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Legislation to Make Transition to District-Based Elections More Efficient Now in the Assembly

League-supported SB 493 (Canella) would enable city councils to use the ordinance process to convert to a by-district election system, avoiding costly litigation or the expense of an election to garner voter approval on the ballot. The bill passed out of the Senate, and is now awaiting committee assignment in the Assembly. *For more, see Page 2.*



2016 Planning Commissioners Academy Call for Proposals *Proposals due July 15*

Do you want to help build the 2016 Planning Commissioners Academy program? Do you have an idea for a new session that will inspire and motivate attendees? Maybe you know of a colleague that would be an excellent speaker? *For more, see Page 2*



Water Board to Offer Three In-Person Drinking Water State Revolving Fund and Proposition 1 Workshops in June

The State Water Resources Control Board's (SWRCB) Division of Financial Assistance will be holding a Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) and Proposition 1 Public Workshop at three California locations in June. The three workshops will provide SWRCB staff with an opportunity to answer questions and receive comments on the Draft FY 2015-16 DWSRF Intended Use Plan (IUP) and the [proposed Proposition 1 guidelines](#). *For more, see Page 2.*

'SB 493' Continued from Page 1...

Since the passage of the California Voting Rights Act (CVRA), numerous jurisdictions with at-large election systems have been subject to lawsuits alleging the existence of racially polarized voting. These lawsuits have created pressure on at-large entities to switch to by-district election systems. A by-district system provides greater protection against further lawsuits under the CVRA.

General Law cities can switch their election systems, but only with voter approval. In the event voters reject the change, cities can still face litigation under the CVRA—leaving costly litigation the sole option for city leaders.

SB 493 builds upon AB 684 (Block, 2011), which gave community college districts similar authority to convert their election systems. Numerous districts have successfully used the process to address concerns about racially-polarized voting. Districts have been able to do this quickly, easily and without spending taxpayer dollars on litigation or an election.

California cities strive to engage residents in policymaking. SB 493 strikes an important balance that protects local control. It allows local leaders to examine their city's demographics, then gives them the tools to proactively remedy any issues they find — all the while being considerate of precious taxpayer resources.

Next Steps

Cities can send in letters to the author's office expressing support for the bill and are encouraged to send letters to committee members (upon committee assignment). [A sample letter](#) is available on the League's website.

'Planners' Continued from Page 1...

The League of California Cities® is continuing the search for speakers and session topics for the 2016 Planning Commissioners Academy to be held March 2-4 in San Ramon.

Submissions from any individual, group, business or organization on any topic are welcome. The Program Planning Advisory Committee will consider the educational value of each proposal and the extent to which it presents new and/or significant information.

Submit fully completed ideas, non-commercial in nature through the [online](#) proposal form by Wednesday, July 15 for the committee's consideration.

'Water' Continued from Page 1...

Prop.1 (Section 79724) allocates \$260 million in funding for public water system infrastructure improvements and related actions to meet safe drinking water standards, ensure affordable drinking water, or both.

The DWSRF (IUP) explains how the SWRCB intends to implement the DWSRF Program. The [Draft FY 2015-16 DWSRF](#) incorporates information regarding implementation of Section 79724 of Prop. 1.

Workshop Details and Registration

The June 22 workshop will be the only one of the three events that will also be [webcast](#). Due to limited space, registration is recommended but not required.

June 22, 9 a.m. to noon: Sacramento
Sacramento Regional Water Quality Control Board
11020 Sun Center Drive, Suite 200
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670
[Registration](#)

June 25, 9 a.m. to noon: Fresno
Fresno Regional Water Quality Control Board
1685 E Street
Fresno, CA 93706
[Registration](#)

June 29, 9 a.m. to noon: Riverside
Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board
3737 Main Street, Room 200
Highgrove Room
Riverside, CA 92501
[Registration](#)

Submission of Written Comments

If you are unable to attend and provide feedback at one of the workshops, please submit comments in writing to DrinkingWaterSRF@waterboards.ca.gov or to:

State Water Resources Control Board
Division of Financial Assistance
1001 I Street, 16th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

June 30 at noon is the deadline to submit written comments on the [Draft FY 2015-16 DWSRF IUP](#).

