

The Voter

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF MENDOCINO COUNTY

January/February 2012

Jane Person, President

Charlene McAllister, Editor

JANUARY 10 LWV MEETING TO FOCUS ON NATIONAL ISSUES

The League of Women Voters was born with a dedication to an individual's right to vote and the January 10, 2012, Program meeting is the time for the local League to get down to grass roots and "vote" for issues that give direction to the national League for the next two years.

More than 800 state and local Leagues in 50 states, Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and Hong Kong, participate in this process called "Program."

The League Program in-

volves planning, study, consensus and input by local Leagues that result in adoption of action and issues at the national convention to be held in 2012 in Washington, D.C.

In odd-numbered years, the same process goes on at the state level.

In 2012, recommendations from local Leagues could include the proposal of a new national study, review/update of a current position, or recommendation of a program for convention concurrence proposed by local or state Leagues.

Current public policy positions include Representative Government, International Relations, Natural Resources and Social Policy.

Please join us for a discussion of these issues and voice your opinion. Everyone will have a chance to discuss and "vote" on priorities for the National League. Members Jary Stavely and Becky Bowen will give background for discussion.

The meeting is 10 a.m. at the C.V. Starr Center, Fort Bragg. Coffee will be served at 9:30 a.m.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE	:
EDITOR'S MESSAGE	2
FEDERAL EDUCATION STUDY	3
MCRPD Observer Report	4
CALENDAR	6
LEAGUE PROFILE: PRISCILLA COMEN	7
LOOKING AT 2011 AND 2012	8, 9
MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION	10

"LOOKING FOR LOCAL LEADERS" AT THE FEBRUARY 14 GENERAL MEETING

What are good leaders? How do we find them and how do we keep them? What is leadership anyway?

Our League Program committee has put together a panel that will talk about leadership at the local level at our general League meeting on Valentine's Day. We know all about national leaders. We see them every night on network news with the perfect hair, perfect wardrobe and all the trimmings that come with a professional staff.

But what about local leaders? We see them every day at school, in the grocery store and around the neighborhood. They are us and it's up to us to find out how to choose leaders, how to nurture them, how to reward them and how to keep them.

Panel members include Ann Cole, executive director of Leadership Mendocino; Steve Lund, former Fort Bragg Unified School District Superintendent; and Susanne Norgard, execudirector of the Community Foundation of Mendocino. At least one more panel member will be included.

If you know someone who seeks to be a local leader, this is a good place for them to start the journey. Please invite them to the meeting at 10 a.m. Tues., Feb. 14 at the C.V. Starr Center, Fort Bragg.

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Editor's Message:

League Board Prepares To Take Position, Action On Fort Bragg Tax Issue

One of the strengths of the League of Women Voters is that we do not take stands on issues where we have no position



These positions are based on studies and dictate to us when and how we can support or oppose measures. Barbara Matheson, LWVMC Action Chair, has looked carefully at the State League positions on State and Local Finance and has been in correspondence with LWVC regarding the proposed special municipal sales tax election March 6, 2012, in the City of Fort Bragg (story on Page 4). Here is an overview of the rationale behind our ability to support the sales tax measure based on the State and Local Finance positions:

The position states that we can support measures to ensure revenues both sufficient and flexible enough to meet changing needs for state and local government services. Adequacy and flexibility are key criteria to be met and while League normally does not support measures that have no sunset clause, therefore we must decide whether the flexibility that comes from non-residents paying a larger percentage of this tax outweigh the other concerns.

While LWVMC hasn't yet taken a stand in favor of the Fort Bragg Sales Tax measure, your board has been in agreement that this measure is one we feel is a sensible solution to a difficult problem.

The Board will vote regarding support for the measure after the January program meeting.

Members are welcome to stay for this brief meeting.

Charlene McAllister

Note: League President Jane Person is out of town. Her president's column will return in the next VOTER issue.

LWV Members Complete Study of Federal Role in Public Education

By Ken Matheson

Thank you to the 25 people who participated in the consensus meeting for the study on the Federal Role in K-12 Public Education. The level of participation made the meeting very successful. Your committee of Jary Stavely, Doris Hammer, Barbara Auerbach, and Ken Matheson felt the results of the meeting made their work meaningful.

