

Opinion: Public needs to remember ills of Nutting

By Larry Weitzman

During his criminal trial, Ray Nutting was described by his lawyer as a “bumbling woodsman.” On June 5 this “bumbling woodsman” who is already politicking for the El Dorado County District 2 Board of Supervisors seat in 2020, was badly defeated at the polls although he was not specifically running for any office in that election.

The seat (District 2 Board of Supervisors) which he is now running for is a seat he once held, but because of his 2014 criminal trial and conviction he was removed from office by Judge Timothy Buckley.



Larry Weitzman

In the recent June 5 election, Nutting, the “bumbling woodsman,” supported the candidacy of Dan Dellinger who was running for county recorder and Mike Owen who ran for auditor/controller. The “bumbling woodsman” heavily supported and advised both candidates, handing out flyers at Walmart, putting up campaign signs and contributed hundreds of dollars directly to each campaign, according to official election records. Dellinger in spite of spending over \$27,000 through April 22, 2018, lost big in a three-way race; garnering just 22 percent of the vote. The other two candidates, neither of who had a political machine, split the other 78 percent of the

vote and will face each other in a runoff.

The “bumbling woodsman” support of Dellinger was an attempt by Nutting to “take over” the county by putting his men in place, people who would be compliant to him. The bumbling woodsman already failed twice before in the 2014 election when he was behind the horribly failed candidacy of Judson Henry who for a short time ran for district attorney (in an attempt to get back at the district attorney who Nutting mistakenly thought prosecuted him) before dropping out of the race because of discrepancies about residence. For El Dorado County residency Henry used the address of a Nutting confederate, Cris Alarcon, qualifications and other issues. The other loss for the “bumbling woodsman” was the Mike Owen campaign for auditor/controller.

Dellinger is a candidate with a checkered past involving the Pioneer Fire Protection District among other things in which the “bumbling woodsman” also had a hand in by pressuring the Pioneer Fire board to hire Dellinger to campaign for them in an attempt to raise tax money within their district. In a later civil trial which Dellinger lost over whether Dellinger accepted taxpayer money for campaign purposes, a witness who was the former head of the Pioneer Fire Protection District testified that it was Nutting, the “bumbling woodsman,” who suggested Dellinger as a consultant. It was “Ray’s way of saying if we wanted support,” they would hire Dellinger.

But the “bumbling woodsman” is now planning a comeback of sorts. There is little doubt he is positioning himself to reacquire the District 2 supervisorial seat he was removed from at the end of his criminal trial. The “bumbling woodsman” blames his fall from grace because of the county auditor and the district attorney. However, Pete Williams of the California Attorney General’s Office was the lead prosecutor as the district attorney wanted to remove any appearance of a conflict of interest from the trial, a concept Nutting ignores and/or doesn’t understand.

The “bumbling woodsman” claims to be a conservative “straight shooter,” but underneath this façade is another more devious individual, who presents himself as folksy simpleton. He appears at Tea Party meetings eschewing big government and handouts, acting as an anti-tax individual. There is no question the “bumbling woodsman” has a following, perhaps blinded by the façade.

But the “bumbling woodsman” loves government largess, promotes it and then pounces on it. It’s what got him in the trouble that eventually led to his criminal trial and downfall.

One of the powers of a supervisor is the ability to fund programs, one of which was Proposition 40 Fuel Management Reduction program. It funds grants to pay private land owners to assist them in clearing their land. But according to a report by CBS Sacramento Channel 13, the “bumbling woodsman” applied for and received grant money, some \$70,000, to clear his own land, reported to be some 660 acres. But Nutting didn’t hire anyone, he hired himself. Invoices were not from a third party, but were done by Nutting himself, billing himself out with no verification of time. Doing a record search allowed me to see the invoices. One county official called them bogus. Nutting attempted to make them look like a third party with a paper dime store invoice you get at a flea market saying “Sold to Tom Nutting” 150 hours at \$65/hour signed by Ray Nutting. Sixty-five dollars an hour? Where do I sign up? In another invoice from Nutting Brush Clearing using his address lists the purchaser of services as Ray Nutting using the same address and then is signed by Ray Nutting. He picked his own hourly rates and charges per acre. And the taxpayers ended up paying the “bumbling woodsman” \$70,000 for doing his own yardwork.

In another Nutting scheme, Nutting tried to get the county to get the federal government to pay himself rent on his property so he could rent it with the government paying the rent for a tenant. During his term in office he badgered our own Health

and Human Services officials to obtain it, refusing their explanation it would be illegal. The department head finally told the “bumbling woodsman” to stop his actions and badgering. The “bumbling woodsman” attempted to use government programs to the max, hardly a Tea Party type of guy.

The “bumbling woodsman” appears to be more like a “bumbling schemer” of government money using his influence from his elected position to obtain government funds and being so obvious about it.