Additional information and the complete Notice of Public Workshops are available [online](#).

If you have any questions, please contact [Uyen Trinh-Le](#) at (916) 440-7590.

Cost of Homelessness in Santa Clara County Detailed in New Report, Highlights How Housing First Policies Help the Homeless and Save Taxpayer Dollars *Annual Cost Tops \$520 Million*

The San Jose Mercury News on May 26 published an [article](#) on a report released Tuesday estimating that Santa Clara County spent over \$3 billion on the county's homeless population between 2007 and 2012. This is an annual price tag of \$520 million. Produced by the Economic Roundtable for the county and Destination: Home, "[Home Not Found: the Cost of Homelessness in Silicon Valley](#)" used a variety of sources to tabulate how much the county spends on the more than 104,000 homeless in the county during the six years studied. This included services such as mental health care, emergency room visits and county jail time.

Making housing the homeless a priority best serves homeless individuals and the larger community. Economic Roundtable President Dan Flaming is quoted as saying "What this shows is that having people live out in the open is tragic for the individual, destabilizing for the community and, at the end of the day, very expensive for the public. The people who are the most tragic are the ones where there can be real cost savings simply by housing them." The article

also states: "Helping people off the streets is more than just doing the right thing, it's also smart public policy that will save taxpayer dollars."

Governor's Environmental and Economic Leadership Awards Now Open for Applications

Applications due July 24

The online application period to apply for the state's most prestigious environmental achievement award is now open. Applications for the 2015 Governor's Environmental and Economic Leadership Awards (GEELA) program are available on the [CalEPA website](#).

The GEELA program recognizes individuals, organizations and businesses that have demonstrated exceptional leadership for voluntary achievements in conserving California's resources, protecting and enhancing the environment, building public-private partnerships, and strengthening the state's economy.

Applications are due by Friday, July 24.

California consumers are environmentally conscious and actively seek products and services that protect our state's natural resources. The GEELA program allows all sectors to raise public awareness of their green mission, goals and products.

GEELA winners will be announced at an awards ceremony in Sacramento and will receive recognition through a California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) issued press release, promotion through our social media accounts, and prominent placement on the CalEPA website. Recipients of this year's award will also receive a 2015 GEELA Winner logo for use on a website or printed materials.

This year, GEELA recipients will be chosen from five different categories and one subcategory, which include:

- Environmental Education;
- Ecosystem and Land Use Stewardship;
- Climate Change;
- Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Dealers;
- Sustainable Practices, Communities or Facilities; and
- Waste Reduction.

Established in 1993, the GEELA program is administered by the California Environmental Protection Agency in collaboration with the Natural Resources Agency; the Department of Food and Agriculture; the State Transportation Agency; the Business, Consumer Services, and Housing Agency; the Labor and Workforce Development Agency; the Health and Human Services Agency; and the Governor's Office.

Additional information is available [online](#).

Webinar for Healthy Planning Scheduled for June 11

The State Office of Planning and Research (OPR) announced that it will hold its Healthy Planning Leadership Series: What's New, What Matters, What's Next on June 11, from 1–2 p.m. Sponsored by the California Chapter of the American Planning Association & Health Officers Association of California, this webinar is the first in series for planning commissioners, public works officers, elected officials and anyone interested in building health communities.

The series offers professionals interested in implementing ideas to support healthy communities the chance to hear practical examples provided by local innovators. OPR will provide credit for planning professionals as well as continuing medical educational credit (AICP and CME credit). Each webinar in the series will have different learning objectives.

The webinar will feature Dr. Dick Jackson and Heather Wooten, two outstanding leaders in the field of healthy planning.

Register for the [webinar](#) online.