

Opinion: Additional sales tax in Calif. is wrong

By Ted Gaines

California might end the fiscal year with a whopping \$20 billion in its rainy day fund. You might think a reserve that size, plus billions more in unanticipated revenue flowing into the state's coffers this year, would satisfy even the tax-hungriest Sacramento politicians and satisfy their appetite for tax increases. Sadly, you would be wrong. Even during this tax boom, Senate Bill 993 is trying to slap taxpayers with the single biggest sales tax increase in state history.



Ted Gaines

Currently, Californians don't pay taxes on services, but SB993 would change that. Next time you visit a dry cleaner, hair stylist, manicurist, mechanic or any of the other countless services that we use day after day, week after week, you'll pay a new and additional 3 percent tax for the exact same service. That's the last thing financially-stretched Californians need in this already unaffordable state. And history is clear that the 3 percent tax will only creep up over time.

The damage wouldn't stop there. Small businesses contract out myriad tasks so they can focus on their core money making activity. They pay for computer services, payroll, janitorial, bookkeeping, legal services and more. Under this bill, they

will be paying a premium for those services. This additional cost puts them at a further disadvantage to their larger competitors, who have staff to perform these services in house, and they will have no choice but to pass those new costs on to consumers, shrink already thin margins, or go out of business completely.

By taxing businesses for services provided during multiple stages of production, this tax will be added on to the final costs of every product we use, including prescription drugs, milk, bread and other staples that are exempt from any sales tax. Although they will not be taxed directly, everyone – even the state's poorest citizens – will be paying a backdoor tax on the products they depend on.

In true California fashion, the plan envisioned in SB993 is wildly complicated, with a maze of exemptions and allocation decisions that make the bill not just a bad idea, but an unworkable one. It's estimated that first-year administrative costs for the state would be around \$900 million, settling towards \$600 million annually afterwards. Good taxation should be simple, and the convoluted scheme embodied in the bill violates that core principle.

A tax on services will spread over the California economy like a Kilauea lava flow, slowly destroying opportunity, prosperity, and the bottom line of family budgets. It could lead to a short-term bump in revenue, but would further damage California's faltering economic competitiveness and corrode our long-term financial health. That's a price none of us should be willing to pay.

State Sen. Ted Gaines represents the 1st Senate District, which includes all or parts of Alpine, El Dorado, Lassen, Modoc, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, Shasta, Sierra and Siskiyou counties.

Social media changing adventure with deadly consequences

By Sarah Tory, High Country News

On July 14 of last year, Peter Doro and Jake Lord joined the Friday afternoon stream of people leaving the sprawling cities of Colorado's Front Range for the mountains. They planned to summit Capitol Peak, a soaring mass of granite 14,130 feet tall near Aspen on the state's Western Slope. They reached Capitol Peak's trailhead late in the day and set off on the 6.5-mile hike to the mountain's base. The sun sank low, filling the sky with streaks of red, purple and orange, and a few cows meandered across the trail, which followed a creek through a sliver of valley that widens abruptly into a vast alpine basin. Capitol Lake lay before them, ringed by the high peaks of the Elk Range, a view so stunning that Doro felt as if he had entered Middle Earth, the setting of J.R.R. Tolkien's epic fantasy, *Lord of the Rings*.

The Elks are among Colorado's highest and most challenging mountain ranges, with seven of the state's 54 peaks over 14,000 feet. And Capitol Peak is considered the hardest of them all – so difficult, in fact, that the Forest Service posted a sign near the trailhead, cautioning would-be climbers about “down-sloping, loose, rotten and unstable rock” that “kills without warning.”

For Doro, 25, and Lord, 24, both avid outdoorsmen, the sign was little more than a formality. As they hiked, their thoughts were not of death, but of the endless beauty and

possibilities that the mountains seemed to hold.

Read the whole story

Calif. TV news disappearing from Tahoe

Updated May 23, 9pm:

By Kathryn Reed

“It is 100 percent about commercials.”

That is the reason Charter-Spectrum is telling customers Sacramento station KCRA is being removed from the lineup in the South Lake Tahoe area. Instead, people will have to get their programming from the NBC affiliate KRNV out of Reno.

“Even though you reside in the state of California, you are part of the Reno, Nev., market,” Sylvester, an employee with the cable company, said. He said because people in this region are more likely to shop in Reno instead of Sacramento this area will soon only have access to the Reno station.

It comes down to money. Advertisers are being sold on the broadcast product based on how many people the station is reaching. Businesses in the capital city region aren’t going to see the Tahoe-Truckee area as having viable or potential customers. Reno and Carson City businesses, though, do consider the basin their market and therefore want to reach them.

While most of the programming is the same, the news is not. And that is what has some locals riled up.

