

Attendee and Simulcast Viewer Questions

April 13th, 2017 Event: Setting the Course: California Leadership in the Age of Trump Panel discussion with Senator Bill Monning, Assemblyman Mark Stone, and California Secretary of Natural Resources John Laird. Questions were collected by email, text, and hand-written forms—all of which are presented here.

Environment

- Currently fracking water is used on agricultural crops. Non-profit groups were trying to get a representative to author a bill on this but no one was willing and the Governor was also unwilling. Acknowledging the power of the oil and gas companies, how would you propose this use of toxins to water our food crops be eliminated?
- What is preventing PERS and STRS from divesting from fossil fuels?
- The coastal commission has seemed to drop the ball lately (I.e. Cemex sand mine, sea walls left up for beyond their permits). Some would argue development interests have taken over. What would your advice be to push the coastal commission in more environmentally responsible way?
- There was once a limit on petroleum products of the US being sold in foreign countries. Can California restrict petroleum products to California? For example, San Ardo oil extraction, can it be limited to end customers in California through regulation or legislation?
- How can we make renewable energy 50% by 2025 or earlier?
- Huge amounts of current and future marine environmental condition information are available in real and modelled data, e.g. ocean-atmosphere models used by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. This includes socially relevant things like change in climate regulation and ecosystem service provision. What are the next steps in better quantifying marine natural capital and other marine and maritime financial and wellbeing quantities in terms that are influential for policy? E.g. at CA state level in particular?

- Is the cap and trade system working and what is current perspective on that versus a simpler carbon tax, in relation to getting a national system in place?
- The fossil fuel industry has been very good at blaming the environmental problems on individuals, asking us all to take "personally responsible". For example corporations came up with the term "litterbug" and funded the "Crying Indian" advertisement because people were starting to push for bottle bills, where corporation would be asked to be responsible for the lifecycle of their products. Why don't we demand that the corporation take responsibility for their pollution? Why don't we MAKE THE POLLUTERS PAY? Yes, individuals can drive electric cars (if the corporations build them) , and get solar, etc. but the real change has to come from changes at the corporate level. WHEN are We the People, going to take our country back from the domination of corporation over our lives? Any ideas?
- There has been a lot of discussion about reducing carbon emissions. However, methane emissions are caused by animal agriculture. Would you comment on steps which California can, is, or should be doing in order to combat this massive issue which is rarely spoken about?
- How will you help local municipalities encourage renewable industries when national free trade policies are inhibiting these efforts (ex: shutdown of Solar in Sand City)
- New technologies are available that make nuclear power less of an environmental threat - do nuclear power plants have a role to play in reducing CA's carbon emissions?
- What role do you see residential rooftop solar playing in CAs energy portfolio, and what are decision makers doing to make this attainable?
- How long will various types of renewable energy technologies have to be in operation to offset their manufacturing footprint?
- How can CA create better multimedia messaging to provide Californians with even more effective, empowering stories & links to proactive green innovations & alternatives for daily living?

- Where does the oil in California come from? Fracking, pipe in, coming in by ship?
- You all spoke about renewable energy and innovative alternative solutions. California has one of the world's largest surpluses in Wave Energy. With investments at our coastal universities, can CA lead the way in this untapped renewable energy?
- Given that nitrogen is an essential plant nutrient, and use of synthetic nitrogen leads to the emission of nitrous oxide (N₂O) a greenhouse gas 298 times as potent as CO₂, what steps do you propose that California take to address this "nutrition/emissions" dilemma? N₂O is also the leading unregulated Ozone Depleting Substance (ODS). The geobiochemical nitrogen cycle has been disrupted by human use of synthetic nitrogen and is a climate change and ozone layer threat. Will California be a leader, as a leading agricultural producer, in thoughtful and responsibility, addressing this threat? What are your thoughts on how to address the "Food Awakening" about synthetic nitrogen?
- We need to get DOGGR into the same discussions with the SGMA people. State officials representing DOGGR in King City told people not to worry about the future need to use the aquifer that is the reservoir for untreated wastewater coming out of San Ardo because Salinas valley Ag is being converted to residential use and because MCWD is building a desalination project in Moss Landing. These reasons are not likely scenarios and the source of these statements was not named, "alternative facts." How can we get State regulatory agencies on the same page for sustainable water management?

Good Governance/Politics

- Important issues seem infinitely complex. Candidates are evasive; we can't know their motive, nor reality of the compromise. Even the depth of issue. Therefore do we voters really make optimal, knowledgeable choice? Seems the Trump methodology may be as good as any?
- What are decision makers in CA doing today to get money out of politics (be specific), and how might this influence national policy?

