

Wendler, Tim

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To: Wendler, Tim
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July 31, 2008

**The Portantino Press:
News from Assemblymember Anthony Portantino
Election - Budget - Education Event - Legislation - Mendota -
College Tour / DARK KNIGHT - The Bella**



Dear Tim and Joanne,

It's been a little busy these last couple of months. Trying to shepherd my policy agenda through the legislature and finding someone to fix a leak in the roof of my house and to patch the living room ceiling - the usual schedule. I've also had some fun kicking off the summer with outdoor concerts in Temple City, Eagle Rock and La Canada - I haven't made it to the Levitt Pavilion in Pasadena yet, but I'm hoping to get there soon. Since I live close to Memorial Park in LCF, Elvis used my house to change costumes for one of the shows. Yes, Elvis! Summer's going way too fast and we're still without a budget. I believe that California is the last State in the nation to adopt a budget. Not a great distinction for the eighth largest economy in the world.

- Anthony

ELECTION

Thank you for your support on Primary Election Day. I'm honored to be nominated for re-election as your Assemblymember for the 44th District heading into November. What an exciting year we're all having and between today and November it's going to get even more riveting. Our Nation faces a tremendous decision as we deal with rising healthcare costs, out of control gas prices and historic foreign policy decisions. Yes We Can! Vote Obama!

BUDGET

The budget is still at a standstill. The Assembly Democratic Caucus has proposed a

balanced approach, cutting the deficit in half through cuts and closing the gap through increased revenues. Unfortunately, the bi-partisan solution necessary by our 2/3 voting majority threshold is still elusive. I continue to be hopeful that all will see the wisdom behind investing in our children's education. An educated population creates opportunity and economic stability. Under our current system, only 30% of students who enter Community College are prepared for college level work. Something has to be done and there's no better time than today to make it happen. From kindergarten through a four year degree, investments in public education return significantly to our economy and will help the next generation thrive in a global economy.

PUBLIC EDUCATION AT THE GRASSROOTS

Speaking of the budget, I'm very pleased to invite all advocates for public education to a discussion that I'll be hosting at the Rose Bowl Press Box from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. on Friday, August 8th. We'll be discussing the state of education in the current budget proposal as well as providing an opportunity for stakeholders from across the 44th Assembly District to share your previous efforts and identify possible future collaborations. I cannot say it often enough - public education is an investment that we must make, for our children and future generations as well as for the well-being of our state's economy and future workforce. Please let me know if you will be able to join us by contacting my district office at (626) 577-9944 or via email at julianne.hines@asm.ca.gov as space is limited.

LEGISLATION

I was disappointed that my efforts to reform breast cancer diagnosis coverage by health insurance companies stalled in the appropriations process. California's breast cancer coverage law was written over 20 years ago and needs to be updated for current technological advances and diagnostic guidelines. My bill was profiled in a recent Pasadena Star News editorial as a "common sense approach" to early detection. I'll be re-introducing it next year. I'm also close to having a new teacher credentialing initiative make it to the Governor's desk. In fact, I'm carrying this bill for the Administration. Additionally, I'm pushing legislation on behalf of foster children and Cal Grants for college students.

MENDOTA

I attended a hearing in the Central Valley community of Mendota at the invitation of my good friend Assemblymember Juan Arambula. I was moved by the heartfelt stories on how the water shortage is affecting both farm workers and farmers. As an urban/suburban Assemblymember, I don't often get exposed to agricultural issues and I learned a lot from all who spoke. I was quite distressed to hear about the farm workers who can't afford to pay \$4.50 for gas and are sleeping in the fields to save money. It's tough enough to raise children today when parents are at home, so imagine the impact on nurturing when economic disadvantage keeps a parent away, day and night. The median income for a "working" farm worker is \$10,000 per year.

COLLEGE TOURS - AND THE DARK KNIGHT

Everyday I count my blessings that I'm able to share so much with my children. After

leaving Mendota, I appreciate my time with them even more. Now that Sofia is entering her senior year, I've been taking her on college visits. It's a blast, as she actually will converse with me. If I could only get her to ask questions on the tour, I'd feel better, but she is 17, after all, and knows much more than I do. Thus far, we've visited UCLA, NYU, Sonoma State, San Francisco State, Dominican University, and University of San Francisco. This weekend the entire family is going to see UC Davis and UC Santa Cruz before we settle in for a cabin stay along the Sacramento River. You haven't lived until you see me fall on my face water skiing. Should be a fun weekend. Who knows where Sofia will end up, but it's been great spending time with her and seeing small, medium and large-sized colleges and universities. I don't know if it makes me feel young or old.

On feeling old, Sofia and some friends went to see THE DARK KNIGHT at City Walk (AT MIDNIGHT) last week. I'm still recovering from staying out till 4 AM. It was a great movie, but sadly, Sofia didn't want me to sit with her and her friends. Why was I there, you might ask? I just couldn't let my little girl stay out till 4 AM without a chaperone. But while they waited in line with a host of teens sporting painted Heath Ledger faces, I got to see GET SMART. A favorite TV show of mine growing up and a pretty good film, too. The mini crossbow in the bathroom scene was hilarious.

THE BELLA

Continues to be in her own world. To be six and focused on how many dead bees are floating in the pool or making forts out of blankets and deck furniture is just amazing to watch. Her imagination and energy have no end in sight... it makes me tired just thinking about it.

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"Always do right, this will gratify
some and astonish the rest" -
Mark Twain

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