jobs in the past and will continue to create new jobs as technologies mature and

change. Now I see Europe, South America countries and even China passing us by in the areas of alternative energy, automobile fuel efficiency and conservation. It is a repeat of what I observed during the 1980's and 1990's when Japan and most of northern Europe put in the air pollution controls that our big corporations said they could not afford. Now China is surpassing us in wind and solar energy and have fuel efficiency standards more stringent than the ones President Obama has just proposed to be in place by 2025. Where is our leadership?

The truth is our congress is not up for sale, it has already been sold. It is up to us as "the People" to wrench it out of the arms of big corporations and the wealthy and return it to its job of taking care of the Common Good. When republicans absolutely refuse to consider raising taxes, or passing meaningful financial reform legislation, they are not doing it for us, the people, they are doing it for the moneyed interests who have bought them. Thank goodness for the "Occupy Movement", at least they are trying to increase awareness and push our legislators to act. They may not be pretty, they may not be the picture perfect example of how to change things, but they are trying to bring about change. The fact that they can assemble and ask for redress of grievances is one of our greatest freedoms. I only hope that people will wake up and listen to their pleas.

For those you are interested I have attached a Kevin Jones article in Mother Jones about the wealth inequality in the U.S in the editorial section. It provides evidence why the 99% are so outraged. The article shows how different the growth of wealth has been for the 1% as compared to the 99% since the Regan revolution. We in the middle class and lower are just plain getting screwed.

As I close I would just like to say that I am thankful for the role you have given me to work to make our club relevant, informative and interesting. I am supported by a great group of board members that truly want to continuously improve our club and to make a difference in local and national politics. We are now beginning to plan activities for next year and we ask for your suggestions as to topics to cover and/or speakers to invite. Please take the time to send me an email with your thoughts about what you would like to see the SRVDC do the same of differently next year. We will consider all reasonable suggestions. Before I close, just a reminder that it is time to renew your dues. Your dues provide with the money to put on the programs each year. We need your support.

Wishing all of you a very happy thanksgiving and all the best during the holiday season and into next year. Have a good month and I hope to see many of you at the Holiday Party on December 10.

Regards,

Jim Donnelly
President, SRVDC

SRVDC Website

Just a reminder that our website <http://srvdems.org/> is up and running. Visit it to see upcoming events and to learn more about the activities of the club. Your comments on our web site, both positive and constructive, are appreciated. Let us know what additional information you would like to see included on the site.

Member Editorials

Each month we invite you to present your views on about any subject you wish to discuss. This is an important way to understand what are major concerns for our members. Surely there are things going on that make your blood boil. Let it out, express your opinions here.

George Miller Meeting at Rossmoor, November 12, 2011

The following was written by Edi Bursan, a member of the Contra Costa County Democratic Party and the Diablo Valley Democratic Club.

The Saturday afternoon meeting hall at Rossmoor was filled by one of the largest Democratic Clubs. In addition State Senator Mark DeSaulnier was present to give the introduction. The new 2010 redistricting puts Rossmoor and all of Walnut Creek in George Miller's district, or as he would say it, puts him in their district. The meeting was well run and questions were fielded in an organized and civil manner that is a welcome change from the more raucous town hall meetings that have been seen in the County. The issues touched on were:

1. Redistricting-

Miller took shots at the Republicans for suing over the new districts made by a committee that gave them equal voice with the Democrats. He also took shots at the Texas Republicans whose Gerrymandering redistricting was tossed out by the courts.

2. Next Election-

He says the Democrats need to pick up 24 seats and that currently the polls indicate that there are 196 Democratic leaning seats and 195 Republican with the rest within a swing.

3. President

He stated that the Obama Administration made significant progress in dealing with credit card laws; health care and that now economist agree that the stimulus did generate millions of jobs and that the problem was that it was not large enough.

4. Health Care

He remains an advocate of the single payer or Medicare for all approach, but feels that the Health Care Act will advance the general condition of the country making Health Care available to more and getting rid of the blockage on pre-existing conditions.

