



# The Jacob Journal

A Newsletter from Supervisor Dianne Jacob

August 2000

Serving the Cities of:  
El Cajon  
La Mesa  
Lemon Grove  
Poway  
Santee

Serving the communities of:  
Agua Caliente  
Allied Gardens  
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Julian  
Lake Morena  
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Mount Helix  
Pine Hills  
Pine Valley  
Potrero  
Ramona  
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Shelter Valley  
Spring Valley  
Tecate  
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Serving the Indian Reservations of:  
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Cuyapaipa  
Inaja  
Jamul  
La Posta  
Manzanita  
Mesa Grande  
Santa Ysabel  
Sycuan  
Viejas

## ATTACKING ELECTRIC SHOCK!

San Diego County is on the brink of human and economic disaster! We have an emergency and time is of the essence.

Over the last few months, San Diego County residents and business owners have seen an unprecedented increase in their electric bills. Rates have skyrocketed from 3.2 cents per kilowatt-hour to 17.5 cents - doubling, and in some cases, tripling the amount paid for electricity from just a few weeks ago with no end in sight!

Many residents and businesses simply can't afford this exorbitant rate increase that has been thrust upon our region virtually without warning!

I've had the chance to visit with mobile home park residents in my East County District, where many of the folks are senior citizens on fixed incomes. Although the temperature was in triple digits that day, we are not in the hottest part of the year yet. In San Diego, we have about 100,000 mobile home residents. And while steps have been taken to help some of those on fixed incomes who are struggling, mobile home residents aren't able to withhold some of their payments or take advantage of programs like the "level

pay plan." If they do not pay the entire bill to the mobile home park owner, they can face eviction.

These individuals, along with many other San Diegans, feel helpless. They are hurting and they are mad. To make matters worse, they are at the mercy of the energy industry just to meet their basic needs such as keeping food cold, operating fans and air conditioning, oxygen devices and other apparatus essential to their survival. This has forced some to choose between buying food and life-sustaining medicine or to pay their electric bills.

I would like to share with you a couple of personal stories that demonstrate the impact of this crisis.

Family Foods Market, a new store, opened for business in my District just two years ago. Their July bill was 200% higher than their bill from last July. This forces them to pay a \$25,624 electric bill, an increase of \$13,000 over last year's July bill. They have put the County on notice that they cannot remain open for business if these circumstances continue. Without immediate relief, they will be forced to shut the doors on a productive new business.

For Dennis Branham, a mobile home park resident in my District who



Attacking Electric Shock!.....	Page 1
Attacking Electric Shock! Continued...Page 2	
Jacob Opposes Prop. 36.....	Page 3
Get the Journal at home or work.....	Page 4
How to reach me or my staff.....	Page 4

Continued on Page 2

## **ATTACKING ELECTRIC SHOCK**

Continued from Page 1

is 100% disabled and lives on a limited income, the cost of electricity has increased from \$190 in June to \$362 in July.

Mr. Branham, who must use an electrically powered oxygen device 10 hours a day to help him breathe and an air pump and air conditioner at night, cannot risk the possibility of having his power cut off.

These two examples express the plight of many. That's why on July 25<sup>th</sup> the Board of Supervisors unanimously approved my request to declare a State of Emergency - to send a message that we're in trouble, people's lives are in jeopardy and our strong economy could be destroyed unless we get immediate relief. The Board also supported my request for a rate rollback to the July 1, 1999 level.

I pleaded with the CPUC last Thursday to just reinstate the rate freeze that was lifted on July 1, 1999 – the same rate freeze that the rest of the State is still under! This is fair, equitable and provides San Diego consumers the same protection as all other Californians! Most important, it provides San Diego consumers with the temporary relief needed while we figure out long-term solutions to this complex problem.

The CPUC failed San Diego when they refused to give us the rollback! They don't feel our pain. However, our pain is coming to the bay area and other parts of the State. That's why Mayors Willie Brown of San Francisco and Jerry Brown of Oakland are supporting San Diego. Thanks to former Mayor Maureen O'Connor for scheduling the meetings and inviting me along.

As the first region in the Nation to experience true electricity deregulation, we are the guinea pigs in this bold new experiment. So far, the experiment has failed and needs a course correction. People are suffering! Businesses are hurting!

We need bold action and we need it now! That's why we are taking our case to the legislature and the Governor. Bills are to be introduced on the week of August 7, 2000 both in the Senate and Assembly to rollback rates to the July 1, 1999 level. I urge you to write to your legislator and the Governor in support of this legislation.

In the meantime, it is important to keep the pressure on to make certain others feel our pain! Join me and other San Diegans and let's send a message that we are only going to pay what's fair. When you get your next SDG&E bill, pay the amount you paid last summer. That's fair! That's the same as all other Californians are paying, so why not San Diego?

According to recent CPUC action, SDG&E cannot cut off your electricity, and as far as the remainder of your bill, SDG&E should forgive the debt! The State Legislature and SDG&E made a big mistake and they should pay, not San Diego consumers!

If each and every business, individual, public agency, non-profit – all of us – paid only what we paid last summer, I'll bet on fast action!

## **JACOB OPPOSES PROP. 36**

*Prop. 36 gets no support from Supervisors*

The San Diego Board of Supervisors approved a proposal brought forward by Chairwoman Dianne Jacob, Sheriff Bill Kolender and Judge James Milliken adopting a resolution in opposition to Proposition 36.

Proposition 36, the Substance Abuse and Crime Prevention Act, is an initiative on the November ballot that would prohibit drug offenders from being incarcerated, resulting in the dismantlement of the County's successful Drug Court program.

"This initiative sends a wrong message to our kids and decriminalizes a problem that has plagued our society for far too long. The time is now to unite against this dangerous proposition," said Jacob.

San Diego County's Drug Court program is one of the most successful programs in the state. Drug courts save taxpayers \$10 for every \$1 invested. About 97% of graduates of drug court had no new convictions while in treatment and the recidivism rate after graduation is just 15%.

"This dangerous and misleading initiative would take away the ability of judges to put drug offenders in jail," said Chairwoman Jacob.

Although Prop. 36 would put \$120 million into drug treatment, the accountability of the Drug Court would be eliminated. In addition, Proposition 36 offers no funding for drug testing participants in treatment programs.

"Judges must have the discretion to temporarily incarcerate a participant who fails a drug test. Without the threat of punishment, there is no recourse for keeping addicts clean and sober during treatment," said Jacob.

Critics say this initiative would also undermine "Drug-Free School Zones," zero tolerance policies and successful anti-drug programs like DARE and JUST SAY NO.

Also, on record opposing Proposition 36 are District Attorney, Paul Pfingst, Chief Probation Officer, Alan Crogan, drug treatment professionals, healthcare leaders, crime victims and taxpayers.

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### **Join me for Coffee and Conversation...**

**Thursday, September 14, 2000, 8:30 to 10:30 a.m.**

Mary's Donuts  
9031 Mission Gorge Road, Santee

**Thursday, September 28, 2000, 8:30 to 10:30 a.m.**

Village Garden Restaurant  
8384 La Mesa Blvd., La Mesa

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# Get The Jacob Journal!

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We hope to hear from you soon!

Aug/00

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