



# Santa Cruz VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

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## Calendar

Tuesday

February 9, 2021

10 a.m. to noon

LWVSCC Board Meeting

Virtual meeting via Jitsi

To attend, email [rsvp@lwvsc.org](mailto:rsvp@lwvsc.org)

Saturday

March 6, 2021

11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Cannabis Impacts and Opportunities

Virtual meeting via Zoom

To attend, email [rsvp@lwvsc.org](mailto:rsvp@lwvsc.org)

Free and open to the public

## February Virtual Board Meeting

*Due to the pandemic, we will be using Jitsi, a secure and free video conferencing system, for our February 9 Board of Directors meeting, which will start at 10 a.m. To attend, send an email to [RSVP@lwvsc.org](mailto:RSVP@lwvsc.org).*



Chaparral Currant (*Ribes malvaceum*)

## Cannabis Impacts and Opportunities in Santa Cruz County

*A Panel Discussion Moderated by*

**Robin Bolster-Grant**

Attorney-at-Law

**Saturday**

**March 6, 2021**

**11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.**

*Virtual meeting via Zoom*

*Free and open to the public*

*To register, email*

[rsvp@lwvsc.org](mailto:rsvp@lwvsc.org)



Santa Cruz County has a long history of being in the forefront of the drive for cannabis legalization. Now that both medical and recreational cannabis use have been legalized in California, the hard work of how that will be implemented and what that will look like is just beginning. What effects will this burgeoning industry have on our county? Our League is taking a look at what the issues are and the benefits versus impacts of legalization.

On Saturday, March 6, Santa Cruz attorney Robin Bolster-Grant will lead a panel in a discussion of local cannabis issues, including licensing, enforcement, taxation, production, retail sales, environmental concerns, prevention of youth access to cannabis, cannabis production, and banking. Bolster-Grant spent 15 years as the Santa Cruz County Cannabis Licensing Officer, and she now works as an attorney in cannabis law at Rice, Luxon & Bolster-Grant, LLP. Also on the panel will be Bryce Berryessa, founder of the TreeHouse cannabis dispensary and co-founder of La Vida Verde (cannabis products) and cannabis industry advocate. (Other panelists to be announced.)

This virtual event will be held on Saturday, March 6 online via Zoom and is free and open to the public. The event starts at 11 a.m. and continues 12:30 p.m. An opportunity to ask questions follows the panel discussion. The Zoom room will be open 15 minutes in advance; please sign in early to help us start on time. To register, email [rsvp@lwvsc.org](mailto:rsvp@lwvsc.org). Registrants may submit questions in advance when they register.

## President's Message



While demagogues throughout history have stoked division as a path to power, the League of Women Voters encourages its diverse members to see what they have in common, engage in civil discourse, and reach consensus on issues after study and research.

There is great strength in the unity gained from the investigation of truth and facts and in exploring diverse points of view.

I want to thank our new and continuing members for your support, through your membership and donations, of the very important work of the League of Women Voters, a group at the forefront of the fight to make democracy work despite all the current challenges. In 2021, we will continue to use the positions developed from years of study to influence legislation at the state and national levels. As president, I look forward to helping face the challenges confronting our democracy with a nonpartisan group that has been a leader in the fight for human rights and education for over 100 years.

—Barbara Lewis, *President LWVSCC*

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## Social Media Help Wanted

If you enjoy being on social media, consider helping our League stay current on Facebook and other social media platforms. This would involve posting information about upcoming events and other items of interest. If you would like to help with keeping our social media up to date, send us an email at [newsletter@lwvsc.org](mailto:newsletter@lwvsc.org).