5. Tea Party

The Congressman made it very clear that the Republicans are being pushed around by the Tea Party whose basic goal is to reverse everything that positive policies have accomplished including taking away a woman's reproductive rights, Federal support for education and even improving the infrastructure of transportation. The extremism of the Tea Party has weakened the Republican leadership by making it even harder for them to compromise. He reported that 68% of the public agrees that the approach in the deficit has to be with revenue increases as well as cuts but that the Republicans are unable to respond to other than their extreme wing.

6. Occupy Movement

The most interesting aspects of the meeting were his review of the Occupy Movement. He made it clear that the whole camping out thing has gone on too far, and that the attraction of fringe anarchists is something that will be jumped on to discredit it. He sees the Occupy as having significantly brought to the nation's attention that there is a fundamental moral or value aspect that has been violated by the excessive greed and the lack of accountability of the bankers and other financial institutions that brought the crisis recession upon us. He advised that the media likes to have 3 clear position points and several leaders so that they can tear them down. However, he felt that by having a wider call to the general issues they had made a major impact in the country. "People are now talking about the values and morality of what has happened to the middle class."

He made it clear that the finance folks dropped the fiduciary responsibility to their overall stockholders and customers by moving in for short-term fees rather than real investments in real estate. He used the example of when he went to buy his home in Martinez how the bankers turned him down saying that the first house was too costly for him and a bad investment. He disagreed with the current administration's record on letting the big bankers and others get away without going to jail for massive damage to the society.

7. Deficit

He put the deficit as coming from the Bush administration which he says turned a massive surplus into a massive deficit by fighting and failing to pay for two wars, providing a drug plan that was not paid for and by giving tax breaks that benefited overwhelmingly the wealthier part of the population while exploding the expenses.

8. McConnell

Some of his most strident attacks were on the Republican Leadership and their position that they wanted the President to fail. He equated it with wanting America to fail in order to promote the extreme views of the Republican-Tea Party shift to the far right. He said even when dealing with George W. Bush he never wanted the President to fail.

9. No Child Left Behind

The good aspect of the effort was that it put an emphasis on all the children in a school rather than just the top 25% that could be pushed to help the school grades go up a little. He also felt that there was now more attention on the achievement by inner city poor schools than before. He made it clear that there was a big problem with generating a good test and we are very bad at creating an effective testing method. However, there was progress being made and that we are focusing on education measurement and corrective actions on a statewide level sooner than before. He stated that we need to move past the original bill and parts of it are obsolete.

However, that education is key. He took a shot at the California Exit Exam that only requires seniors to have an 8th grade math and a 10th grade reading level.

Reflecting on part of his overall comments, he said, "When you win in Congress the game is not over, you then have to defend it." Making the analogy that in Congress the game is never really over. For George Miller and his new district, there is no sign of any let up in his drive to continue to lead and be part of the defense of progressive legislation

Yet More Grim Inequality News from the CBO

By [Kevin Drum](#) | Mother Jones, Tue Oct. 25, 2011 3:54 PM PDT

The Congressional Budget Office is out with a timely new report on income inequality, which you can find [here](#). [1] Nickel version: The rich are getting richer, and the rest of us are just kind of drifting along.

The main summary chart is the one on the right. Since 1979, adjusted for inflation, incomes of the broad middle class (solid blue line labeled "21st to 80th percentiles") have increased about 40 percent, which comes to a sluggish 1 percent per year. During the same period, the incomes of the richest 1 percent have increased about 280 percent, or 7 percent per year. This is a pretty familiar chart by now, but one thing to note is that the incomes of the rich are pretty volatile: They drop a lot during recessions, but they also bounce back pretty quickly and regain their high growth rates as soon as the recession is over. This chart only goes through 2007, but the same dynamic has been at work in the aftermath

of the Great Recession: a steep drop followed by an equally steep recovery.

Another set of charts is below. These are a little less familiar and need a bit of explanation. They show Gini inequality coefficients for different kinds of incomes, and the more distorted the chart the higher the inequality.