Even during his criminal trial, his “expert witness” a registered forester testified one-way implicating Nutting in his crimes at the grand jury level and then changed his testimony 180 degrees during trial. The judge who had read the grand jury testimony stopped the witness cold, dismissed the jury, told them to disregard everything Nutting’s witness said, then advised the witness he may have committed perjury and assigned him a lawyer. After consultation with his appointed lawyer at taxpayer expense (what does Nutting care?) Nutting’s registered forester took the Fifth Amendment and refused to testify further.

While the jury didn’t hear all the evidence, the judge did. Nutting did get convicted of some misdemeanors, which required the judge to remove the “bumbling woodsman” from public office. The judge also said he would use discretion and say nothing more about the “bumbling woodsman” other than you’re fired.

Larry Weitzman is a resident of Rescue.

Opinion: Earth can't sustain an ever growing population

By Andrew D. Hwang, The Conversation

Humans are the most populous large mammal on Earth today, and probably in all of geological history. This World Population Day, humans number in the vicinity of 7.5 to 7.6 billion individuals.

Can the Earth support this many people indefinitely? What will happen if we do nothing to manage future population growth and total resource use? These complex questions are ecological, political, ethical – and urgent. Simple mathematics shows why, shedding light on our species' ecological footprint.

The mathematics of population growth

In an environment with unlimited natural resources, population size grows exponentially. One characteristic feature of exponential growth is the time a population takes to double in size.

Exponential growth tends to start slowly, sneaking up before ballooning in just a few doublings.

To illustrate, suppose Jeff Bezos agreed to give you one penny on Jan. 1, 2019, two pennies on Feb. 1, four on March 1, and so forth, with the payment doubling each month. How long would his \$100 billion fortune uphold the contract? Take a moment to ponder and guess.

After one year, or 12 payments, your total contract receipts come to \$40.95, equivalent to a night at the movies. After two years, \$167,772.15 – substantial, but paltry to a billionaire. After three years, \$687,194,767.35, or about one week of Bezos' 2017 income.

The 43rd payment, on July 1, 2022, just short of \$88 billion and equal to all the preceding payments together (plus one penny), breaks the bank.

Real population growth

For real populations, doubling time is not constant. Humans reached 1 billion around 1800, a doubling time of about 300 years; 2 billion in 1927, a doubling time of 127 years; and 4 billion in 1974, a doubling time of 47 years.

On the other hand, world numbers are projected to reach 8 billion around 2023, a doubling time of 49 years, and barring the unforeseen, expected to level off around 10 to 12 billion by 2100.

This anticipated leveling off signals a harsh biological reality: Human population is being curtailed by the Earth's carrying capacity, the population at which premature death by starvation and disease balances the birth rate.

Ecological implications

Humans are consuming and polluting resources – aquifers and ice caps, fertile soil, forests, fisheries and oceans – accumulated over geological time, tens of thousands of years or longer.

Wealthy countries consume out of proportion to their populations. As a fiscal analogy, we live as if our savings account balance were steady income.

According to the Worldwatch Institute, an environmental think tank, the Earth has 1.9 hectares of land per person for growing food and textiles for clothing, supplying wood and absorbing waste. The average American uses about 9.7 hectares.

These data alone suggest the Earth can support at most one-fifth of the present population, 1.5 billion people, at an American standard of living.

Water is vital. Biologically, an adult human needs less than 1 gallon of water daily. In 2010, the U.S. used 355 billion gallons of freshwater, over 1,000 gallons per person per day. Half was used to generate electricity, one-third for irrigation, and roughly one-tenth for household use: flushing toilets, washing clothes and dishes, and watering lawns.

If 7.5 billion people consumed water at American levels, world usage would top 10,000 cubic kilometers per year. Total world supply – freshwater lakes and rivers – is about 91,000 cubic kilometers.

World Health Organization figures show 2.1 billion people lack ready access to safe drinking water, and 4.5 billion lack managed sanitation. Even in industrialized countries, water sources can be contaminated with pathogens, fertilizer and insecticide runoff, heavy metals and fracking effluent.

Freedom to choose

Though the detailed future of the human species is impossible to predict, basic facts are certain. Water and food are immediate human necessities. Doubling food production would defer the problems of present-day birth rates by at most a few decades. The Earth supports industrialized standards of living only because we are drawing down the “savings account” of non-renewable resources, including fertile topsoil, drinkable water, forests, fisheries and petroleum.

The drive to reproduce is among the strongest desires, both for couples and for societies. How will humans reshape one of our most cherished expectations – “Be fruitful and multiply” – in the span of one generation? What will happen if present-day birth rates continue?

Population stays constant when couples have about two children who survive to reproductive age. In some parts of the developing world today, couples average three to six children.