We had a group consensus on all but two of the questions. Our report has been filed and will be part of National's final consensus. We had concerns about some of the wording of the questions that the committee passed on to the National League: We agreed that all students preK-12 receive a quality education and that public education is important to perpetuate a strong and viable democracy. However, we had no consensus on what the current role of the federal government should be.

We do want the federal government involved in programs we think are important for the "common good" which we define to be equity in funding public education.



Ken Matheson facilities consensus study.

We believe in national common core standards but with as much flexibility for state and local control as possible. If question "4" would have asked us directly if we believed in national standards we would have had a consensus. However, the way the question was written we could not arrive at a consensus. In our statement on this section we say that we would ultimately like to have local control of student evaluation that considers all aspects of the student not just how they do on a national or state test. We would like to see less of the fill in the bubble type of testing from the state and/or national levels.

Regarding funding and equity issues, we had consensus on each question.

We define the "common good" to be the need to equalize education funding. We supported the way the Elementary and Secondary Education Act worked in the 1960's and 70's. During those decades most of the funding was given to low-income city schools. This distribution of federal funds had a dramatic effect of improving the education of students in those schools. We would like to see federal mandates return to this type of concentrated funding in the poorest schools. This type of funding would enhance the "common good" by making the funding of education more equitable.

The National League will send us their final consensus report and recommended new education position that will be adopted or rejected at the 2012 National Convention. We will keep you informed of the final results.

League Observation Report.

Special District, City of Fort Bragg Link Up To Support C.V. Starr Center with Sales Tax

The City of Fort Bragg and the Mendocino Coast Recreation and Park District have come together in a historic effort to save the financially-strapped C.V. Starr Community Starr Center in Fort Bragg.

On March 6, 2012, Fort Bragg citizens will vote on a measure that authorizes the City Council to levy a 1/2 cent special city sales tax that will provide dedicated revenue to the C.V. Starr Community Center.

This Special Sales Tax Ordinance, if approved by 2/3 of the votes on the mail-in ballot, will transfer title of the community center property and all improvements, fixtures and furnishings to the City of Fort Bragg. The Recreation and Park District in turn will assign all revenues it receives from the Fort Bragg Redevelopment Agency and 45 per cent of the district's property tax revenues to the city to be used solely for parks and recreation purposes within city limits.

Cost of the special election has been estimated at \$15,000 to \$20,000 by the Mendocino County Registrar of Voters and the proposal will be the only item on the ballot.

Fort Bragg residents will vote again in April to elect a city councilman to fill the vacancy left by the death of Council Member Jere Melo.

In a special Recreation and Park Board meeting December 20 at the C.V. Starr Center, board members passed a motion to continue to keep the doors of the center open under a "bare bones" financial plan. The board also discussed ways to solicit more donations.

Acting Executive Director Jim Hurst said the district would "run out of money" for the Starr Center in February unless additional funding or donations materialize. In order to keep the center open and the district operating under a "barebones" cost plan, some \$13,000 per month must be raised between

February and June when the city assumes ownership of the facility (if the sales tax measure is approved by voters). Even then, Hurst said he had not begun talks with the city about funding during the transition period.

The board also approved a resolution that authorizes Hurst and board attorney Jim Jackson to file for Chapter 9 bankruptcy for the special district before the end of the year if necessary. Chapter 9 bankruptcy applies to municipalities and special districts and allows them to deal with debts without jeopardizing assets, according to Jackson. In addition to shortage of funds to operate the C.V. Starr Community Center, the board also deals with shortages in operation for the Mendocino Recreation Center and an unresolved issue with its bank regarding a note on purchase of land east of Fort Bragg that was to be developed by the district first as a golf course and ultimately a regional park.

Board members and Hurst stressed that if the sales tax is passed, none of the revenues would be applied to debt management of the proposed regional park land—or any other district facilities.

Two new members have taken seats on the district board: Mary Cesario Weaver and Maryellen Shepherd, appointed by the County **Board of Supervisors** November 1, 2011. These new members replaced David Yeomans and Jason Hurst, who resigned. Ms. Weaver has lived on the coast more than 30 years and worked as a realtor for more than 20 years. She has served on the Fort Bragg Planning Commission and is an active member of the coastal community. Ms. Sheppard has owned her own land appraisal company since 1981 and has been an active volunteer in the Fort Bragg community and schools for 30 years.