The top left chart shows the inequality of labor income in 1979 (light blue) and 2007 (dark blue). As you can see, it's moderately unequal, and the level of inequality hasn't changed a lot over the years. Likewise, the bottom right chart shows the inequality of capital gains income. This is extremely unequal, but again, the level of inequality hasn't changed too much. Both the light blue and dark blue lines are pretty close to each other.

The other two charts show business income and capital income, and they're quite different. Both show a fairly heavy amount of inequality, and, more interestingly, they show that the level of inequality has widened dramatically over the past three decades. Business income, which means income going to owners of private businesses, has grown much more concentrated, probably due to the growth of high incomes among privately owned professional firms (law, medicine, and finance). And capital income, which is largely dividends and rental income, has become far more concentrated as well. I'm not quite sure what story this tells, but one thing it tells us for sure is that most of the growth in income since 1979 has been in nonlabor income. Which is to say, not the kind of income that people like you and I get much of.

Figure 2.

Cumulative Growth in Average After-Tax Income, by Income Group

(Percentage change in income since 1979, adjusted for inflation)

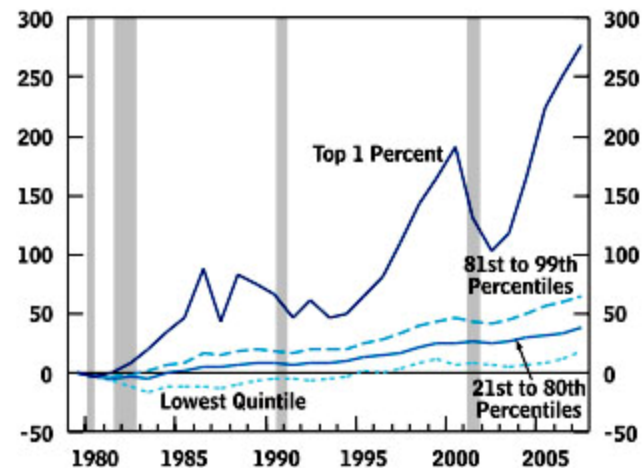
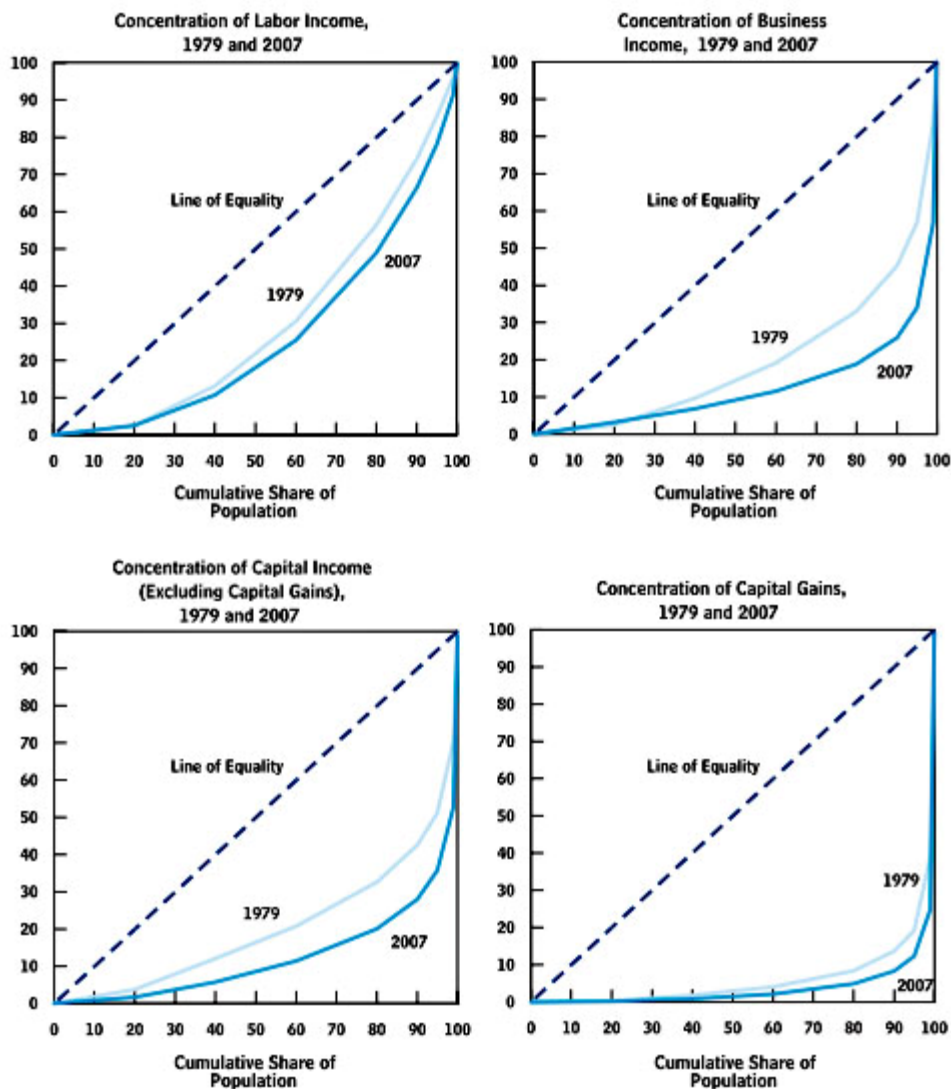


