

All Politics Are Local

August 2023



With all of the major problems facing California, one would think that the governor and his merry band of legislators would be diligently passing legislation to solve them. Forget about homelessness, taxpayer exodus, open borders, a deficit budget, dying cities, no cash bail, smash and grab robberies, wildfires, lack of water storage, decaying infrastructure... (but don't get me started).

The full-time California legislature, which has a one-party supermajority, introduced a record 2,632 bills in 2023. In 2022, 1,166 bills were sent to the governor, who signed 997 of them and vetoed 169 of them. The legislature has until September 14, 2023 for each house to finalize passing the 2023 bills. Given the exorbitant number of bills introduced this year, a good many of them will likely pass into law. Compare that with states like Texas that holds regular sessions every other year and passes about 25 bills into law or Florida, with its 60-day regular legislature session that passed approximately 200 laws in 2023, including a Parental Rights in Education bill.

Without fail, the more bills the California legislature passes, the more rights we lose and the more money it costs us. The operative principle seems to be: When something doesn't work, throw more money at it. Informed taxpayers wisely vote these big spenders out of office.

The California legislature recently returned from vacation, determined to make up for lost time. It seems they now want our children. Yes, not satisfied with renaming schools and removing statues, parental rights and local control are under attack.

Some of the more egregious bills that have passed the Assembly and are soon to be voted on by the Senate include:

AB665 – Minors (12 years or older) can consent to mental health treatment/counseling or to residential services without parent consent or notification at the discretion of the “professional” person. Passed Assembly, currently waiting on a Senate vote. Also, known as the “legal kidnapping” bill.

AB957 – Refusal to affirm a child's gender identify would be a presumption for custody in favor of the gender-affirming parent/guardian. Passed Assembly, currently waiting on a Senate vote.

AB1078 – The state, rather than local school boards, would dictate materials and curricula (in particular the role and contributions of culturally and racially diverse groups, including various genders) used in schools. With penalties, if violated. Currently in the Senate Appropriations Committee but will probably be voted on before the deadline.

AB1314 – A bill to require schools to notify parents if their child identifies as non-conforming or as a transgender remains in an Assembly Committee where it will probably die.

Some school districts have unwritten policies that restrict educators from disclosing students' gender identities to their parents without their consent. Teachers who feel that parental rights in these matters should prevail and have been terminated are being defended in the courts. At the same time, Sacramento is siccing the attorney general on school districts that are implementing policies that require notification.



So, if up until now, you have entrusted your children and grandchildren to public schools, you might think twice. Maybe you got a taste of what was going on during the covid lockdowns. Maybe you were just glad to get the kids back in school. Trust no more. If you voted, chances are you hadn't a clue about whom your candidates for school board were or what they stood for. If you voted, chances are you hadn't a clue of how much control the state superintendent had over the curriculum being taught in your local schools. If you voted, chances are you wouldn't believe the pet projects and costly bills your assemblyperson and state senator supported. If you voted, chances are you never dreamed of how much control the governor could wield by declaring a state of emergency, while ignoring the same restrictions himself. Yes, one man or one woman can turn your life upside down.

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Action - Stay informed. Research your local candidates and vote accordingly. Share information with your friends and neighbors. Attend or watch live stream school board and city council meetings. Speak out and send emails to your school trustees, council members and representatives. Keep up to date on legislation. (<http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov>). Know the names of your federal and state legislators and how to contact them. Then contact them!