"KCRA is where our community gets its news on issues that affects us. Political and vital California news," South Lake Tahoe Councilman Tom Davis told *Lake Tahoe News*. "We don't get California news from Reno stations. I, as an elected official, will not let Charter censor what news we get."

But it has nothing to do with censorship. It has to do with Charter being a business, and like all businesses, it wants to make a profit and not give its product away for free.

Bret Picciolo, senior director of communications for Charter, didn't know if people would still be able to stream KCRA.

He also wouldn't release how many people are affected by this decision that will take effect on or after June 4.

El Dorado County Supervisor Sue Novasel plans to have a conference call with Charter officials on Friday. On that call will be county CAO Don Ashton, PIO Carla Hass, and city electeds Davis and Wendy David. Novasel said she would ask *LTN's* streaming question.

Novasel has been down this road before with Charter. When she was on the Meyers Roundtable Committee the Sacramento station was pulled in 2008. Public outcry helped restore the service. In 2003 Charter blamed the elimination of KCRA from Meyers televisions because of technology, which was then resolved.

"None of the Reno stations acknowledge us," Novasel told *Lake Tahoe News*. "This is really a public safety issue. If they are going to be our home station, that has to change."

The FCC requires Charter carry the in-market NBC affiliate, which would be the Reno station. Still, it is solely Charter's decision – not the feds', not the station's – to remove KCRA from the local offerings.

While KCRA has no say in the matter, no one from the station returned *Lake Tahoe News'* call. The station must care a little

about Tahoe, it has a skycam on the South Shore.

People still have the option of tuning into the 10pm airing of KTVU to get Bay Area news, and thus California news, through this Fox affiliate.

On the North Shore it's different. Charter subscribers had KTVN Reno removed. Placer County gets Sacramento stations KQVR and KCRA on Spectrum as well KRNK out of Reno.

Dead Tahoe bird tests positive for West Nile virus

A Steller's jay in South Lake Tahoe has tested positive for West Nile virus.

This is the first bird this year to test positive in El Dorado County. The animal was found on May 7.

San Mateo and Santa Clara counties have also had reported cases of West Nile.

Confirmation of the West Nile virus positive bird means the virus is circulating between birds and mosquitoes and there is heightened risk of infection in humans.

West Nile virus can be transmitted to people through the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes get the virus when they feed on infected birds. The illness is not spread from person-to-person. While most people infected with the virus show no symptoms, some may have high fever, severe headache, tiredness and/or a stiff neck that can last several days to several weeks. The most serious cases of West Nile virus infection can lead to encephalitis, an inflammation of the brain, which can

be fatal.

Last year, two West Nile virus positive birds were identified in El Dorado County; in Garden Valley and South Lake Tahoe. For 2018, no human cases of West Nile virus have been reported for El Dorado County.

To help prevent West Nile virus:

- Drain standing water around property and keep water in swimming pools, ponds and water troughs circulating or treated with “Mosquito Dunks” or mosquito fish.
- Apply insect repellent that contains DEET or another approved substance (e.g. picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus or IR 3535) on exposed skin when outdoors.
- Dress in long sleeves and pants when outdoors among mosquitoes. Mosquitoes are most active at dusk and dawn.
- Make sure doors and windows have tight fitting screens, kept in good condition.
- Report dead birds and tree squirrels to 877.968.2473. Wear gloves and place the dead bird or squirrel in a double plastic bag if you dispose of it yourself.

Day, night and weekend tennis instruction at ZCTC

A backboard is one way to improve your tennis game, but it won't provide any insight into why your backhand isn't as penetrating as it could be.

A pro – that's who you should be hitting with. A professional has the ability to work with players of all levels to elevate

their game. It could be adding top spin, changing a grip for better command or adding a new shot like a drop volley.



Dave Nostrant leads a tennis clinic at Zephyr Cove Tennis Club. Photo/Provided

Zephyr Cove Tennis Club has two professionals to help refine one's skills. They offer a variety of clinics and more personalized instruction. Text or email the instructor to confirm a spot in the desired clinic: Dave Nostrant, 702.496.6277 or davenostrant@yahoo.com and Ginny Unger, 775.901.6713 or ginnyunger@yahoo.com. For more details on pricing and other offerings, go **online**.