Figure 6.

Concentration of Major Sources of Market Income, 1979 and 2007

(Cumulative share of income, in percent)



Source URL: <http://motherjones.com/kevin-drum/2011/10/yet-more-grim-inequality-news-cbo>

Links:

[1] <http://www.cbo.gov/doc.cfm?index=12485>

Contra Costa County Democratic Party Holiday Party

The Contra Costa County Democratic Party (aka the Central Committee) is holding our annual Holiday party on Thursday, December 15, 2011. Central Committee members as well as members of our county clubs are invited to this pot luck meal and festivities. Come join fellow Democrats and a number of our local elected officials to review this year and talk about plans

for next year. Please bring an appetizer ,main course or dessert to share. The party will provide refreshments.

Thursday, November 15, 7:30 Pm to 10:00 PM

IBEW Local 302, Hall, 1875 Arnold Dr., Martinez, CA 94553

For more information contact Jim Donnelly (925) 570-9289

Reports from our Elected Officials

Congressman Jerry McNerney

McNerney Calls For An Equal Playing Field For All Parties In Bay Delta Plan



Nov. 15, 2011

Washington, D.C. – Today, Rep. Jerry McNerney (CA-11) submitted his own comment regarding the controversial Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) relating to the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP). This period for public comment followed the ongoing efforts of Rep. McNerney and other Members of Congress from the region as they repeatedly called on the Interior Department to rescind the document, noting that it was developed behind closed doors and that it gives water export agencies south of the Delta and in Southern California unprecedented influence over an important public process concerning California's precious fresh water supplies.

"The Bay Delta Plan has moved forward without the input of the people of the Delta communities. The farmers, families and businesses in the Delta stand to lose their livelihood and way of life if water is stolen from our backyard," said Rep. McNerney.

McNerney has met with key officials who have crafted the BDCP and continued on by pressuring the Department of the Interior to retract its support of the MOA. McNerney and other Members have written to Sec. Ken Salazar to express their objections to the current BDCP.

"We have to have a clean, healthy Delta. Any plan that includes a canal would turn our Delta into a salty marsh, costing the community millions of dollars and countless jobs. I will continue to fight to even the playing field and bring our voice to the table," said Rep. McNerney.

The text of Rep. McNerney's public comment is below.

Bureau of Reclamation

Bay-Delta Office

801 I Street, Ste. 140
Sacramento, CA 95814

To whom it may concern:

The public comment period on the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) signed between state and federal agencies and south-of-Delta water contractors is a critical time for the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP). I believe that BDCP officials should extend the comment period and rescind their support for the MOA, and I hope that state and federal policy makers will seize this opportunity to make major changes to the BDCP. As the MOA illustrates, the current BDCP and its focus on constructing a massive peripheral canal or similar system will benefit south-of-Delta water users at the expense of Delta communities.