We cannot wish natural resources into existence. Couples, however, have the freedom to choose how many children to have. Improvements in women's rights, education and self-determination generally lead to lower birth rates.

As a mathematician, I believe reducing birth rates substantially is our best prospect for raising global standards of living. As a citizen, I believe nudging human behavior, by encouraging smaller families, is our most humane hope.

Andrew D. Hwang is an associate professor of mathematics, College of the Holy Cross.

Opinion: How the NFL and U.S. politicians politicized

By Jesse Berrett

In January 1942, as the United States committed itself fully to World War II, President Franklin Roosevelt decided that baseball, then the national pastime, should sustain civilian morale during the lengthy struggle ahead. He implored its commissioner, Kenesaw Mountain Landis, to make sure the games went on, despite worldwide armed conflict. And so they did. Professional baseball players, Roosevelt argued, "are a definite recreational asset."

Roosevelt did not extend that consideration to professional football players, whose sport did not register politically. As a result, the NFL nearly shut its doors during World War II. So many players were called to serve that several franchises had to merge. In fact, the league didn't take off until it

closely associated itself with national politics. For the last half-century, the intertwining of American football and politics has sustained both pastimes, and no one played both games more enthusiastically than Richard Nixon.

By the 1960s the United States was involved in a different war, and the politics of sport had changed, nowhere more so than in the nation's capital. Washington was "a male town, and football is its game . . . the right metaphor for its politics," journalist Hedrick Smith wrote. "Not to possess Redskins season tickets spells a fatal absence of status," observed Mary McGrory, an astute observer of local mores. The *Washington Post* detailed David Broder, its prize-winning political columnist, to cover a preseason game. The Harris poll named football America's most popular sport in 1965, the Gallup poll in 1972.

What had changed? The NFL, to grow its business, spent the post-war decades single-mindedly pursuing cultural currency. Under PR-conscious Commissioner Pete Rozelle, who took the job in 1960, the effort resembled nothing so much as an advertising campaign: in Rozelle's mind, "anything that caused people to connect with pro football" would do. Conveniently enough, that's exactly where politics were heading. "We're moving into a period where a man is going to be merchandised on television more and more," a Nixon aide explained to a reporter in 1968.

The NFL published its own books, made its own movies, and eventually sponsored an essay contest officially certified as part of the 1976 bicentennial celebrations. NFL Creative Services' books depicted professional football as the essential expression of a complex and multifarious America. NFL Films sold viewers a vision of the game as a spectacular, vivid, and heroic showcase for passionate excellence.

The NFL's intention was to persuade audiences both popular and elite that the sport deserved support because it was

quintessentially American, perfectly in tune with the contemporary world, and deserving of solicitude should it encounter any legal roadblocks.

But the NFL never stopped politicking. Its cultural productions went global, usefully extending American soft power while cementing the association between NFL and Americanism.

Politicians benefited as well. Just as the NFL grew more adept at selling itself, so too did political figures begin to cultivate an interest in sports figures. In 1960, the John F. Kennedy campaign “put celebrity-gathering into mass production,” as one veteran consultant put it. A Nixon campaign organizer noted that “round[ing] up practically every All-American here” had helped the Republicans carry California.

Soon every politician was seeking out jocks. In 1968, Bobby Kennedy’s recruiters noted that athletic endorsements paid big dividends because “you are dealing with people who usually get press on their own steam.” Hubert Humphrey directed his campaign toward sympathetic sportswriters, attempted to get an article published in *Sports Illustrated* on the virtues of competition, and even scooped up Kennedy’s “top recruits” two days after his assassination. “With luck, if Teddy doesn’t run,” they could be enticed to hit the campaign trail for Humphrey.

Politicians across the spectrum hobnobbed with players and coaches, endorsed the campaigns of former players, and exerted themselves to win new franchises for their states. By the mid-70s, the collective intertwining of what one reporter called the “sport of politics and the politics of sport” had become inextricable.

The coziness between football and power rendered lobbying almost unnecessary: Lawrence O’Brien, Lyndon Johnson’s special

assistant for congressional relations, recalled “inordinate efforts on behalf of the NFL in the Senate” by Senators in “constant quest...for a franchise location in their state.” No wonder that, when House Judiciary committee chair Emanuel Celler stalled a bill allowing the NFL to bypass the Sherman Anti-Trust Act and merge with the rival AFL in the fall of 1966, the House and Senate majority whips, Louisianans Hale Boggs and Russell Long, schemed to push it through the Ways and Means Committee. All it took was for the NFL to establish a team in New Orleans. “Pro football provides the circus for the hordes,” a disgusted Celler remarked.

In 1973, the House Interstate Commerce subcommittee “rammed through” without debate an NFL-backed measure preserving TV blackout rights for games that had not sold out 72 hours before their scheduled start. That blackout rule created incentives for fans and even cities to buy up unsold tickets. Without a sellout, TV stations would not show the home team’s games.

