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ACC-OC focuses on CalPERS and Pension Relief Strategies

In August the Association of California Cities-Orange County's Local Government Finance Committee traveled to Sacramento to meet with the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) Leadership team, including CEO Marcie Frost and her executives. ACC-OC's main objective was to start a conversation that could serve as a baseline for understanding the financial fundamentals of the pension system. Only then could stakeholders-- employer agencies, elected officials and public employees-- distill the complexities and challenges of the current system and work together to identify pragmatic solutions to address structural deficiencies.



From these meetings came a series of takeaways. At the top of this list was the need to develop personal relationships with individual members of the CalPERS Board of Administration who have the ultimate authority over pertinent issues concerning investment strategy, the discount rate, and long term amortization strategy for local governments and agencies. The creation of these relationships are critical as the Association continues its pension stabilization efforts in Sacramento.

At the end of October, the Association was able to secure private, one-on-one meetings with eight members of the CalPERS Board of Administration. These meetings served as a starting point for relationship development, with representatives from ACC-OC's Local Government Finance Committee highlighting general concerns pertaining to the Board's investment strategy and its impact to local governments. These meetings were incredibly successful, with both parties feeling that this was the start of a critical dialogue that needed to continue as reforms are continuing to be discussed.

One of the largest takeaways, was the willingness of individual CalPERS Board Members to meet with the ACC-OC membership and hear directly from city officials what their concerns are, and listen to possible solutions. In 2018, the Association will be working to bring CalPERS Board members to Orange County for private dialogues with ACC-OC member cities. Additionally the Association will continue to leverage these relationships with our reform initiatives at the Board of Administration and with the Legislature.

The Association met with the following members of the CalPERS Board of Administration

- Rob Feckner, President of CalPERS
- Henry Jones, Vice President of CalPERS
- Theresa Taylor, Board Member

- Bill Slaton, Board Member
- Richard Costigan, Board Member
- Michael Bilbrey, Board Member
- Priya Mathur, Board Member
- Dana Hollinger, Board Member



POLICY

Washington D.C. Video

In September, 45 Association Member leaders journeyed to the nation's capital to meet with federal representatives and elected officials to discuss issues pertinent to Orange County and the region.

To highlight the excursion, Association staff created a feature video summarizing the education and advocacy trip.

This inaugural visit to D.C. paves the way for ongoing opportunities for dialogue and engagement at the federal level. By doing so, the Association continues its ongoing mission to be the authoritative regional voice for public policy issues, with focus on: education that empowers, policy that is collaborative and advocacy that is service-oriented.

Enjoy the video [here](#)!

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EDUCATION

OC Register Commentary

After the August visit by Association Members to Sacramento to meet with CalPERS officials, attendees: Diane Dixon, Newport Beach Councilmember, Lyn Sementa, Huntington Beach Councilmember and Heather Stratman, CEO Association of California



California needs to tackle its pension problems for the good of Orange County cities

www.ocregister.com

Leadership from the municipal members of the Association of California Cities-Orange

Cities penned an Orange County Register commentary discussing the issues surrounding unfunded future public employee pension obligations.

Check out the piece [here](#).

ICMA Commentary

The ACC-OC continues to provide keen analysis and insight on the key policy challenges facing cities and states. The latest example, CEO Heather Stratman's recently published commentary on crafting regional solutions to addressing the critical issue of homelessness.

Writing on the historic and highly respected American City & County platform, the voice of state and local government since 1909; the piece documents a defined blueprint for communities seeking pragmatic solutions to end homelessness.

By expanding the conversation and fostering engagement, the Association continues its ongoing mission to be the authoritative regional voice for public policy issues, with focus on: education that empowers, policy that is collaborative and advocacy that is service-oriented.



Read the piece [here](#).

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LEGISLATION

Prop 64 Forum Recap

Last week, ACC-OC hosted a Prop 64 Implementation Forum, as a follow up from January's Prop 64 Panel. There have been many changes since the proposition to legalize recreational marijuana has passed and the event focused on preparing cities for what still lies ahead of the January 2018 implementation deadline.

The event kicked off with Mayor Don Sedgewick (City of Laguna Hills) welcoming guests to the Laguna Hills Community Center and introducing Moderator, Mayor Dave Harrington (City of Aliso Viejo). Mayor Harrington introduced Nic Gonzalez-Podesta from Weedmaps who went over a brief "Cannabis 101" discussion. He gave attendees an overview on what cannabis is, the potency factors related to cannabis inhalation and ingestion, how cannabis is grown, and the forms of distribution. He also discussed the new technologies that will assist municipalities and local law enforcement in deciphering what is considered a harmful level of tetrahydrocannabinol (also known as THC).

Patrick Munoz, a city attorney with Rutan & Tucker presented a recap on Prop 64, the proposition's origins, what has happened since its November passage, and what still remains to be decided. Legislation was adopted over this past year to bring recreational cannabis regulation into parity with medical cannabis regulation. Richard Parrott, the Director of CalCannabis, the State entity that oversees cultivation licensing and growth, provided information on the state's role in licensing if a city does not take action before the January timeline. He also discussed packaging and edible production of cannabis products.

The second panel went over what cities in Orange County are doing

and implementing. Tarquin Preziosi, City Attorney in the City of Cosa Mesa discussed the city's ban on recreational cannabis, cultivation, distribution, and dispensary locations. He also went through the steps the Council made to reach that decision. He was later joined by Dustin McDonald, an Associate at Weedmaps, who provided the industry perspective, and how some cities in California are working with industry to implement Prop 64. He discussed the positive benefits associated with implementation. Dustin also discussed the statistics on what is cu



rently in Orange County, despite the bans placed by local municipalities related to the selling, distribution, and delivery of marijuana.