As the agencies evaluate public comments and weigh the future of the BDCP, I wish to highlight the Economic Sustainability Plan (ESP) for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta recently adopted by the Delta Protection Commission. As the ESP makes clear, a canal and related proposals “are clearly incompatible with economic sustainability at their current levels.” The BDCP must meet its obligation to fulfill the state’s co-equal goals while also helping, not harming, the economic development of the Delta region.

The Delta has a long and proud agricultural history, and farming continues to be the cornerstone of the Delta economy. Delta farming generates hundreds of millions of dollars in revenue and supports thousands of jobs. According to the ESP, a 15,000 cfs isolated conveyance facility would diminish water quality and leave a large footprint, causing at least \$30 million in annual agricultural losses and possibly far more. Other proposals associated with the BDCP would cost tens of millions in additional agricultural losses, and the deterioration of Delta water quality threatens the tourism and recreation economies and could dramatically increase the cost of treating water resources. In its current form, the BDCP will deal a devastating blow to the economy and culture of an entire region.

Better alternatives exist to the BDCP’s deeply flawed proposals for a canal or tunnel system, but they will only receive the consideration they deserve if the MOA is rescinded and the BDCP is transformed into a process that is fair, transparent, and places the best needs of the Delta on par with other interests. As I have repeatedly expressed, I believe that the MOA gives south-of-Delta entities special privileges that are wholly inappropriate. Decisions that will forever affect Delta communities should only be made in close consultation with elected officials and key stakeholders from the Delta region.

The Delta Counties Coalition (DCC) recently sent correspondence to senior BDCP officials highlighting 10 issues that must be addressed if the BDCP is to succeed. I believe it is critically important that state and federal agencies respond to each of these concerns in a detailed,

substantive, and timely manner. I also wish to express my strong support for many of the principles outlined by the DCC, including but not limited to:

- 1. A reevaluation of the timeline for completing the BDCP – The BDCP is one of the most complex environmental restoration initiatives ever undertaken. The current timeline is unrealistic and should be modified so that science – not the whims of water export contractors – guide key BDCP decisions.*
- 2. A withdrawal of the MOA – The MOA gives unprecedented, unfair, and improper influence to south-of-Delta water contractors. The BDCP must be changed so that in-Delta stakeholders can participate on a level playing field.*
- 3. Serious consideration of non-diversion alternatives – A peripheral canal or similar system will devastate the Delta region's economy. The BDCP must make a good faith effort to consider other options and should support vigorous statewide investments in water conservation, water efficiency, and other innovative projects.*
- 4. Ensure that local officials have a key role in the process – The BDCP does not provide a meaningful role for local officials in the decision making process. This flaw must be addressed if the BDCP is to succeed.*
- 5. Support investments in local levees – As the ESP states, "the levee system is the foundation on which the entire Delta economy is built. Therefore, a sustainable Delta economy requires a sustainable levee system." State and federal policymakers should support immediate investments in local levees.*

Thank you for your attention to my comments. I hope they will receive full consideration as state and federal agencies consider the changes that are so badly needed to the BDCP.

Sincerely,

*Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress*

Congressman George Miller

HR358 Part of GOP's destructive War on Women October 13, 2011 1:38 PM

The House is voting today on a Republican bill to limit reproductive health care services for women.

This is an extreme and destructive effort, and it attacks a problem that does not exist. Federal funds are not used for abortion, except for rape, incest or life-threatening situations. But that's not enough for them. This bill goes beyond federal funds, and takes away the right of women to spend their own money on the health care they choose. But that's not enough for them.

Attacking the rights of women is shameful. But it is also an obsession of Republican leaders in Congress.

Under their legislation, women purchasing private insurance plans in the new health exchanges set up in the Affordable Care Act using their own money, would not be able to purchase a full range of coverage for reproductive health care – including coverage of abortions. Their bill would also allow states to more easily attack insurance coverage of essential benefits like contraception.