“It’s not true that Congress is divided, paralyzed, and unable to act with decision and leadership,” the journalist Nicholas von Hoffman acidly commented. “The pro football fans of America will be able to see their teams’ home games this year on television.”

Football on film sold America in ways that politicians liked. NFL Films perfected its craft with its magnum opus, “They Call It Pro Football.” Made in 1967, the 25-minute documentary neatly served the propagandistic, promotional, and political needs of both the league and the Defense Department. A number of reviews recognized the film’s social significance without fully grasping its extent, one extolling the “beauty and violence of the game—and its impact on the entire country.” At a briefing discussing how to sustain the morale of soldiers in Vietnam, General Creighton Abrams told Defense Secretary Melvin Laird that the men wanted football games.

"These films are important to them," Abrams said.

"We better call Rozelle up tonight," replied Laird, who quickly pledged "a two-minute bureaucratic drill" to ensure that the Armed Forces Network provided servicemen with more televised football.

Their bosses enjoyed these movies just as much. Secretary of State William Rogers brought a supply of NFL films on tour to show to foreign diplomats in the Far East in 1969. Air Force One flew an NFL film to Lyndon Johnson's ranch in Texas, and Nixon later ordered a big-hits special for the White House. NFL Films' productions were shown at the Continental Hotel in Paris, where homesick fans could savor the national pastime while munching hot dogs. They became a staple of life at military bases and on Navy submarines; and even in Saudi Arabia, where oil companies ordered copies of the films to console "American workers far from home."

By the 1972 election, the merger between politics and football seemed almost complete. In April 1972, George McGovern announced an athletes' committee heavy on football players. Its chair, Redskins guard Ray Schoenke, a history major and academic All-American at SMU, had walked into McGovern's office the previous summer and volunteered his services. Schoenke made himself a one-man political operation. He handed out campaign literature at training camp, obtained rosters from the league office, and worked the phones every night.

But McGovern got crushed by Nixon in what a disappointed journalist panned as "one of the dumbest political football games ever played before a nationwide TV audience." No surprise. He was up against the country's most football-friendly president.

Richard Nixon was a football fanatic who did the most to turn the game to political ends. Nixon's connections to the sport ran deep. He frequently credited his coach at Whittier

College, Chief Newman, with teaching him never to quit. He officially kicked off his first campaign for president on Whittier's field before 20,000 roaring supporters and thanked Newman when accepting the Republican nomination in 1968. In his final memoir, "In the Arena," Nixon recalled that "I learned more about life sitting on the bench with Chief Newman than I did by getting A's in philosophy courses."

He was not averse to putting those lessons to use. Nixon and his staff invoked football and attended games at strategic junctures throughout 1969 and 1970 with clear political intentions.

In November 1969, the administration countered nationwide anti-war marches with National Unity Week, featuring flag displays and what a White House memo called "a patriotic theme or event" at halftime of every televised college football game. Nixon told reporters that he was going to spend the Saturday afternoon of the march the right way: "It was a good day to watch a football game."

The next fall, he kicked off his campaign for a Republican Congress before an enthusiastic crowd at Kansas State by contrasting the school's football team (good) with youth protest (bad). He followed that up by sharing a podium with Ohio State coach Woody Hayes, celebrating the recently-deceased Vince Lombardi as "an apostle of teamwork," and accompanying the secretary of Defense and Wisconsin's Republican candidates for senator and governor to Bart Starr Day, an event honoring the legendary Packer quarterback in Green Bay. A reporter traveling with the campaign found Nixon's rah-rah approach utterly predictable: "It may be hard for some politicians to reduce a major political campaign to football terms, but not this one."

In 1971, Newman's successor at Whittier, George Allen, became coach of the Redskins. Nixon and Allen had supported each other's endeavors since the 1950s, and the relationship

deepened in Washington. Allen campaigned for Nixon and attended White House functions, and Nixon sent Allen a shoebox-full of notes, called him at home, and even attended practice at Allen's invitation in 1971 to encourage his players.

The 1972 convention ratified what Nixon's Republican detractors termed "game-plan politics." "The president likes football analogies, and the relationships of field position and ball control were the essential elements of what the campaign organization tried to do," the head of his advertising agency explained about the smoothly-run spectacle.

Bart Starr introduced convention chair Gerald Ford, and newly-elected New York Rep. Jack Kemp, a former NFL quarterback and "No.1 [political] draft choice," as a Sports Illustrated reporter following his campaign had described him, gave an "electrifying" speech seconding the nomination of Spiro Agnew. Numerous Republican power brokers nurtured Kemp's political ambitions for a decade: Herb Klein, Nixon's communications director, gave him a newspaper column, Reagan and the RNC hired him, and the White House publicly supported (and graced him with a congratulatory phone call after) his first run for Congress.