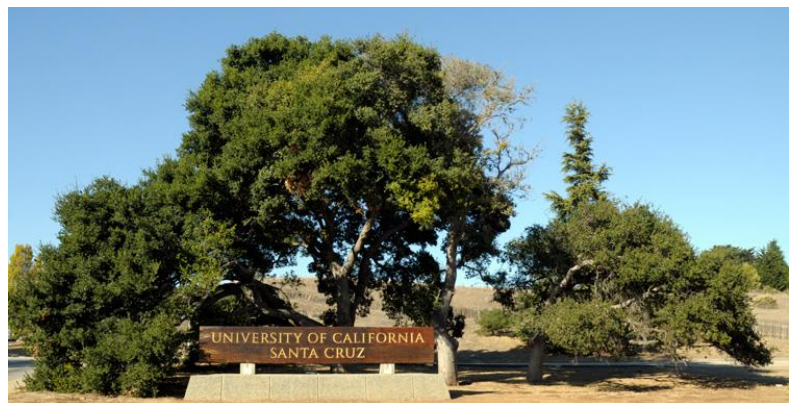
## UCSC's Plans Open for Comment

In January, the University of California Santa Cruz introduced its draft Long Range Development Plan and Environmental Impact Report for 2021 (online at [lrdrp.ucsc.edu](http://lrdrp.ucsc.edu)). They are open for public comment until March 8. They have also published a community handbook with a summary of the plans and their impacts.

UC Santa Cruz anticipates that under this plan, the on-campus population could grow from approximately 18,500 full-time equivalent (FTE)1 students and 2,800 FTE faculty and staff (2018-2019 academic year) to a potential enrollment of approximately 28,000 FTE students and 5,000 FTE faculty and staff by the 2040-2041 academic year. To accommodate the potential increased population, the 2021 LRDP proposes construction of an additional 3.1 million assignable square feet (asf) of academic and support building space and approximately 2.5 million asf of student and employee housing space.

The plan acknowledges that there could be and increased demand for housing in the area that would have a “significant and unavoidable” impact on the community. It also admits that, even with strict conservation measures and implementation of city drought measures, in drought years this increase in water usage would create a gap between water supply and demand that would require the city to find new water sources.

There will be virtual public hearings on February 3 and 4. The public may submit written comments until the end of the comment period (see the Revised Notice of Availability at [lrdrp.ucsc.edu](http://lrdrp.ucsc.edu) statement for details on how to submit comments and how to participate in the hearings).



## An Interview With Assemblymember Mark Stone

On January 22, members from three local Leagues interviewed State Assemblymember Mark Stone, who represents California's 29th Assembly District, via Zoom.

The interview began with a question on land use and climate. Assemblymember Stone commented on the importance of California's cap and trade program to get funds from polluters and the struggle with how to manage working forests, wetlands, and agricultural lands in a way that sequesters carbon and can help with reaching our goals. From his standpoint, Assemblymember Stone feels that while the working lands project has had some funding, it is not being used productively as it could be, and that the funding necessary to do that efficiently has been used in areas that are less productive. One of our biggest challenges, he said, is that 70% of our forest lands are in Federal control; the previous administration was not a good partner in land management, but he hopes that will change under the new administration. All working lands can be managed for multiple benefits, and wetlands are a very important part of how we sequester carbon and are part of how we manage our water supply issues. Some efforts have been made to address this, but, so far, the money has not been applied as well as he would like.

The second question dealt with housing and homelessness, zoning and affordability. Assemblymember Stone spoke of the tug-of-war between the state legislature and local governments. Land use has traditionally been the purview of local governments, but they have not always done a good job in providing for the breadth of housing necessary for people to live. The state has had lots of pushback on legislation that ensures a supply of multi-family dwellings and addresses infill issues. He tells local jurisdictions that if they show how they are addressing local housing needs, then he can help push back on the obligations put in place by the state; if they can't, then the state will step in.

Assemblymember Stone says that the time has come for communities to rethink traditional single-

family housing as created decades ago, and really look at how we want our communities designed, recognizing that we won't see the effects for decades as projects come online. He feels that the state would do better to use more "carrots" and fewer "sticks", and that, if given more incentives, communities would take their housing policies more seriously and understand the impact on local populations and the changing demographics and dynamics of who is looking for housing. "It's a difficult situation that is going to take us a long time to ultimately change," he said.



