



PAC Meeting Minutes

Chair: Alex Walker

March 11, 2014

7:00 – 9:00

- I) Announcements
  - a. 930am-130pm PAC endorsement presentations and discussion this Saturday March 15 at the Women's Building.
    - i. Betty Lee at 930 will be our first candidate, others to follow including the Pro and Con sides of Prop B waterfront height limits, and judicial candidates.
  
- II) California Association of Voting Officials (CAVO), Brent Turner – Secure Voting Systems
  - a. Milk Club was the first democratic club in the US to endorse open source voting. (Open to inspection, not open to manipulation)
  - b. Findings from my Past Decade of Research: If you have an electronic voting system (we do) then you buy systems from set manufactures who use secret software, auditing is impossible. SF elections systems cost \$13 million for insecure systems provided by oligarchical manufactures. We're advocating for a completely transparent open source election system with no intellectually protected property. Los Angeles is implementing the first open system, but it may not be fully open source. CAVO advocates General Public License open source systems, the "gold standard of open source free use."
  - c. SB360 recently was signed into law. It paves the way to creating and certifying open sources voting systems without regards to the federal certification. Now California can bypass the feds and create its own open source voting system that can be used by all the counties. We want John Arnst, head of SF Elections to lead on this issue. Eventually we'll be able to vote on our smartphone.
  - d. Obama recently put together a report and the committee putting the information together left out information about open source. Microsoft and the intellectual property establishment lobby against it.
  - e. 11 counties, no bay area and all smaller ones have joined California Association of Voting Officials (CAVO)

**Motion to allow CAVO use of the Milk Club logo to encourage open source voting passes unanimously.**

- III) Proposed Sugar Beverage Tax
  - a. Proponent, Sup Eric Mar:
    - i. This tax would fund \$31 million annual healthy community programs. 40% towards schools for healthy food and exercise programs, 25% for food access, 25% for parks and water, and 10% to groups fighting for change. Coalition of food groups fighting for equitable access to healthy



foods. 1/3 of Americans will have diabetes if we don't stem obesity.

Sugary beverages are a critical part of the obesity epidemic and associated diseases. Tobacco taxes were an effective tool in reducing smoking. We have strong support from health organizations and labor organizations. I hope you will stand with us and prevent big soda from misleading us. This is a community mandate for healthy food choices and better food/liquid options. Soda companies are marketing to our kids and selling ever greater sizes. It is cheaper to go into a corner store and buy a soda than milk.

- b. Rascoe Mapps from Stop Unfair Beverage Taxes, Coalition for an Affordable City:
  - i. They exclude diet sodas and coffee drinks, this legislative isn't a soda tax, it's unfair and selective. It's also a regressive tax, and it will impact local business more than the national drink manufactures. And spreading of tax costs will impact and raise grocery costs for everyone, even when you're not buying a sugary drink. That brings me to affordability. Every little costs and extra tax adds up. One year we're losing money on a yacht race, the next year we're implementing a regressive tax. Obesity is out of control. But access to healthier options and the money to afford those options are how you serve obesity. This is not about whether or not we like soda companies, this is about whether or not we should adopt a regressive tax that will impact low income communities the most.
- c. Responses
  - i. Eric: If you look at the data, people are healthy in the affluent areas of SF but poverty in SF and low income areas are drastically affected. Areas with the larges communities of colors face the worst health conditions, consume the worst food, and have rates of obesity as bad as the nation. This bill helps creates points of access for healthy affordable food choices. Follow the money is what I always say; they're backed by big soda, and we're backed by grassroots organizations. This tax is needed for equitable health reasons. Just education and access to better choices don't counter all the advertisements directed at youth. 2 cents per oz. will deter about 25% of consumption.
  - ii. If you look at this map of low income areas in the city you see a clear association with obesity. But it is not genuine to call it a soda issue. This map represents an affordability issue. I got a call by a small business owner in a low income community who thanked me for my work on this issue because he's concerned about how he'll deal with it. I applaud Sup Mar's efforts to seek innovative solutions to obesity and equitable healthy food access, but a regressive tax isn't the way to go.
- d. Questions:
  - i. David Wagner, Sup Mar is this regressive tax going to disproportionately affect low income communities, and if so why is that a legitimate use of state power? We estimate with Yale's help that a 2 cent tax per oz. will reduce consumption 25% and will direct funds to counter this three to four



decade long takeover by big soda and poor foods. David to Rascoe: Do you think the state should make it more expensive to do something harmful? Rascoe: It seems like your trying to be more philosophical than economical in an everyday sense.

- ii. How are you working with Washington DC on this issue? Many national programs are focused on education. 50 years of tobacco reduction after surgeon general's warning shows that education is not the only means of success, many tools have to be employed and taxes are an important part of that. Big soda pours tons of money into small towns who have thought about soda taxes. Rascoe responds: Solutions come from making healthy choices affordable, not by making the poor poorer by removing their low cost consumption options.
- iii. How do you ensure this promotes healthy access and how do you ensure it reduces consumption? Yale, Harvard and UCSF research. Some will reduce the amount they drink, a few will stop drinking, and more people will make other choices that don't cost as much. Rascoe: We have real case studies that show soda taxes don't work.

IV) Drug Policy Alliance, Laura Thomas

- a. We are sponsoring three bills in the state legislator:
  - i. AB 1535 creates a new solution to accidental drug overdose. More people die from accidental overdose than in car crashes. Most overdoses are from opioids, and there is an antidote which works immediately, but a prescription is required. We want to make this overdose medicine more available and in pharmacies.
  - ii. AB 1743 would allow pharmacist to sell up to 30 syringes to an adult without a prescription.
  - iii. SB1010 will address the sentencing discrimination between crack and powder cocaine. Racial disparities driven by the differences in crack and powder sentencing. This bill will drop all crack sentences to match powder mandates.

**Motion to support all three of these bills and recommend the GM also do so passes unanimously**

V) New Business

- a. CA State Dem Party Convention in Los Angeles, our party platform now is to ban fracking and legalize marijuana.
- b. State Party has a new renter caucuses

Motion to Adjourn passes at 9:05 PM