A copy of the district's cash flow chart through June, 2012 and (prepared on Dec. 13) is on the following page.

MCRPD BARE BONES Projected Cash Flow July 1, 2011 thru June 30, 2012 Prepared 12/13/11

Prepared 12/13/11	PRO	ACTUAL	PROJ	ACTUAL	PBO	ACTUAL	PROJ	ACTUAL	PBOL	ACTUAL	DBO.I	DBO.	1.080	1000	1048	1.000	1000	
OPERATING REVENUES	111-1131	7/1-7/31	871-8/31	6/1-8/31	9/1-9/30	8/1-8/30	10/1-10/31	10/1-10/31	11/1-1/30	11/1-11/30	12/1-12/31	1/1-1/31	2/1-2/28	3/1-3/31	47-4/30	5/1-5/31	671-6/30	TOTALS
For Braggistan Center Mendocino	4,841	6,461	13,000	15,072	48,830 7,580	37,101 5,802	30,000 16,928	20,505	14,200 4,232	15,152 5,287	14,200	14,200 5,060	14,200	14,200 5,520	14,200	14,200 4,324	9,588	314,539 123,098
Kudos/Assets TOTAL REVENUES	20,000	20,014	4,000 82,000	17,112	34,635	34,836	51,000	40,301	42,000 80,432	35,916 56,355	32,000	28,000	30,000	35,000	31,000	38,000	28,000	370,179
OPERATING EXPENSES					-						<u>.</u>				200	tac'oo		
Salaries and Wages Kindoc/Acente Worke	60,000	56,802	84,000	43,031	74,000	44,714	35,500	37,912	20,000	21,544	21,500	21,500	21,500	21,500	21,500	21,500	21,500	354,503
Payroli Taxes	17,000	18,472	21,000	15,956	23,000	19,203	15,480	15,927	7,000	7,914	7,900	7,800	7,900	7,900	7,900	2,900	7,900	132,772
Kudos/Assets Payroš Taxes Oneratino Exnenses	79 570	5R 478	60 570	1,410	66 570	2,820	2,820	2,560	2,900	2,750	2,400	2,600	2,800	3,200	2,800	3,500	2,600	29,440
TOTAL EXPENSES	149,570	131,752	154,570	166,337	163,570	151,731	128,570	139,912	104,370	102,617	87,800	87,000	88,200	83,600	89,200	96,900	97,000	1,317,049
NET OPERATING INCOM % Recovery	(50,081) 0.67	(33,470) 0.75	(72,570)	(73,579) 0.56	(72,525) 0.56	(73,992) 0.51	(30,642)	(41,998)	(43,938) 0.58	(46,262)	(29,824)	(39,740)	(33,040)	(38,880)	(22,840)	(40,376)	(35,232)	(509,233) 0.61
OTHER INCOME & EXP																		
Lease/Purchase Regional I	(1,667)	(1,667)	(1,667)	(1,867)	(1,667)	(1,667)	(1,667)	(1,667)	(1,667)	(1,867)	(1,867)	(1,667)	(1,667)	(1,667)	(1.667)	(1,667)	(1,667)	(20,004)
SCORE Pledges	8,000	977,7	7,700	7,027	7,000	7,164	7,000	4,853	6,500	10,990	6,500	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	0 50,810
Save the Dream Donations Property Taxes Dedautonment See	390,575	390,575	3,500	3,678		1,400		250		1,970	6,175				24,582	4		9,795 462,835
Solar Rebate Prop 40 income	3,000	3,175	3,000	3,334	3,000	3,041	2,700	2,765	2,400	2,421	2,612	2,612	2,612	2,612	2,612	2,612	2,604	33,042 10,000
Prop 40 Expenses Real Water	1,000	ř						į			180						1,000	1,180
Special Event Exp	700	(1,464)		(449)			38,000	507,71	4,280	0,240	<u>.</u>		8,400		1,500			1,913)
transfer from gen'l acct Transfer from fund accts										(6,200)	(8,855)							(16,055)
TOTAL OTHER INC/EXP	412,908	405,676	12,533	11,823	8,333	9,938	27,033	23,904	11,433	13,810	48,136	7,045	15,445	2,045	28,127	14,090	3,037	583,176
NET CASH FLOW BEG CASH BALANCE	362,827	372,208 (184,935)	(60,037)	(81,856) 187,271	(64,192)	(64,055) 125,615	(3,609)	(16,094) 61,581	(32,505)	(32,452)	18,312 11,015	(32,695)	(17,595)	(36,635)	5,287 (57,799)	(26,286)	(32,195) (78,798)	73,943
ENDING CASH BALANCE		187,271		125,615		61,561		43,467		11,015	29,327	(3,369)	(20,964)	(57,799)	(52,512)	(78,798)	(110,993)	
= Restricted Funds				,														
FUND BALANCES Mendo * Kudos 4 kids *									6,100	6,100	12,055							
Fat Tire New Pool		8	8	931	931	834	931	93-	8	931	2,500							
SCORE 2		7,774	9,174	7,774	11,411	11,411	12,411	20,208	21,208	21,833	22,933							
Tile Project	,	1,300	1,300	8,	1,300	1,300	1,300	9,701	3,701	3,851	3,851							
Score I Capital Project FUND BALANCE AVAILABLE	315	2,000	2,000 14,861	2,000 13,461	2,000	2,000	2,000	29,631	2,835 36,831	2,835	2,835							
Fund Balance Transfer TOTAL FUND BALANCE		13.461	14.861	13.461	17.088	- 17.598	18.598	. 20 631	25.824	27.706	54 064							
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Calendar*

