



Redistricting Reform Moves Forward!



Feb. 1 Press Conference announcing Speaker Fabian Núñez's Support of Redistricting Reform. CCC's Ned Wigglesworth speaking.

Can our state lawmakers give up the ultimate power to draw their own

districts? Well, 2007 might just be the magical year.... Speaker Fabian Núñez announced, "The current system is indefensible. Legislators should not cherry-pick their votes."

Redistricting reform will be part of a larger reform package that will involve term limit adjustment. Term limits now limit lawmakers to serving no more than 6 years in the Assembly and 8 years in the Senate. The adjustment would allow lawmakers to choose to serve in one house only for up to 12 or 14 years. Common Cause has been sup-

portive of extending term limits to allow lawmakers to develop greater knowledge about important policy issues and become less dependent on lobbyists and consultants for expertise.

Another part of the package may be to move California's Presidential Primary from June to February 2008. Discussions are underway to place both the redistricting reform measure and term limit adjustment measure on this early ballot.

Redistricting reform will entail a constitutional amendment.

Cont'd on page 5.

.....
Inside this issue:

Media Reform	2
Congressional Clean Money Bill	3
Clean Money—Clean Cities Conference	4-5
Legislative Update Orange County News	5
Sacramento News Oakland News CCC Board News	6
San Diego News San Diego Upcoming Events	7
Take Action on Redistricting Reform	8

Speaker's Commitment to Redistricting Reform Principles

We're pleased to report that Speaker Núñez has publicly adopted the redistricting principles espoused by Common Cause and our coalition. Of course, the devil is always in the details, but it's progress...

- ✓ A bipartisan redistricting commission will be created of 11 members, including commissioners who are Democrats, Republicans and not registered with either of those parties.
- ✓ The commission will be representative of Califor-

nia's diversity, including, but not limited to, racial, ethnic, geographic and gender diversity.

- ✓ The commission will be required to comply with the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act and the California Public Records Act.
- ✓ The commission will be required to follow specified criteria to ensure that fair, legal plans are adopted. Those criteria will include: Compliance with the U.S. Constitution and the federal Voting Rights

Act, including per-district populations that meet constitutional equality standards. Districts will also be geographically contiguous, respect communities of interest, city, county and geographic boundaries to the extent practicable and be compact to the extent practicable. Incumbents' and candidates' residence locations may not be considered except as needed to comply with these standards.

For more details, visit www.commoncause.org/ca

Media Reform

Imagine if your access to the internet depended on how much you were willing to pay. What if your access to certain websites was blocked? Concerned? You should be, since some internet service providers want to close



Support Senate Bill 215: The Internet Freedom Preservation Act

access to worldwide websites or discriminate based on who can

pay the highest toll on the internet highways.

Common Cause supports “net neutrality,” the fundamental principle that the Internet will remain open, free, and competitive. The “neutrality” of the worldwide web we now enjoy is being threatened. If corporate interests prevail, some websites may be censored or deemed off limits, and rich corporations could pay for preferred access, further commercializing the net and extending the wealth gap to what is currently the most level media available.

Common Cause understands that the internet has revolutionized citizen engagement in our democracy, allowing people to obtain news from diverse sources and to communicate with our elected representatives and like-minded citizens.

We need your help to protect access to information and worldwide web resources. Please support S. 215, the Internet Freedom Preservation Act, introduced by Sen. Byron Dorgan (D-ND) and Sen. Olympia Snowe (R-ME).

Currently, six major companies control most of the media in our country. A majority of Federal Communications Commission (FCC) members want to allow further consolidation and put decisions about what kinds of programming and news Americans receive in even fewer hands.

When the FCC tried a few years ago to roll back rules that limited one corporation’s ownership of

the media in one market, Common Cause members told the FCC that our democracy demands diverse, competitive, and independent sources of information. By responding to the threat, we stopped media consolidation then, with the help of the courts. Now the FCC again seeks to allow one company to own more TV stations, radio stations and newspapers in one market area.

And again, Common Cause is on the case. You can contact the FCC at www.commoncause.org/NoMoreConsolidation.



The FCC wants to allow more consolidation of TV, radio, and newspapers.



