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## Letters to the Editor: 1-12-18

### By Contributed Content

Posted Jan 12, 2018 at 12:01 AM

Updated Jan 12, 2018 at 8:17 AM

### County government

Some weeks ago my open letter to County Supervisor Robert Lovingood was published in the Daily Press, reciting some serious County governance issues and derelictions. These were matters of concern to citizens in his district and elsewhere in the County and in Newberry Springs, which has been a dumping ground for nasty campaign contributors.

Not surprisingly, there has been no reply from his majesty or his jumbo staff. Keep in mind that Judicial Watch, a good-government nonprofit in Washington D.C., in their February 2017 issue of *The Verdict*, rated San Bernardino County as one of the three most corrupt governments in the United States.

Our County government is too deeply corrupt to be reformed without a very large federal intervention, which isn't likely. Need a reminder: Think Cadiz water project rip-off; think unregulated wholesale spreading of sewage sludge compost; think red carpet for the sleazy billboard industry; think industrial-scale solar energy projects coming soon to residential communities; think over 100 illegal marijuana grow sites in Newberry Springs; think the Community Plan hoax presently being shoved down the throats of some desert communities; think unattended blight in desert communities; think disinterest in cleaning up old landfills; think contempt for respecting scenic highways.

So what to do about it: In the late 1980's there was a powerful, but unsuccessful movement to form a separate county in the High Desert. Governor Deukmejian appointed a five-member commission to study the proposal. On March 1, 1988, the commission issued its final report, having determined that a new county, to be called Mojave County, in the High Desert, was viable after holding 23 public hearings.

The commission determined that San Bernardino County had been taking \$14 million a year from the High Desert, that it was not returning to the High Desert in services. It went to two elections, one in the High Desert and one in the Valley areas. The proposal

needed a majority in both areas but lost in the Valley areas. A professional public relations effort in the Valley might have been successful, but it didn't get financed, apparently for lack of funds.

The commission recommended that Barstow become the new County seat, centrally located. With five County supervisors, all in the High Desert, we might have had a four-year college by now and a lot of other positive developments.

### **Fred Stearn, Newberry Springs**

#### **Redistricting**

The Victor Valley Community College District has functioned effectively for decades under the existing at-large voting system. Apparently some lawyers have gotten together and decided that certain areas of the High Desert are not properly represented, so, without citing any evidence of misrepresentation they have decided that voters should be limited to candidate(s) running in their newly assigned district.

My constitutional voting rights are being restricted by allowing me to vote only for those individuals who decide to run in "my" district. What if I feel this person is not qualified or does not represent me best, do I vote for them anyway or decide not to vote at all? What if I wish to express my preference for candidates who do not reside in my district?

Perhaps most importantly, how is splitting the Board of Trustees into districts going to improve the services provided to students by the Victor Valley Community College District? Proponents of abolishing the current at-large voting system have been silent on these important questions.

Switching to a district voting system will restrict voters' choices for no apparent reason. The constitutional rights of Victor Valley Community College voters should not be constrained by those whose motives do not include improving the quality of education provided to students.

### **Deborah K. Brady, Spring Valley Lake (County)**

#### **Nicotine vs. Marijuana**

Growing up in New England in the 1930-1950s, nearly everyone smoked cigarettes. Of the nine in my immediate family, seven smoked. Due to deceptive advertising by the cigarette manufacturers, and the results of medical evidence of the deleterious effect of cigarettes on the smoker's health, laws and programs were instituted against the

practice of smoking. Class-action lawsuits were undertaken and were successful in forcing cigarette companies to be fined huge sums that resulted in billions of dollars being set aside to compensate many whose health was affected due to smoking.

Is there any common sense thinking and individual who believes smoking marijuana is not equal or worse for the health of the smoker than is smoking cigarettes?

It will only be a matter of time before the same result of the danger to health will be recognized, and again the government will step in and restrict the production and use of recreational use of marijuana as it did with cigarettes. In addition, class-action lawsuits will be forthcoming seeking compensation for those with mental and medical defects caused by smoking marijuana. In this instance, however, since marijuana is classified by the federal government as illegal, those cities and states who permit the use of marijuana may also be required to pay for the medical treatment as well as liability compensation of those adversely affected by marijuana use. When you consider the combined use of smoking marijuana and drinking alcohol ... nothing but grief will result!

This is a huge unfunded liability for any city or state that permits the use of marijuana for recreational purposes in defiance of federal law against such use.

**Lee Bell, Apple Valley**



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