- Tuesday, January 10, 2012, General Meeting League of Women Voters Annual Program Meeting 10 a.m. C.V. Starr Center, Fort Bragg Coffee served at 9:30 a.m.
- Tuesday, February 7, 2012, Board of Directors Meeting 9:30 a.m. Fort Bragg Library
- Tuesday, February 14, 2012, General Meeting Looking for Local Leaders Panel Discussion 10 a.m. C.V. Starr Center, Fort Bragg Coffee served at 9:30 a.m.
- Friday, March 16, 2012
 Annual Meet and Greet Your Elected Officials
 5-7 p.m. Caspar Community Center
- Tuesday, April 3, 2012, Board of Directors Meeting 9:30 a.m. Fort Bragg Library
- Tuesday, April 10, 2012, General Meeting National Privatization Study 10 a.m. C.V. Starr Center, Fort Bragg Coffee served at 9:30 a.m.
- Tuesday, May 8, 2012, Annual Business Meeting And Election of Officers, Board Members Time To Be Announced Caspar Community Center

All General Meetings open to the public at no charge
All Board Meetings open to members

*Please note we will keep members informed about any changes
in location involving the C.V. Starr Center

LWV Launches New Study on Privatizing Government

As local and state governments continue to slash services, an eye is cast toward private purchase, leasing or administration. Privatization already is a fact in the U.S. and with few—or no rules—to protect tax-payer assets. League members voted at the 2010 national convention to study the issue and develop a position. At issue is the transfer of federal, state or local government services, assets or functions to the private sector. At risk are transparency, accountability and preservation of the common good. The LWVMC national study committee will present information and consensus questions at the April 10 general meeting at the C.V. Starr Center, Fort Bragg. If you would like to participate in this study, please contact Barbara Matheson at ken@mcn.org or Charlene McAllister at charmac@mcn.org

Looking Toward Program About Local Leadership

By Charlene McAllister

In preparation for the February program on Leadership, much "Googling" took place in a search for an adequate definition

Among the many sites visited, one that struck a chord was a piece titled "Key Competencies for Improving Local Government" published by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UNHABITAT) in Kenya.

This organization believes strongly that without strong local institutions and motivated staff, reforms will not deliver the desired outcomes. It also recognizes many local authorities and organizations lack the human resources required to meet the needs of a community. Training and capacity-building are considered a wise investment into the future sustainability of cities and communities.

The work they are doing is based on a belief in democracy and the realization that there is a need to reach and influence public officials and communities with the desire to improve and promote good local governance. How League-like is that?