Specifically, the legislation:

- Unnecessarily Re-Opens The Debate on Abortion That Occurred in 2010. This bill represents an attack on the compromise contained in the Affordable Care Act (ACA) on abortion. The ACA is consistent with long-standing federal law by prohibiting the use of federal funds to pay for abortions (except in cases of rape or incest, or when the life of the woman would be endangered). The Act requires two separate premium payments for those women and families who receive federal subsidies and choose health coverage that includes abortions. The Act is clear – no portion of federal subsidies may be used to pay for the portion of comprehensive health coverage that is purchased in state exchanges that relates to abortions. The compromise was endorsed by such pro-life groups as the Catholic Health Association. And yet now this compromise is being thrown out the window by this bill.
- Restricts, for the First Time, How Millions of Women with Private Insurance Can Spend Their Own Private Dollars In Purchasing Health Insurance. This GOP bill takes unprecedented steps far beyond the Hyde Amendment. Beginning in 2014, the bill prohibits the millions of women and their families who are in the Health Exchanges and are receiving federal subsidies from purchasing any health plan that includes abortion coverage – even if they are using their own private dollars to purchase the portion of coverage relating to abortions. This prohibition will affect most women in the Exchanges, since a large majority will be receiving subsidies. It is unlikely that insurers would then offer these policies to those women in the Exchanges not receiving subsidies, since they will be a minority.
- Would Likely Shut Down Private Insurance Market for Abortion Coverage for The Millions of Women in the Exchanges. Despite the claims of the bill's supporters to the contrary, the net effect of the bill's provisions would likely be to shut down the private market for abortion coverage for women in the Exchanges. It is likely insurers wouldn't offer any health plans that include abortion coverage to those in the Exchanges, since the majority of families would be prohibited from purchasing them. It is also likely insurers wouldn't offer separate abortion coverage – so-called "rider" policies – because the experience in the states where these "rider" policies have been offered has shown that the market for them is not viable. Indeed, a number of experts have predicted that, if this GOP bill were enacted, there would be no option for women and their families to purchase abortion coverage in the Exchanges.

Congressman John Garamendi

Congressman Garamendi Joins Congressional Leaders Urges "Supercommittee" to End Subsidies for Big Oil Corporations

November 2, 2011 7:00 PM

As these Corporate Welfare recipients are on pace for \$132 billion in profits in 2011, Republicans put student aid and retirement security on the chopping block

Standing in front of the Capitol, Congressman Garamendi joins Senator Menendez, Boxer, and other Members of Congress in calling for an end to oil subsidies.

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, in light of exorbitant oil and gas industry profits, Congressman John Garamendi (D-Fairfield, CA), a Member of the House Natural Resources Committee, joined other Members of Congress and leaders of conservation groups Oceana and the Sierra Club in urging the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction to end subsidies for the oil industry. Doing so now will help protect vital economic programs for hardworking Americans including Pell grants, Medicare, Social Security, and veterans benefits. The Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction, often called "the Supercommittee," is charged with issuing a formal recommendation by November 23, 2011 to reduce U.S. deficits by at least \$1.5 trillion over the next ten years.

The five biggest oil companies took in 70 percent more profit this fiscal quarter than they did in the same quarter in 2010, and their earnings for 2011 are projected to go up by 74 percent to \$132 billion. At the same time, the oil and gas industry receives an estimated \$10 billion in subsidies every year from American taxpayers. While Republicans in Congress have consistently voted to preserve these inappropriate subsidies, Democrats continue to fight to end them.

Today, Congressman Garamendi pointed out that "subsidies are designed to help fledgling industries to grow, and after 95 years, the incredibly profitable oil industry no longer needs these training wheels."

Garamendi continued, "Public policy is about choices -- and this is an easy one to make. Instead of lavishing billions more on billion-dollar oil companies, 'the Supercommittee' should focus on creating jobs and strengthening the middle class."