FCC moves may hurt local cable access stations

The FCC recently agreed to nationalize the local cable television franchising process. But if the FCC regulation is upheld, local governments will lose control over their local rights-of-way and funds which pay for public, education, and government (PEG) access stations’ programming. As a result, local access stations, which provide diversity of political thought and community involvement, may be drastically reduced or eliminated in many states. The new Senate Commerce Committee majority has scheduled an FCC oversight hearing among the first three of the new Congress in February. We’ll be watching these hearings closely. You can write to the FCC to tell them you want to keep local control and preserve local cable access channels.

To take action on media reform issues and get the latest up-dates, check out the Common Cause website at www.commoncause.org. Get action alerts on Common Cause issues by signing up for Cause Net action alerts on the website at www.commoncause.org/CauseNetSignUp.

Congressional Clean Elections

Congress is listening to America's concerns about corruption in government and is moving forward with real ethics reform. This past election season Common Cause, Public Campaign Action Fund, Public Citizen & U.S. PIRG worked together with 109 members of Congress who committed to support public funding of congressional elections. Candidates either signed a Voters First Pledge which stated they supported congressional Clean Elections along with lobbying and ethics reform, or were co-sponsors of federal legislation to establish full public funding of congressional elections.

California Common Cause along with our California coalition partners are taking a lead in southern California to ask members of Congress to follow through on their promises. We're dedicated to educating the public and Congress about an upcoming bill in the U.S. House of Representatives to address public financing of congressional campaigns. Rep. John Tierney from Massachusetts and Sen. Dick Durbin from Illinois will be introducing legislation in February. So far we've met with the offices of Rep. Xavier Becerra, Howard Berman, Adam Schiff, Brad Sherman, and Hilda Solis and will continue to set up meetings in the coming months.

The "Clean Elections" model of full public financing for congressional campaigns is based on successful laws in seven states (Maine, Arizona, Connecticut, New Jersey, North Carolina, New

Mexico and Vermont) and a growing number of municipalities. Clean Elections programs at the state and local level have given voters more choice at the polls, narrowed the spending gap between incumbents and challengers, and severed the direct tie between special-interest money and elected officials.

Did you know...

- THREE OUT OF FOUR VOTERS SUPPORT A VOLUNTARY SYSTEM OF PUBLICLY FUNDED CAMPAIGNS.
- SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC FINANCING OF CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS CROSS ALL PARTY LINES. EIGHTY PERCENT OF DEMOCRATS, 78% OF INDEPENDENTS, AND 65% OF REPUBLICANS SUPPORT THIS REFORM.

Candidates who choose the Clean Elections option:

- May raise "seed money" in amounts of \$100 or less from individuals only, up to a limit, to finance start-up expenses.
- Must raise a set number of "qualifying contributions" of \$5 each from district or state residents to demonstrate popular support for their campaigns.
- Will receive grants for both their primary and general election races when they are certified as eligible for public funds. They must adhere to spending limits, stop accepting private funds, and participate in a set number of public debates.
- Are entitled to additional

dollar-for-dollar matching funds up to 200% of the original grant when they are outspent by their opponents or independent expenditures. They also qualify for free air-time for election communications.

Speaker of the House of Representatives, Nancy Pelosi, is a proponent of the issue, but she needs to hear our voices of encouragement and interest. We need to create a strong, broad base of support for the upcoming House bill, comprised of nonprofits, business, unions, elected officials, and our activists.

Once the bill is introduced, we'll be asking you to contact your legislators urging them to support congressional clean elections, write letters to the editor for your local newspapers and keep your friends and neighbors informed. In the meantime, let us know if you can join meetings with your House Representative to discuss Clean Money or if you're involved with other groups that support public financing of elections.



109 MEMBERS OF CONGRESS SIGNED OUR VOTERS FIRST PLEDGE TO SUPPORT PUBLIC FINANCING OF CAMPAIGNS.

Clean Cities Conferences

Clean Money, Clean Cities Conference

Please join California Common Cause and the California Clean Money Campaign for CLEAN MONEY – CLEAN CITIES, a one day conference reviewing the benefits of fully public-funded systems for election campaigns, and how local governments are using such Clean Money systems.

Listen to experts, meet your city officials and fellow activists, and discuss together priorities in achieving public financing at the

city level. The conferences will be March 15 at the Pasadena Civic Center and March 23 at San Jose City Hall.

Planned sessions & workshops include:

- **CLEAN MONEY BASICS:** Activists and elected officials provide an overview of Clean Money systems and developing city-level proposals.
- **KNOW THE LAW:** What are the constitutional and legal

issues facing Clean Money systems?