Despite Nixon's electoral dominance, football's triumph wasn't partisan. No single participant succeeded in cementing a dominant political meaning for the nation's most popular sport. Instead, football's popularity provided a new language for politics and debate. Was one candidate trying a Hail Mary with a last-minute attack? Was another running out the clock with a lead? Had miscommunication in the Congressional huddle made a key bill fail? A political scientist complained in 1975 that "the discourse of politics" threatened to be "completely absorbed by the language of sports."

The NFL, a profit-minded entity, both cultivated and profited from all this political attention. So when Richard Nixon told

the crowd at Bart Starr Day that “the 1960s will be described as the decade when football became the No. 1 sport,” that sport’s number-one fan was merely adding a presidential signature to what a broad popular referendum had already decreed.

Jesse Berrett teaches history at University High School in San Francisco. He is author of “Pigskin Nation: How the NFL Remade American Politics” (University of Illinois Press, 2018).

Letter: Sunbeam Blinds helps serve food

To the community,

On July 2, Sunbeam Blind Company sponsored Bread & Broth’s Adopt a Day of Nourishment, and owners Kurt and Laura Rasmussen crewed alongside of the B&B volunteers to serve 88 meals to very grateful dinner guests.

Sunbeam Blind has been a sponsor every year since 2016 and B&B is very appreciative of their ongoing support of our AAD program.

It is truly a pleasure to have Adopt A Day of Nourishment sponsors come back year after year and host a Bread & Broth Monday meal. Bread & Broth AAD sponsors enjoy serving others and lending a helping hand while finding the experience of participating in their sponsored dinner humbling and uplifting.

“It’s always a pleasure to assist the dedicated regular volunteers at Bread & Broth,” commented Laura. “Everything

about his program is beneficial to our community. Food insecurity is an ongoing issue for people and B&B provides the grateful guests with a nutritious and delicious meal along with to go bags of food every week. We are happy to play a small part in making a difference for our neighbors and we'll be back again."

Kudos to Laura and Kurt for their compassion and empathy for those who struggle with food insecurity. Bread & Broth is proud to partner with Sunbeam Blind Company and appreciates Kurt and Laura for their enthusiastic support of the Adopt A Day of Nourishment program.

Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth

Letter: Tahoe rep weighs in on Placer County politics

Publisher's note: Rep. Tom McClintock, R-Garden Valley, wrote the following letter to the Placer County Board of Supervisors.

I write to support the many local citizen groups that are seeking a resolution declaring that Placer County opposes California's so-called sanctuary laws. I also urge you to join the 12 California counties and 42 California cities that are challenging them as incompatible with the rule of law and the supremacy of the federal Constitution over immigration.

California's policy of releasing dangerous criminal illegal aliens back into our communities rather remanding them to federal authorities for deportation presents a critical public safety issue for the people of Placer County. It also imperils

federal law enforcement officials who must then attempt to arrest them at grave personal risk to themselves and to innocent bystanders.

There is good reason for immigration law to be in federal hands and every reason for state and local governments to cooperate in their enforcement. If our immigration laws are to be ignored, as sanctuary supporters advocate, then our national borders mean precisely nothing. Nations that cannot or will not defend their borders aren't around very long. The open borders advocated by California officials are suicidal for any nation.

Placer County has suffered grievously because of the non-enforcement of our immigration law. The bloody rampage by a twice-deported illegal immigrant in 2014 claimed the life of Placer County sheriff's Detective Michael Davis. Democratic government relies on fidelity to law. If the law is abandoned, our democracy would dissolve into anarchy. Detective Davis gave his life to uphold the law. All that is asked of Placer County Supervisors is to take a stand in its defense.

Opinion: Importance of running for election

By Judy Price, Moonshine Ink

Long-time Tahoe/Truckee residents likely recall frequent and extended power outages; street closures – sometimes all roads in and out – for more than a week at a time; grocery stores running out of food; gas stations running out of fuel. Neighbors helped one another to dig out from snow storms and share generator power, fuel, and even food.

The special districts and the town of Truckee were formed because we know that, at times, we are isolated and need our own organizations to provide services. We recognized the need to be self-sufficient in providing road maintenance, snow removal, public safety, power, water, sewer, recreation, schools, hospital, airport services, and more.

Read the whole story

Opinion: U.S. not as divided on immigration as you think

By Deborah Schildkraut, The Conversation

Lawmakers in Washington, from the president down to first-term members of Congress, may be misjudging how the public feels about immigration.

President Trump appears to believe the country needs and wants hard-line policies. Members of Congress haven't stopped him from carrying out those policies.

Do the American people really support them?

It turns out that government officials who think the majority of Americans want hard-line immigration policies are wrong.