*State Assemblymember Mark Stone (Democrat, District 29) in a virtual interview with local League members.*

While building more housing has always been a high priority for the state legislature, Assemblymember Stone said that, currently, their biggest priority is working on the potential eviction crisis that's coming because of the pandemic.

The next question focused on equitable COVID-19 recovery. Assemblymember Stone noted that one of the foremost issues for the legislature is underserved communities, and that the legislature is pushing the administration to make sure that vaccine distribution is equitable for underserved and rural communities. He's concerned because the Governor's administration is talking about changing the tiers to be more clearly age-based, which will exacerbate the inequality of distribution that we are already seeing. When you look at who is providing essential services, he said, it's not just an age-based calculation. The legislature has been holding hearings about the proposed changes to the tier system, and is asking the administration to focus primarily on the equity question.



Membership in the League of Women Voters is open to men and women of voting age who are U.S. citizens. Others are welcome to join the League as associate members.

Send your check payable to League of Women Voters of Santa Cruz County or LWVSCC with this form to LWVSCC, Box 1745, Capitola, CA 95010-1745.

\_\_\_ \$65.00 Individual annual membership

\_\_\_ \$100.00 Two members in a household

\_\_\_ \$10.00 Student membership

\_\_\_ Contribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Checks made out to LWVSCC are not tax deductible.

To make a tax-deductible donation, write a separate check to LWVC Education Fund.

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The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

**Mark Stone interview attendees:** from LWVSCC—Barbara Lewis, Dorothy Fry, Pam Newbury, and Lydia Nogales Parker; from LWV San Jose/Santa Clara—Vicki Alexander and Virginia Holtz; from LWV Monterey County—Howard Fosler and Mary Ellen Dick. Also in attendance was Mark Stone’s district director, Maureen McCarty.

In terms of economic recovery from the pandemic, Assemblymember Stone said the administration’s proposed budget is short on details. One of the questions to be raised in the current budget cycle is how they will manage the equity issue to ensure distribution of funds to those who have been hurt most by the pandemic. Assemblymember Stone said that the legislature “is definitely looking at equity as one of the highest-values for what we are expecting from implementation of any kind of recovery plan.” The governor wants to move quickly, but lack of details will slow down the process. With regard to his thoughts on how the administration has handled the pandemic crisis, he feels that, given the scope of the problem, they did as well as they could have, but he would have liked more transparency and better communication as changes have been made.

Finally, we asked about other major issues the legislature would deal with in 2020 and about his personal priorities. Assemblymember Stone mentioned the pandemic, resilience of the water system, sea level rise, and wildfire recovery and insurance. In particular, he stressed the need to look for the best ways of coping with changes that we know are coming, such as the ability to protect and manage sea level rise, the increasing number of fires, and managing wetlands that are becoming our new water delivery system.

Assemblymember Stone said that we know sea level rise is going to have a dramatic effect, and that local jurisdictions will have to manage the effects of sea level rise, but often they don’t have the resources or the political will to accomplish this, so the state will take a more active role in managing the changes.

Wildfires are another area where Assemblymember Stone says the state can bring resources to bear by addressing building standards. Because the Urban Wildland Interface area is much larger than they had thought, changing building standards and codes to ensure we don’t have the same level of disaster will be a difficult political question. The state is challenged with making sure that they can protect people and their homes and that insurance companies can stay in business in California. “It’s going to take the state using its political clout and its economic clout to be able to manage a lot of these issues,” he said. Protection for renters and housing affordability are important concerns.

Mark’s personal priorities include child welfare, questions of liability insurance, sea level rise. Currently Assemblymember Stone serves on the California Ocean Protection Council, chairs the Judiciary Committee, and deals with the budgets for courts and prisons. He continues to be concerned with juvenile justice.

—Barbara Lewis, recorder and LWVSCC president