Here is a current list of classes:

- Mondays: 9-10:30am – Women's 3.0-3.5 Drill Clinic (Unger)
- 10:30-noon – Beginner to Advanced Beginner, Men/Women (Nostrant)
- Tuesdays: 11am-12:30pm – Winning Strokes and

Strategies Doubles, 3.0-3.5 Men/Women (Nostrant)

7-8:30pm – Masters Clinic, 3.5 and above Men/Women (Nostrant)

- Wednesdays: 9-10:30am – Winning Strokes and Strategies Doubles, 3.0-3.5 Men/Women (Nostrant)

7-9pm – Doubles 3.5 and above, Men/Women (Nostrant)

- Thursdays: 9:30-11am – Super Play, 3.5 and above Men/Women (Nostrant)

7-8:30pm – Super Play, 3.5 and above Men/Women (Nostrant)

- Fridays: 9-10:30am – Beginner to Advanced Beginner, Men/Women(Nostrant)

- Saturdays: 9-10:30am – Masters Clinic, 3.5 and above Men/Women (Nostrant).

McClintock food stamp limits too strict for GOP

By Kate Irby and Emily Cadei, Sacramento Bee

California Republican Rep. Tom McClintock doesn't believe his party's controversial plan to stiffen work requirements for food stamp recipients goes far enough.

But his proposal to require even more people to work for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits was too strict even for most of his fellow Republicans.

McClintock's amendment to House Republicans' farm bill failed in a vote Thursday night, 83 to 330 (there are 235 Republicans

in the House). It could enlarge the target that Democrats have already placed on McClintock's back in this year's election.

Read the whole story

Train passenger found injured near Truckee tracks

By Sam Gross, Reno Gazette-Journal

It's been a week since Aaron Salazar was found battered and unconscious near railroad tracks in Truckee, California, and his family is no closer to understanding what happened to the 22-year-old student who was traveling by rail from Colorado to Oregon.



Aaron Salazar's family and friends want answers.
Photo/Austin Sailas

Was he attacked?

Was he thrown from the train?

Was this a hate crime?

After a week of sitting by Salazar, who lies comatose with a broken pelvis and damage to his brain stem in a Reno hospital critical care unit, his family is still in the dark as to what circumstances left Aaron beside the tracks on May 15 in Truckee, a town his Amtrak train was scheduled to stop in for just a few minutes.

Read the whole story

Letter: Barton folks spend evening at B&B

To the community,

Bread & Broth was very excited to have members of Barton Hospital's dietitian department sponsor the Monday meal on May 14.

So many departments from Barton Hospital host Adopt A Day of Nourishments and they always send wonderful sponsor crew members to help at their sponsorship dinners. True to form, the five Barton volunteers, Rebecca Espinel, Jessica Keys, Lynn Norton, Kristine Travis and Jennifer Trew, were a joy to work with.

"It was a pleasure to serve members of our community," said Keys. "We were amazed to see how much fresh produce was given to the dinner guests."

B&B is thrilled to have our "Green Goal" program recognized by professional dietitians. While the majority of the meal costs are covered by the \$300 donation of the sponsoring AAD group, B&B uses funds donated to our general fund to purchase fresh

fruit and vegetables and dairy products (milk, eggs and butter), to add healthy food to the giveaway bags that our dinner guest can take home for use later in the week.

B&B appreciates the support that we receive from Barton Hospital departments and team members. Their devotion to helping people does not end at the close of their work shift as demonstrated by the Barton dietitians help funding and serving a hot, nutritious meal to those in need in our community.

Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth

Firewood permits to be available in basin

Firewood permits go on sale at the South Lake Tahoe office of the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit on June 4 and at the Incline Village Forest Service office on June 6.

Permits cost \$20 per cord, with a two-cord minimum and a limit of 10 cords per household.

Permits have specific conditions and complete information is provided when the permit is issued. Maps to designated cutting areas are provided and must be in the permit holder's possession along with the valid permit when cutting.

The permit is for collection of "down-dead" wood in designated areas. "Down-dead" means the tree is down on the ground and dead, rather than dead and standing. Cutting any standing tree, whether dead or green, is not allowed.

Permit holders must keep vehicles on National Forest roads. No

off-road travel is allowed and permit holders must comply with all permit conditions. Some designated fuel areas are only open during specified dates and all areas are subject to closure at any time.

Permit sales will end on Nov. 16 and the last day to cut is Nov. 18.

S. Lake Tahoe seeks parade entrants for July 4

South Lake Tahoe is looking for participants in the annual 4th of July parade.

The parade will be staged on Ski Run Boulevard. Starting at 10am participants will head west on Highway 50 to Al Tahoe Boulevard where the parade will lead up Al Tahoe and conclude at Bijou Community Park.

Individuals, businesses, sports groups, philanthropy groups, schools, and others are invited to participate. Floats are encouraged. There is no entry fee, however an application is required to participate. This assists in the planning and execution of the parade.

Applications are available **online**. They are due June 15.

Premium viewing locations will be along Highway 50 between Ski Run and Al Tahoe.

A celebratory barbecue will follow, with all proceeds benefiting the American Legion Post 795.