- When will the California legislature confront the ethical issues connected to money and influence? Climate change is a social justice issue as well as an environmental issue - allowing oil money to influence government is clearly unethical!
- What is the Democratic Party doing about nepotism in the Trump administration?
- What kind of political leverage would an advisory vote by Californians for political independence gain (or would it?) with the Trump government/Red State America? This is not a question about political or economic viability, but the messaging such a vote might have if a significant number said “yes, we’d rather be independent than follow Trump.”
- How can we bring to the table a constructive discussion between both parties in these times of high political radicalization?
- This overview on the environment and climate change is encouraging, but a lot of our problems are local. We are still losing large numbers of trees, other habitat, and open spaces fast. A controlling number of our city and county planners are not very interested in these issues impacting their decisions. Many of our city and county commissions and officials ignore the E.I.R’s they are supposed to seriously consider for example. Some even routinely ignore local laws when it comes to the environment. Other than running for office ourselves, how can we hold them accountable without spending a fortune to sue?
- How will Ca leadership deal with the Trump administration policies on the issues of fracking, waste water injection and protecting the water supply and public health?

Urban-Rural Political Divide

- The supermajority of state democrats by-in-large represent urban districts. As rural representatives, where do you find coherence and common ground with your urban colleagues on the rural policy agenda?

Inequality

- The statistics on percentage of citizens with graduate degrees in the region is of course something for which we can be proud. However, in the Salinas Valley only 7% of Latinos have a bachelor's degree or higher while many communities are 99% Latino. What ideas do you have for addressing this social inequality that ultimately translates to economic inequality?

Science

- How do we get our national leaders to consider findings in science in their deliberations when they seem so determined to ignore these facts?

Transportation

- What are the thoughts of the panel members on developing a light rail to serve the whole of the Monterey Bay?
- In terms of traffic along high 1 to and from Marina to Monterey and back again; some of which being people from the Salinas area going to work on the peninsula. What is the prospect for a light rail going from Salinas to Seaside, alongside Blanco Road and Reservation Rd (or partly through Fr. Ord), going over the Salinas Rives, or skirting around it? (It would cut down on the traffic, pollution, and shorten people's commuting time considerably).
- We need a high speed rail system running up and down the coast (as well as across the country). Do you think it might be a possibility in the foreseeable future?

2020 Presidential Election

- Who are the potential presidential nominees for 2020? What do you think of Gavin Newsom?

Geopolitics

- How can that state of California influence foreign policy of federal policy to reduce the war cycles across the globe?
- What is California doing about protections from Korean attacks?
- I am very concerned about the nuclear threats coming from North Korea. What kind of protection is currently in place in and on the surrounding area of California to protect our state from any threat of nuclear bombs or any other devastating threat coming from North Korea? Is there any plan of a protection policy to protect our people of California?

Education

- Most population is middle income bracket. It has been for a while they don't receive RELEVANT public education. Even if there is \$\$ going to education, there needs to be a change in the education system. Make it relevant! Make it evolutionary!
- Say something about state of education in California—it is bad and it is the 5th largest economy in the world (California's GDP is almost equivalent to France's); California ranks 7th from the bottom in quality of schools in the country.

Housing

- How can we make housing affordable on the Monterey peninsula?

Taxes/Budgets

- Given that California's contribution to federal tax revenues is greater than what the state receives from the federal government and that the federal government is working against California's values on so many issues, including immigration, diversity, climate change, environmental regulations, etc., do you believe California should take any steps in regard to our states tax revenues?
- How about taxes on movies, cable TV, and other non-essentials to help fund public education, k-grad school? We will need teachers, doctors, professors, etc.
- How do we raise the California budget for EPA and public school funding when national budgets for those things get cut?
- Why does it seem like my electricity bill keeps going up?
- My water bill just went from \$35-40 a month to \$115 per month. As a senior, why am I punished to pay up in five years instead of spreading it out for twenty?

Regulations

- I love the idea of putting in a floor for regulations to protect immigration and environment. What if the federal government does remove health care or disaster relief or other services from California? At what point would the floor be infeasible?

Healthcare

- Can you speak to SB562 single payer healthcare in California? Do you support it? Where are we currently? Do you think it's possible/doable?
- I would love for "Medicare for All" to be the law in CA. But will SB562 have support from Gov. Brown, and will its passage change what Medicare recipients currently enjoy? How would it be financed?
- I am from Santa Cruz and I have a question for our Representatives particularly Senator Monning: In response to GOP attempts to dismantle the Affordable Care Act, SB562 "The Healthy California Act" has been introduced. Which aims to provide healthcare to all of California's residents. My question is do you support this bill?
- Please comment on SB562, Healthy California ACA, and single payer healthcare

Activism/What Can I Do?

- Most of us feel better about ourselves when we help others. How about a "Make a Difference" weekend every month?
- We are grateful to have great representation in California. How can we make a difference nationally when the advice we hear is to contact our representatives? They aren't the problem.
- From a political viewpoint, do you think the March for Science next week will have an impact on Washington and/or local policy-makers?