



Jim Beall
California State Senator



Representing the 15th Senate District

Including the cities of San Jose, Campbell, Cupertino, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, and Saratoga

November 2013 Newsletter

ROAD REPAIR DEFICIT

As the chairman of the Senate Budget subcommittee on transportation, I am convening a hearing Monday, Dec. 16, 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., at the Bascom Community Center, 1000 S. Bascom Ave., San Jose, to assess the conditions of our roads - from state and city highways to bridges - and how California can begin improving them.

San Jose ranks third for the poorest roads among the nation's 20 biggest urban areas, according to TRIP, a national transportation research group. The San Francisco-Oakland metropolitan area was the second worst. The Los Angeles-Orange County region had the dubious distinction of being the worst.

California needs to fix its roads to cut congestion, expedite commerce, and improve our environment and quality of life. An estimated 300 million pounds of carbon dioxide is pumped into San Jose's air annually due to traffic congestion, the Urban Mobility Report said.

Our roads are bad and they will get worse unless the state acts. The problem is transportation funding for road repairs is stagnant and likely to dwindle. In recent years, the state road improvements have been financed with 2006 Proposition 1B bonds and federal economic stimulus funds. Both funding sources have been exhausted but traffic congestion grows.

The forecast for gasoline tax revenues is also dire. The increase in overall fuel efficiency and the growth of hybrid and electric-only vehicles has translated in lower gas consumption and less revenue from the pumps.

The Dec. 16 hearing will assess the condition of our roads, a necessary step toward understanding how California can attack its transportation problem.

WORKERS COMPENSATION

I will be holding a Town Hall forum on my legislation, Senate Bill 626, on Tuesday, Dec. 16, from noon to 2 p.m. at Fresno State University's Alice Peters Auditorium, 5245 N. Backer Ave.

SB 626 can save the workers compensation system money and cut hospital and drug costs through

preventative care that keeps workers on the job.

The bill fills several holes in workers compensation law passed last year by allowing injured workers to designate chiropractors as their primary treating physicians. This change would stop the state from restricting a person's choice of licensed medical professional when it comes to their health and offers a cheaper option than surgery.

The bill also would make Workers Compensation Appeals Board's rulings more transparent and would allow increases to permanent disability impairment ratings due to psychological disorders related to a compensable injury.

HOLIDAY EVENTS

If you're at Los Gatos on Saturday, Dec. 7, at 11 a.m., you can see me in the 57th Annual Los Gatos Children's Christmas/Holidays Parade. The parade is sponsored by the Los Gatos Lions Club & LGS Recreation, in cooperation with the Town of Los Gatos and Los Gatos High School. The parade route is on North Santa Cruz to Main Street and ends at the Civic Center.

. . . And, look for my Senate District 15 office's tree in Christmas in the Park at downtown San Jose's Plaza de Cesar Chavez.

UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

Unless action is taken by Congress, federal extended unemployment insurance benefits will [expire at the end of the year](#).

Due to high rates of unemployment during the economic crisis, the federal government had authorized up to 37 weeks of additional benefits when claimants had exhausted their regular state unemployment insurance benefits.

The last week payable on these federal extensions is Dec. 28. Even if a claimant has remaining funds available on his or her federal claim, no federal extended unemployment insurance benefits will be paid after Dec. 28.

The state Economic Development Department has posted a [list of resources](#) that may be needed by those who are no longer able to collect federal extended benefits. The resource list includes such services as basic needs assistance like CalWORKs, Medi-Cal; CalFresh (food stamps); school meal programs; the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, also known as WIC; low-cost car insurance; credit counseling; and Keep Your Home California (mortgage relief).

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Information about the typhoon that struck the Philippines, killing thousands and displacing 4 million people, is available on [my website](#).

The terrible disaster is a grim reminder that all of us who live in seismically active California must take

steps to prepare an emergency disaster plan. A natural disaster can occur with little or no warning and it is important to be prepared. The California Department of Public Health and state Office of Emergency Services have worked together to offer these [tips on how to prepare a disaster plan](#), and [how to assemble an emergency supply kit](#). Additional information about California disaster preparedness can be [found here](#).

BALANCING HOLIDAY MEALS

The average American will take in about 4,500 calories and 229 grams fat from eating a traditional Thanksgiving dinner. This greatly exceeds the average daily caloric intake of 2,475 calories for an American man and 1,833 calories for a woman.

Here are some healthy holiday party reminders from the California Dietetic Association, a non-profit voluntary membership association of registered dietitians, dietetic technicians registered, and nutrition students dedicated to healthy lifestyles:

- Don't Arrive Hungry: Before you head to a holiday party, eat a small snack with protein and fiber like celery and peanut butter or yogurt topped with walnuts.
- Balance the Buffet: Use the [MyPlate Guidelines](#) and make half of your plate vegetables and fruits, one-quarter whole-grains and one-quarter lean protein.
- Count Liquid Calories: Go easy on the eggnog, punch and alcohol - those calories add up quickly. Plus, too much alcohol can lower your eating resolve. Try an alcohol-free eggnog made with low-fat milk.
- Find the Fruit: When it comes to dessert, find the fruit and enjoy small portions of richer desserts.
- Fill Up with Water: Start with water-filled veggies, salads, and broth-based soups, which fill you up on few calories. Drink a glass of water in between alcoholic beverages to slow down drinking and stay hydrated.
- Veg-Out: Be careful with appetizers, which can be deep-fried and sodium- and fat-filled. Opt for a Mediterranean platter with cut-up veggies, hummus, olives, and whole grain crackers.

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