Congressman Garamendi and House Democrats are advocating for passing of the [American Jobs Act](#) and the [Make It In America agenda for jobs](#)

State Senator Mark DeSaulnier

Senator DeSaulnier Honored as a "2010 Champion of Summer Learning"

November 17, 2011

Senator Mark DeSaulnier (D-Concord) was recognized this week by the National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) for his efforts to preserve and expand summer learning programs.

The award "2010 Champion of Summer Learning" was presented by NSLA interim CEO Matthew Boulay.

"I am honored to receive this distinction," said DeSaulnier. "After school and summer learning programs play a vital role in our public education system. These programs assure that children do not fall behind educationally during summer months. They also provide a safe environment for children in the hours after school and in the summer while parents are at work."

DeSaulnier authored SB 429, which was signed into law this year to boost enrollment in summer learning programs. SB 429 will achieve this by offering longer program hours, and allowing additional children access to summer learning programs by creating greater flexibility with state and federal after school dollars.

In 2008, DeSaulnier created the State Legislative Task Force on Summer and Intersession Enrichment. The task force held several hearings, and in 2009, DeSaulnier authored SB 798 to direct more of our federal after school dollars to year-round programs and more effectively target students' and families' needs.

NSLA recognized DeSaulnier and four others whose support has increased public investment in innovative summer learning programs for low-income children.

The other four awardees are:

- NASA administrator Charles Bolden.
- Former Mayor Bill White of Houston, TX.
- Mary Ronan, Superintendent of Cincinnati Public Schools.
- Mayor John Peyton of Jacksonville, FL.

The mission of the NSLA is to connect and equip schools and community organizations to deliver quality summer learning programs to our nation's youth to help close the achievement gap

Assembly Woman Joan Buchanan

Assemblymember Buchanan Announces the Submission of California's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant Application

Sacramento - Assemblymember Buchanan is proud to announce that Governor Brown, along with State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tom Torlakson and State Board of Education Chair Michael Kirst submitted the application for the federal [Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant](#) (RTT-ELC) on October 17, 2011. The goal of the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant is to ensure children entering kindergarten are prepared to learn and succeed by increasing access to high-quality early learning programs, especially for children with high needs.

"As the Assembly representative to Early Learning Quality Improvement System Advisory Committee, the Early Learning Advisory Committee and a former school board member, I understand the importance of quality early learning programs to student success and was happy to write a letter in support of the state's application." Assemblymember Buchanan stated. "Research confirms the social and economic benefits of early education for children and families, as well as society. Children who attend effective early learning programs are better prepared for kindergarten, have stronger language skills in the first years of elementary school and are less likely to repeat a grade or drop out of school. These gains are maintained throughout high school." Buchanan continued.

This grant application gives California the opportunity to receive \$100 million in federal funding over a four-year period to achieve the goals of the RTT-ELC. States have until October 19 to submit their application, with grants being awarded in December 2011.

Membership Drive

It is that time of year again, time to renew your membership in the San Ramon Valley Democratic club. Dues are only \$25/person or \$40/family. These dues support us in presenting our programs throughout the year. Also, as this year is an election year we need your dues to help our local candidates in their efforts to get re-elected. The primary goal of the SRVDC is to aid in informing voters and concerned citizens about issues of the day and how they may impact our lives. The SRVDC serves the communities of Alamo, Blackhawk, Danville and San Ramon. We provide a vehicle for persons interested in your communities to come together for

interesting and informative meetings about issues facing all of us. We provide a voter registration and information table at the Danville Farmer's Market and other venues. We also send out a monthly newsletter presenting updates from our elected officials and provide a forum for our members to express their views.

We need your continued support for these efforts. Dues are \$25/ person and \$40 per family. Please complete the form below and mail it to address below:

Renewal or New Membership

Singly or Family Membership

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Email _____

Home Phone _____ Cell phone _____

Please indicate the activities that interest you

____ Voter Registration

____ Get-out-the-vote activities

____ Fundraising

____ Publicity

____ Local Government

____ Newsletter

____ Hospitality

____ Programs & Functions

Make checks payable to: San Ramon Valley Democratic Club

**P.O. Box 1218
Danville, CA 94526**