MISSION STATEMENT
THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS,
A NON-PARTISAN POLITICAL
ORGANIZATION,
ENCOURAGES INFORMED
AND ACTIVE
PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT,
STRIVES TO INCREASE
UNDERSTANDING OF
MAJOR PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES,
AND INFLUENCES PUBLIC POLICY
THROUGH EDUCATION
AND ADVOCACY.

Profiles in League—Priscilla Comen

By Susan Mitchell

Priscilla and Richard Comen started coming to stay "Same Time Next Year" at the Heritage House many years before they moved here in 1985. As Priscilla puts it "we've always lived on the coast: Malibu, Cambria and now Mendocino." They were drawn to this area because of the musical, artistic and cultural opportunities missing on the central coast and so abundantly available here. They bought property and built their house—a yurt—where they have lived ever since.

Priscilla joined the League as soon as she arrived. She hadn't been a member previously but had always been

very active politically. She helped stop a nuclear reactor being built in Malibu and helped save an historic bank building in Cambria. She chose to join the League because we study issues and take positions that help the community make informed decisions on issues.

Priscilla has been president of the League twice and once served as co-president with Marcet Makela. She has been head of the budget as well as other committees, but the job she most enjoyed was moderating candidate forums, especially asking candidates probing questions.

When asked if her involvement in the League had changed her view of politics she answered with an emphatic "NO, I'm always disap-

pointed in how politics work." She "wishes the League had more power to change things." One of the issues that she feels we should revisit is immigration because "too many innocent wonderful people are getting hurt."

One of her other many activities is working at the Mendocino Community Library which is open 6 days a week and fully staffed by volunteers. She writes a monthly book

review in the *Mendocino Beacon* and is a community reporter for the paper. She also is at work writing a historical novel about Elizabeth Cady Stanton.



Former League Presidents Mildred Benioff (right) and Priscilla Comen.

When asked what she had learned from the League she quickly answered "how to keep quiet when it is necessary." She feels the League is doing a great job of "keeping it together and organizing" for the sake of the community. She enjoys belonging to the League and says it makes her feel useful. She says she continues to learn about issues and passes this knowledge on to others including her own children who are now voting. Of most importance to Priscilla are the League's educational election publications (especially the Spanish language editions) that she helped distribute for many years.

REMEMBERING 2011: LWV MEMBERS IN OUR MEMORIES AND IN THE COMMUNITY

April, 2011—Juanita Bullard Memorial Scholarship, College of the Redwoods Fort Bragg Campus

Laura Nokes, 2011 recipient of the Juanita Bullard Memorial Scholarship at College of the Redwoods, visited her grandparents on Huckleberry Lane in Fort Bragg as a child.

Ms. Nokes, who graduated from Walnutwood High School in Rancho Cordova, earned a degree in business software from Heald College and went to work to help her family after her father's death. Her dream was to write and the dream commenced at College of the Redwoods Fort

Bragg campus. She graduated last spring and made plans to continue at the University of California, Santa Cruz, where she will major in English.

The CR scholarship honors the memory of Juanita Bullard, long-time League member, who died in October, 2008. The scholarship is funded by an anonymous donor. The scholarship was awarded to Ms. Nokes at the April, 2011, scholarship ceremony on the college's Fort Bragg campus.



December, 2011—Former League Presidents Return to the Coast to "Do Good" for Food Bank



From left: League friend, Mary Willoughby; Mildred Benioff; League board member Pat Dunbar and Helen Herbert gathered with the DoGooders at the Little River Inn in December to raise \$3,660 for the Fort Bragg Food Bank. Ms. Benioff founded the annual benefit more than 25 years ago and Ms. Herbert worked with her. Both are former League presidents. Luncheon was prepared by Little River Inn Chef Marc Dym. The Inn donated venue, food and staff (including Inn event coordinator and League member Hilarie Coate) for the annual holiday event attended by more than 70 participants.

November, 2011—League Members Embrace Action to Support County Library Sales Tax Measure

The LWVMC adopted a local position on libraries in 1991 that supports improved library services and facilities which promote economy and utilization. The League was one of the first organizations to step forward to support the 2011 sales tax measure to provide revenue to restore the struggling county library system's operating hours, personnel and pro-

grams. Members visited all county branches, spoke at public meetings, recorded messages for community television and gathered support at tables set up at post offices and grocery stores. Included in results of the Consolidated District Election November 8, 2011: Measure A (library sales tax) received 75.66 per cent of the vote.