Elected officials – both Republican and Democratic – tend to think that their constituents are more conservative than they actually are on immigration and other issues. Moreover, recent research suggests that Republican constituents have been more likely to contact their elected officials than Democratic constituents.

Yet, my research on public opinion about immigration, and that of other social scientists, shows that the American public is supportive of more welcoming immigration policies. Welcoming policies might include a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants, accepting more asylum claims or allowing the use of multiple languages in public places.

Most Americans support a path to citizenship

I am a scholar of public opinion about immigration and national identity, and I have studied how people from a variety of backgrounds feel about immigration-driven diversity in the United States.

Let's look at public opinion on one immigration proposal that has been debated for over a decade: providing a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants living in the U.S.

Since late 2007, polls conducted by CBS and the *New York Times* have asked respondents which option they prefer when it comes to "illegal immigrants working in the United States." The options include: allow them to stay in their jobs and eventually apply for U.S. citizenship; allow them to stay only as guest workers but not apply for citizenship; or require them to leave their jobs and the country.

This question has been asked in 31 CBS/*New York Times* surveys since 2007. In 22 of them, providing a path to citizenship is the majority preference. Support for citizenship has not fallen below 50 percent since 2013. In fact, support has increased over time, a trend that has continued throughout Trump's presidency.

Support for a path to citizenship varies by one's background when it comes to race, gender, education, income, party and ideology. However, support is high across the board, even among those who say they are Republican or conservative.

Of course, this is only one of many immigration policies

getting attention these days, and support for other policies varies.

Attitudes on this policy show that Americans are not as divided or as conservative as the discourse coming out of Washington, D.C., might reflect and is becoming even more supportive of the welcoming approach. Yet, providing a path to citizenship is also the primary policy that seems to keep thwarting legislative reform in Congress.

A welcoming climate need not alienate U.S.-born whites

Public officials may be concerned about alienating non-immigrant whites if they pursue welcoming immigration policies. We tried to find out whether that alienation could happen. In a recent experiment, my colleagues and I asked U.S.-born whites in Arizona and New Mexico how they felt about their state adopting more welcoming or restrictive immigration policies.

We asked people if the proposed policy would make them angry, sad or happy. We found that liberal and moderate whites responding to the more welcoming treatment were more likely to be happy and less likely to be angry or sad than were those who were responding to the restrictive treatment.

We also asked them if the proposed policy would make them feel more or less at home and more or less likely to want to move. Again, we found that liberal and moderate whites, in response to the welcoming treatment, felt more at home and less likely to want to move than did liberal and moderate whites who were given the unwelcoming treatment.

Only conservative whites were happier, less angry, less sad and felt more at home in response to restrictive treatment. Every one else fared better when told that their state was considering adopting policies that welcomed immigrants.

It is worth noting that in the 2016 data mentioned above, only

35 percent of whites identified as conservative while 65 percent identified as either liberal, moderate or other.

Squeaky wheel gets the grease

Given these data, why is a conservative approach to immigration dominating in Washington?

In American politics, it is the squeaky wheel that gets the grease. Within the Republican Party, which holds a majority of seats in Congress, voters with more conservative preferences on immigration and other issues have been more active in recent years than other party members. As long as that continues to be the case, Republican politicians will feel that they need to push restrictive immigration policies if they wish to remain in office, even if the majority of their constituents feel otherwise.

As more and more people respond to President Trump's immigration agenda with protests and participation in electoral politics, this asymmetry in engagement may change.

Deborah Schildkraut is a professor of political science, Tufts University.

Opinion: ACA changes and pre-existing conditions

By Marcia G. Ory, The Conversation

A widely shared *New Yorker* cartoon heralded "70 as the new 50" with the implications that being 50 was a joyous and healthy age. More than 10 years later, we are seeing that being in one's 50s may have its drawbacks, at least in terms of current

American political debates around repealing key provisions of the Affordable Care Act.

Coverage for pre-existing conditions, which has reduced the uninsured rate by an estimated 22 percent, has been a cornerstone of the ACA. It is generally viewed as the most popular element of ACA by proponents and opponents alike.

But now, that coverage is imperiled by proposed challenges to mandated health insurance coverage. The Justice Department in June supported lawsuits filed by attorneys generals in 20 states that claim that coverage for pre-existing conditions was eliminated when the administration's tax bill was passed in December 2017. In that bill, Congress repealed the penalty, starting in 2019, for people who do not have health coverage.

While the jury is still out on the ultimate fate of the ACA, dismantling preexisting coverage would be particularly troubling for those in their 50s and early 60s who have not yet reached 65, the age at which most people become eligible for Medicare.

As a researcher focused on public health and aging issues, I think it's important that health care needs for our aging population be viewed within a broader family and societal context. Additionally, it's important to recognize that aging is a lifelong process. Health and well-being in the later years are largely determined by what are known as the social determinants of health, or factors within a society that influence a person's health. These factors include such things as race, ethnicity, education, income, employment and even neighborhood environments.