- **THE INSIDE STORY:** Campaigning and governing in a Clean Money system.
- **WINNING CLEAN MONEY:** Successful campaigns at the ballot box or the city council.

For more information please visit www.cacleancities.org, or e-mail conference@cacleancities.org or call 213-252-4552.

State Legislative Update

The 2007 State Legislative Session has just begun, so most bill proposals are still in the drafting stage. But here's a preview of the bills that Common Cause is watching. As always, check out www.commoncause.org/ca for the latest developments and how you can make your voice heard.

- Sen. Joe Simitian (D-Palo Alto) may author a bill creating a clean money election

system for insurance commissioner.

- Insurance Commr. Steve Poizner announced his intent to pursue a ban on campaign contributions from insurance companies to candidates for insurance commissioner. No author for a bill yet, but stay tuned.
- Asm. Sam Blakeslee (R-San Luis Obispo area) is looking at options to deal with travel

by elected officials and staffers paid for by private interests, including disclosure and limits.

- Sen. Carol Migden (D-SF) has introduced legislation (SB37) for California to pass a National Popular Vote compact that would allocate our electoral college votes to the national winner of total votes, when enough other states also pass similar laws.

Redistricting Reform

cont'd from page 1...

One way or the other, it must be passed by a majority of voters as a ballot proposition. It can be placed on the ballot either through a petition campaign or by the legislature's passage of the measure by a 2/3 vote. Common Cause is working with a large coalition of groups to keep both paths open.

Orange County News

Orange County members!

Visit our table at the **Great American Write-In**, taking action on issues that matter!

Saturday, March 24

9:30am-1pm

at the Lakeview Senior Center

in the Woodbridge Community Park in Irvine.

(949) 724-6900.

Oakland News: Instant Runoff Voting Victory! by Joanne McKray

Under an Instant Runoff Voting (IRV) system, voters rank their choices of candidates for each race, so that a majority winner can be identified with one election. The need for a runoff election is eliminated, along with five additional months of campaigning and money raising by the top two vote-getters. As taxpayers, we save hundreds of thousands of dollars. Last November, voters in Oakland passed Measure O, a Charter Amendment bringing IRV for local elections to the city, by almost 70%.

Our story begins January 2006, when ten people, who thought that instituting IRV elections in Oakland would be a significant step forward, met and decided to get organized. The group had

representatives of League of Women Voters, Fairvote, New America Foundation, Californians for Electoral Reform, Green Party, and Common Cause. We organized the meeting.

We knew it wouldn't be easy. A Charter Amendment would be necessary. Our goal: win a vote of the City Council to put IRV on the ballot. We started by outreaching to other community organizations and creating a website, www.oaklandirv.org.

In April, our pace suddenly picked up. A Council member running for mayor decided to make placing IRV on the November '06 ballot a part of her campaign. We swallowed twice and went into overdrive. Fairvote and New America Foundation

helped with the measure language. Common Cause members called their Council representatives to urge them to put IRV on the ballot. At 2 a.m., July 19, the Council voted 6-2 to do so.

The pros who were helping us explained the three Ms of mounting a campaign: message, messengers, and money. Here, Oakland Common Cause members came through again and responded to our appeals with contributions.

We distributed literature to organizations, walked precincts, stood on BART platforms and farmers markets. In the end, a relatively small group of people made it happen. I find it inspiring that a handful of ordinary citizens could join together to make our democratic system work.

Sacramento News: Media Watchdogs Protect Public

Did you know that the public owns the airwaves? Federal laws allow broadcasters to use these airwaves for profit with the understanding they will serve the public interest. To promote the public obligation of big media companies, the Sacramento Media Group (SMG), an affiliate of Common Cause, has been meeting with local television stations

to encourage increased coverage of important issues on our local news programs. We asked that stations present five minutes of locally produced content on substantive election issues such as candidate's positions on issues instead of the usual coverage of who is ahead in the polls.

This year, SMG worked with Dr. Kimberly Nalder of Sacra-

mento State Univ. to monitor news coverage of the election by local TV stations. Students and community members watched the local news in the month before the election and found that campaign ads were 6 times more likely to be shown than an election news story. Want a copy of the SMG Election 2006 report? Call JoAnn at (916) 443 1792, x 11.