Reading Room quilt stitched by a patron who donated her creation to the Willits Public Library

LOOKING TOWARD 2012: MEETING, GREETING, READING, STUDYING, VOTING Friday, March 16, 2012—Hold the Date for the League's Annual Meet and Greet Your Elected Officials



Superior Court Judge Ann Moorman at 2010 Meet and Greet reception in Fort Bragg.

By Barbara Matheson

Mendocino County Sheriff Tom Allman, Fort Bragg City Council Member Dan Gjerde, College of the Redwoods Trustee Barbara Rice, and Mendocino Fire Board member Gwen Jacobson have already responded to our "Save the Date" notice sent to them and 60 other elected officials about the League's seventh annual Meet and Greet reception. Be sure Friday, March 16, 2012, is marked on your calendar and plan to attend this event from 5 to 7 p.m. at our new Meet and Greet location in the Caspar Community Center. Hope to see you there.



Sheriff Tom Allman at 2011 Meet and Greet

National League of Women Voters Reacts To Legislatures' Changes in Voting Rights

WASHINGTON, DC—LWVUS President Elisabeth MacNamara called on the Department of Justice "to act more forcefully and without delay to insure fair elections in 2012," in a December 13 appearance in Austin, TX.

MacNamara said the League was disappointed in the Department of Justice's record on voting rights enforcement. The statement came as a reaction to antivoter laws passing in state legislatures "at an alarming rate," according to a League press release.

Florida League President Deirdre Macnab recently announced the Florida League's decision to stop registering voters because of the state's new restrictive third-party voter registration laws.

Eight states have passed photo ID bills at the polls in 2011 and similar laws are pending or predicted in Minnesota, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Virginia.

The LWV Education Fund's Public Advocacy for Voter Protection Project has been created to ensure all eligible voters, particularly underserved populations, can exercise this right protected in the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Updates in State, Local Elections

- March 6, 2012—Special all-mail municipal (sales tax) election, City of Fort Bragg (last day to register is February 20, 2012)
- April 10, 2012—Special Municipal Election of Fort Bragg City Council Member (last day to register is March 26, 2012)
- June 5, 2012—Presidential Primary and Statewide Direct Primary election
- November 6, 2012—General Election

New in 2012:

As of June, 2012, California voters will see presidential primary candidates and candidates for the parties' county central committee offices on ballots according to political party affiliation. However, for statewide offices (state constitutional offices, U.S. Congress, and state legislative offices), all candidates running in the Statewide Primary Election will appear on a single primary election ballot and voters can vote for any candidate. In this new Top-Two Open Primary system, the top two votegetters (not the top vote-getter from each qualified political party) will move on to the general election. This change occurred after California voters approved Proposition 14 on June 8, 2010.

&				
Membership in The League of Women Voters of Mendocino County is a bargain and a statement. You will be saying that you are committed to the ballot as a means for change and for providing non-biased information to voters. The issues your League follows are those that affect every resident's family and community. Get involved in the League of Women Voters. Dues are due now.				
Please consider joining at one of these levels:				
Susan B. Anthony Individual Membership \$55				
Amelia Bloomer Two-member Household Membership \$80				
Elizabeth Cady Stanton	Membership \$ 100			
Carrie Chapman Catt M	embership \$250 or more			
Donation				
Please send me more information	n:			
Name/Names:				
Address				
	StateZIP			
PhoneE-m	ail:			
Please make checks payable to: League of Women Voters of Mendocino County				
And mail to: LWVMC				
P.O. Box 1128				
İ	Fort Bragg, CA 95437			
<u> </u>				

The League of Women Voters
of Mendocino County
P.O. Box 1128
Fort Bragg, CA 95437
707 937-4952

www. mendo.ca.lwvnet.org

www.smartvoter.org

www.lwv.org

www.ca.lwv.org

Final district maps of 53 California Congressional, 40 State Senate, 80 State Assembly, and 4 Board of Equalization districts (maps effective in June, 2012, election):

www.CaVotes.org

Mendocino County
Public Television
Meeting Coverage
www.mendocoasttv.org

Library of Congress Legislation Status www.thomas.loc.gov