I research these social determinants and how they affect people's access to health care and their health. I see several issues at the intersection of aging, health, and health care policy and research that can inform this debate.

Far-reaching consequences

According to a recent Kaiser Family Foundation report, it is likely that more than a quarter of American adults under age 65 have pre-existing health conditions that would make them uninsurable for individual market coverage under pre-ACA underwriting practices. But it is those 55 to 64 and who number more than 40 million, who would be most affected.

Upward of 80 percent of people in the 55 to 64 age group have conditions such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart conditions, asthma/chronic lung disease, diabetes, cancer or behavioral health disorders that would affect their qualification for insurance. This generation, also referred to as "Generation Jones," are one generation behind those already eligible for Medicare and hence less affected by such policy changes. Those in Generation Jones because of their health and employment status are likely to be most impacted if mandates against pre-existing exclusions are overturned.

Chronic diseases increase with age

Most chronic conditions are aging-related, meaning they are more prevalent in the later years of life. However, chronic disease rates start accelerating in mid-life. About 50 percent of people between 45 and 64 have multiple chronic conditions, compared to 18 percent among those 18-44 years of age. The early onset and progression of unchecked obesity-related common chronic conditions, such as heart disease, diabetes and cancer, are linked to increased governmental health care costs once eligible for Medicare.

Without access to health care, the near-elderly are less likely to take advantage of proven clinical preventive services, such as mammograms, influenza vaccines or counseling to increase physical activity and referrals to community exercise programs, that can help detect many chronic conditions, delay their onset or reduce disease progression and further complications.

The negative consequences of health care coverage policy changes, while concentrated among the near-elderly, will not be universal. Public health experts note that effects will be more pronounced among those with lower incomes or racial and ethnic minorities. These groups are likely to find it most difficult to obtain affordable insurance if pre-existing conditions were grounds for denying coverage.

Why the Joneses are so vulnerable

On the surface, Generation Jones may look like a more stable group relative to younger groups in terms of workforce participation and insurability. However, many in Generation Jones have less access to coverage than the first wave of boomers who have already crossed into the Medicare safety net.

Concerns about job security have always been a hallmark for Generation Jones. Low-income Joneses are especially vulnerable being in jobs without adequate health care coverage. Or, even if currently covered by employee health insurance, Joneses are at risk of losing coverage if they lose their jobs or decide to retire before 65. Despite recent upticks in the economy, people 55 and older if unemployed still find it harder to find comparable jobs

Rescinding or denying health care coverage for pre-existing conditions impacts Joneses and their family members too. An estimated 50 percent of Americans live in households where a family member would be denied coverage for pre-existing conditions. Concerns about health care coverage are impacting critical life choices for families. Even those who are Medicare age are reluctant to retire because they want to keep employee-sponsored health care coverage for their younger spouses who have pre-existing conditions.

Solutions for the near-elderly

Many think tank institutes and aging advocacy groups, such as AARP, are calling attention to the probable plight of the

near-elderly if protections for pre-existing conditions are eliminated in future health care insurance policy mandates – reiterating many arguments heard in the early 2000s.

I believe it is critically important to keep these issues in the forefront, especially as policies are being debated. Generation Jones may not be as visible as their older baby boomer siblings, but they have the potential to be active players in this debate, as they have already demonstrated in prior elections.

Our society can not overlook untoward consequences for those in the 55-64 age group who become uninsurable. Moreover, I do not think the bigger policy questions can be ignored. For example, will saving money today result in short-term savings that only push the costs of care to another funding stream when Generation Jones become eligible for Medicare?

It is hard to imagine protection for pre-existing coverage for those 55-64 being overturned given the universal appeal of this mandate and the policy reports already being generated. The current health care coverage debate is part of a larger public health discussion about the health and productivity of future generations of Americans. The last wave of the baby boomers – Generation Jones – will not turn 65 and reach Medicare eligibility for another 10 years. Thus, I believe an enduring solution is needed now to address this long-term problem for the current group of near-elderly.

Marcia G. Ory is a regents and distinguished professor, associate vice president for Strategic Partnerships and Initiatives, Texas A&M University.

Letter: Hard Rock gives back at Bread & Broth

To the community,

Hosting their first Adopt A Day of Nourishment sponsorship, Lake Tahoe Hard Rock sponsored B&B's Monday meal on June 25.

It was really great having the newest hotel and casino on Tahoe's South Shore hosting a community dinner for the needy in the community. Hard Rock's partnering with B&B demonstrates their commitment to being involved with the community and being a part of the solution to improving the quality of life for our community's at risk population.

"Bread & Broth demonstrates Hard Rock's motto of 'love all, serve all' through the great service it does for the local South Shore community," commented Brandie Warr, Hard Rock's director of resort marketing. "Hard Rock Hotel & Casino was proud to serve alongside B&B's many volunteers during on Monday meal adopt a day."

