

HOW TO REACH US

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Prop. 46 is all about money



Kimberly White / Getty Images for Vanity Fair

California Attorney General Kamala Harris (center), with Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D.-N.Y. (left), and Katie Couric of Yahoo News.

No wonder lawyers are scorned. The No. 1 lawyer in the state, Attorney General Kamala Harris, with the help of her trial lawyer friends, has crafted a ballot measure, Proposition 46, which carefully buries the attempt to gut the capping of medical malpractice awards. It is the gold standard for keeping the limits of pain-and-suffering awards reasonable and preventing your medical bills from escalating more.

Proposition 46 is not on the ballot because someone thinks we need to test doctors for alcohol or drugs; it is about skyrocketing trial lawyer awards and increased malpractice insurance for doctors and hospitals. All of which will translate into higher medical costs and higher medical premiums for you and me. Vote no on Proposition 46.

John Burk, Santa Barbara

No new jails

Jeff Adachi and Naneen Karraker are right that a new jail in San Francisco would be wasteful compared with expanded pretrial services ("Jails are jammed with those who can't afford bail," Open Forum, Oct. 3).

In addition, the proposed \$290 million for jail construction could instead build thousands of beds for the mental health and substance abuse patients whose untreated conditions land them in jail. Such public health alternatives will prevent crimes and preserve human dignity; investing in more jail cells will lock San Francisco into a pattern of failure both by individuals and by government.

Raphael Sperry, San Francisco

Priced out

My comment is when is the city going to ask tech companies to pay taxes? When are hardworking people going to be able to live and work in the city? When is the continuous construction of larger-than-life and luxurious condos going to stop? Enough is enough.

Ana Kirola, San Francisco

Hypocritical tax

I have a question for the editors of The Chronicle who endorse the S.F. soda tax: Do you also advocate taxing every single other item sold in the city with sugar, or is it just soda that you think is bad for people?

Plenty of other foods, many in fine bakeries that the hipsters frequent (and hence are deemed more worthy), have equal amounts of sugar. This tax is hypocritical unless it applies to every sugary item sold, not just one product that the elite choose to forgo so they think it OK to penalize its usage.

Marc Schoenfeld, Oakland

Change administration

Robert Reich ends his weekly column, "Raising rock-bottom wages is what boosts the economy" (Insight, Oct. 5), with this comment: "If it's heading downward (the median household income), as it has been for the entire recovery, we are all in deep trouble."

He established that this is exactly what has been happening for the past five years earlier in the column, when he said the median household income continues to drop. The median household income is 8 percent below what it was in 2007. It is 11 percent below its level in 2000. We are in the first economic recovery on record in which 90 percent of Americans are worse off.

What better argument can anyone make for a change in administration than this, starting this November?

Roland Martin, Carmel-by-the-Sea

Enjoying the game

Ann Killion's one-liner about the Giants' marathon victory over the Nationals on Saturday night — "baseball's version of a government shutdown" — is priceless ("Tougher team wins epic game," Sports, Oct. 5). The only other thing she might have written was that this 18-inning extravaganza made a lot more sense and was definitely a lot more fun.

Michael Traynor, Burlingame

Tenured teachers

Could Debra J. Saunders ("California schools chief race is about teacher tenure," Insight, Oct. 5) please explain how tenure is bad for urban students and bad for good teachers? Does she really think that (presumably good) administrators would simply be able to reassign the good teachers to the urban schools? Or will the good teachers, lacking tenure, choose to work there on their own?

I worked in private business for a couple of decades. With no tenure, I was free to move around as best suited me. Nothing personal. It's just business. Tenure works both ways. I went into teaching in my 40s. That career showed me that Marshall Tuck lacks the most fundamental qualification to be superintendent of public education: He has never been a teacher. It takes several years of full-time teaching to fully understand the challenges of teaching.

I also spent several years in education administration, so I know that involves a very different skill set. Saunders' comparison with the U.S. Secret Service is a red herring. Teaching and law enforcement are, thankfully, very different endeavors.

Robert Plantz, Santa Rosa