Best wishes to Paul Turner and Gloria Rubio-Cortes!



Join us in wishing California Common Cause Board members Paul H. Turner and Gloria Rubio-Cortes well as they leave the

board for new horizons. Gloria will be leaving California to lead the National Civic League.

Paul is leaving the Greenlining Institute to work for Citibank as their new Community Relations Director for the Greater Southern

California Region. Paul also served as the National Director of Greenlining's government reform program working on initiative campaigns and worked with Sen. John McCain to pass sweeping reforms in Congress.

San Diego News

Clean Money in SD:

It's not over! Clean money has a chance in San Diego. Former council member John Hartley and "Neighborhoods for Clean Money" are gearing up to put clean money elections on the San Diego 2008 ballot. California Common Cause is reviewing the initiative language with Hartley, and the ballot proposal will be finished by February. In January, our San Diego organizer, LaToya Jarrett, was added to the "Neighborhoods for Clean Money" steering committee, as the Common Cause representative. Common Cause will have a series of events on clean money over the summer.

Sunshine ordinance:

Do you know what information you are allowed to request from your city council representatives? Are you aware of what your representatives can deny public access to? Common Cause is working with a representative from Councilwoman Donna Frye's office to tailor a sunshine ordinance that will be presented to San Diego city council this year. The ordinance calls for: explicit reasons for closed session on the record, faster response time for requested public records, greater access to financial records, and a specific statutory justification for refusal to release records. The ordinance is unique, in that, it

declares willful violation of the ordinance a misdemeanor. The ordinance goes beyond the Brown Act and California Public Records Act to ensure that citizens and city council understand the public's right to open government and access to government records.

Did you know...

CITIZENS IN THREE OTHER LOCATIONS THROUGHOUT THE US - DAVIS, CA; MINNEAPOLIS, MN; AND PIERCE COUNTY, WA - ALSO VOTED TO CHANGE THEIR LOCAL ELECTION SYSTEMS TO INSTANT RUNOFF VOTING.

San Diego Upcoming Events

February 17, 2007

Health Care Reform and Clean Money: Exploring the connections.

Arizona and Maine have established an efficient health care system. Learn how good health care policies were made possible by removing the overwhelming pressure on state lawmakers from wealthy interests—including unions, pharmaceutical companies, the hospital lobby and others. Learn how clean money elections can produce tangible results



in various policy areas.

April 21, 2008

Redistricting Reform : Returning power back to voters.

Join us for a discussion about redistricting: the history, how it works now, the prospects for reform, and the potential impact on San Diego's representation. We'll talk about the history of state, local, and national redistricting reform efforts. This event is the first in a series of events on redistricting reform and Common

Cause's efforts on the issue. The speakers include: a representative from the governor's office, the chair of the 2001 San Diego redistricting commission, our own Kathay Feng, and a representative from the League of Women Voters. This forum on redistricting reform will be co-sponsored with the League of Women Voter's San Diego chapter.

To RSVP,

e-mail Jeanne Brown at:

jhisten@cox.net

Or call LaToya Jarrett at:

310-871-1430



3250 Wilshire Blvd., Ste 1005
Los Angeles CA 90010

Visit us at: www.commoncause.org/ca

Or e-mail us at: info-ca@commoncause.org

Take action on redistricting reform!

We want redistricting reform on the ballot in 2008. We are pushing for a good legislative measure, but it may also be necessary to mount a signature-gathering effort.

Can we count on you to help with both?

Call or e-mail us to let us know if you can help gather petition signatures. Whether it is 2 or 200—we need your help!

- ca-info@commoncause.org
- (213) 252-4552 / 916 443 1792

Thank you for helping to keep our government accountable!

Write your lawmakers a note on the importance of redistricting reform. Use your own stationary and words for a personal touch! Here is sample language:



As a member of California Common Cause, I am very committed to restoring public trust in our government. We need your leadership to reform our redistricting process to put communities first. It is important to me that the commission NOT be hand-picked by the legislature. The independent citizens commission MUST draw lines for state and congressional seats using objective criteria.

- Assembly Speaker Fabian Nuñez:
State Capitol, P.O. Box 942849 / Sacramento, CA 94249
- Senate President pro Tem Don Perata
State Capitol, Room 205 / Sacramento, CA 95814
- House Speaker Nancy Pelosi
235 Cannon HOB / Washington, DC 20515