Joining Brandie from Hard Rock were fellow team members Susan McDonough, Cheryle Scarborough, Kimberly Templeton and Beatrice Vattima.

Thanks to their \$300 donation, Hard Rock and its congenial and enthusiastic crew served 106 dinner guests a hot, nutritious meal of hearty meatloaf, mashed potatoes, and a veggie medley. Sponsoring a dinner not only helps alleviate hunger, it provides a sense comfort and caring, bringing hope to the most vulnerable. Bread & Broth thanks Hard Rock Hotel & Casino and looks forward to their continued support of our program's goal of easing hunger in our community.

Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth

Opinion: Spend some time in Redding

By Joe Mathews

If you love California and don't know where to go for summer vacation, here's a suggestion: Go north!

Start in Redding. Sure, the city of 92,000 at the northern end of the Sacramento Valley might not be on your list of preferred destinations, but its region, the North State, is crucial to understanding California.



Joe Mathews

And as a vacation spot, it has practical advantages—cheaper and less crowded than the coast, and cooler than the deserts.

Is there really anything to do in Redding? You bet. For starters, you can visit California's greatest 21st-century structure, the Sundial Bridge.

Sure, the Golden Gate Bridge is more beautiful, but the Sundial, which opened in 2004, combines a stunning look with technological magic. Part of the 710-foot-long span's appeal lies in the "goose-in-flight" design by the world's leading architect of bridges, the Spaniard Santiago Calatrava. The glass-decked bridge has a 217-foot-tall pylon that, via

cables, holds up the structure while also casting a shadow that make it a sundial.

Another dimension of its power comes from its setting: It spans California's grandest and most important river, the Sacramento, at a spot 300 miles upriver from where its waters reach San Pablo Bay. Tight-fisted locals still grumble over the \$24 million price tag. But the span is already an icon, connecting Redding's robust network of trails and providing another amenity for Turtle Bay, Redding's 300-acre, education-oriented park.

The bridge has another virtue: proximity, via a short drive or longer bike ride along the Sacramento River Trail, to California's most beautiful waterwork.

The Shasta Dam makes news for the controversy over whether to raise it to store even more water in California's largest reservoir. But the dam itself is also a place of unsurpassed beauty, especially at sunset. People gather on top of the dam to walk, bike, or just admire the magisterial view of the valley.

One recent evening, I was greeted by the graduating class of U-Prep, or University Preparatory School, a top Redding charter school. They were flirting, reminiscing, and saying their goodbyes before beginning their adult lives. The dam, holding the water upon which the state relies, feels like a door, the front gate where California really begins.

Since Redding is very hot in summer, it's best to head from the dam into the mountains (provided there are no fires in your path) and visit the state's most mystical peak, Mount Shasta. This 14,180-foot volcano is a true California emblem—volatile, stunning, rising so dramatically that it doesn't quite seem to fit the landscape, or the earth.

"When I first caught sight of it (Mount Shasta) over the braided folds of the Sacramento Valley," John Muir famously

wrote in 1874, "I was fifty miles away and afoot, alone and weary. Yet all my blood turned to wine, and I have not been weary since."

While it's possible to put crampons on your hiking boots to visit Shasta's glaciers or—if you have money —take a helicopter flight around it, I prefer to commune with the mountain from Lake Siskiyou. You can even rent chalets there from the Mount Shasta Resort, a decidedly unpretentious place. Its developer, John Fryer, is also an inventor. He introduced me to a new alternative form of golf he dreamed up—Whing Golf, where instead of having to use a set of golf clubs, you can throw all your shots using a patented club, inspired by a jai-alai cesta. A round of Whing Golf at the resort is \$16, cart included.

"The power of the mountain is you can see it from everywhere," Fryer told me as we admired Mt. Shasta on the course. "It's spiritual."

From there, head north into Yreka, population 7,600, the unofficial capital of the quixotic decades-long effort to turn this part of California into its own state, to be called Jefferson.

In Yreka's downtown, you'll understand the nod to separation. State cars and trucks are common here. Many people I met work for state agencies, and thus know better than city slickers our state government's many failings. Familiarity breeds contempt.

But the region is effectively subsidized by the rest of the state, so breaking away would be fiscally disastrous.

Still, if you folks in the North State really want to secede, I'm OK with it, on three conditions. First, that you don't take all our water with you. Second, that you agree to link your statehood bid with Puerto Rico's own campaign for statehood, to give the disaster-decimated island more power

and to preserve political balance (given Jefferson's Republican proclivities and the island's Democratic nature).

Third, and most important, that you don't put up any barriers to prevent Californians from visiting as often as we like.

Joe Mathews writes the Connecting California column for Zócalo Public Square.