Panel three reviewed California's taxation and regulatory framework. The first speaker was Andre Rivera, from the Office of State Treasurer John Chiang. Andre discussed the state-federal banking conflict, which remains a challenge in collecting revenues and depositing those funds in federally insured banking institutions. Over the last year the Treasurer's office has been holding Banking Working Group meetings across the State. They recently published a report with their findings and the discussions that were shared at these stakeholder meetings. The report makes recommendations to continue advocating for a solution at the federal level, but acknowledges this is unlikely given the current administrations comments on the topic. He anticipates legislation will be introduced ranging from ideas to create the Bank of California, to the utilization of Credit Unions, and the ability for cities to enter into Joint Power Authority agreements with counties and non-profit entities to regulate the revenue collections for this industry.

Morgan Scarboro with the Tax Foundation provided a national cannabis tax overview. She relayed what cities across the nation are doing related to cannabis business regulation as a revenue source and the positives and the negative pitfalls. Her big takeaway was that cannabis regulation is not a silver bullet fix for fundamental revenue shortfalls. Additionally, responsible taxation is imperative in remaining competitive with neighboring communities. She also cautioned that if a city chooses to employ a ban that they should not be under the impression that there is not cannabis being distributed throughout their cities, because private cultivation-grow of up to six plants is not allowed to be regulated by individual cities and neither is distribution-delivery. Essentially, cities will be losing out on revenue, while other cities not far from their location will be receiving the profit.

The last panel focused on public safety, and how cities can prepare themselves for the newly legalized use of recreational marijuana. Chief Corey S. Sianez with the Buena Park Police Department shared the challenges faced by Colorado municipal law enforcement officers and the pitfalls that still lies ahead for law enforcement. He described that there is a newly emerging "grey market" that is being promulgated by the licensed medical marijuana users selling and cultivating without going through the proper licensing bodies. Additionally, he warned cities of the potential for the private grows to exceed the allowable six plant maximum and the use and selling that could result from this component of Prop 64. He also expressed concern for edibles being exposed to children and adults ingesting harmful quantities. If the packaging is removed he does not believe a child or an uninformed adult will be able to tell the difference between unlaced food and cannabis food. Lastly, he brought up the concerns related to detecting those under the influence of cannabis and the level of difficulty and strain on law enforcement resources to detect and train for this type of diagnostic. He pointed out that Colorado's driving under the influence (DUI) rates went up two times since the amount reported before the legalization of recreational marijuana.

The second law enforcement panelist was Diane Goldstein with the Law Enforcement Action Partnership and former Redondo Beach Police Department officer. She provided a slightly different perspective that touched on the need to bring marijuana out of the shadows and the benefits of legalization. She believes that the dispensary operators and those growing will provide a very strong regulation and reporting structure for those practicing unlawfully, because that would hurt their business. Additionally, she believes police departments and sheriff's departments should be trained to tell when someone is under the influence of marijuana, and the rise of DUIs in Colorado is a product of better police training and monitoring. She pointed out that this is something law enforcement should be considering now, as it's always been illegal to drive under the influence of any substance. She also mentioned that there is research being done at several universities

across California to designate what specific level of THC is harmful and that, that technology and information will get better over time. Diane's biggest takeaway was that the law of the land had legalized Prop 64, and that people will be using recreational marijuana despite the bans in individual cities. One person residing in city that has legalized cannabis can very easily come into another city that has not, which should result in all law enforcement officers being prepared to absorb this responsibility.

After each panel attendees had the opportunity to ask the panelists questions and receive information on that specific policy topics covered by each speaker. The event concluded with closing remarks by ACC-OC President, the Hon. Steve Jones (City of Garden Grove). The event was robust in content and the speakers have made their power points, informational handouts, and materials available to attendees. In just a few short months, California's State Bureau on Cannabis Regulation will begin implementing their newly created regulatory frameworks around legalized recreational marijuana, this event was geared to prepare cities for this timeline, and share what cities are doing in anticipations for selling, cultivation, and distribution of cannabis. What still awaits final resolution includes the state and federal banking conflicts, and the remaining public safety challenges. ACC-OC is tracking the Prop 64 implementations of the cities across Orange County, and will be reviewing legislation related to local cannabis use throughout the 2018 legislative session.

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MEMBERSHIP

Welcome to ACC-OC New Member: HomeAway

ACC-OC's strength rests in its outstanding Members! Each municipality, agency, organization and business offer their own unique acuity, capabilities and competencies. Without the support of our Members, the ACC-OC would not be the regional voice it has become and will continue to be.

This month we recognize our newest member: HomeAway.



A brand under the Expedia umbrella, HomeAway is the world leader in vacation rentals, according to the company's website. With over 2 million unique places to stay in 190 countries, HomeAway is committed to helping families and friends find the perfect vacation rental to create unforgettable travel experiences together.

Through HomeAway, owners and property managers offer an extensive selection of vacation homes that provide travelers with memorable experiences and benefits, including more room to relax and added privacy, often for less than the cost of traditional hotel accommodations. The company also makes it easy for vacation rental owners and property managers to advertise their properties and manage bookings online.

ACC-OC is excited to have HomeAway as a new Member, and we look forward to years of collaboration together!

Member to Remember

For many Orange County residents the name to know for cable, internet and voice is Charter Communications. According to the company's website, Charter Communications is America's fastest growing TV, internet and voice company, and serves 26 million residential and business customers in 41 states.

The company's line of Spectrum offerings deliver customers: access, reliability, convenience, connectivity and content. As Tom Rutledge, President and CEO of Charter underscores: "We, at our core, are a service organization. And every product we sell has a huge service component."

At ACC-OC, the Members are responsible for our ongoing success. We are delighted to have Charter Communications as a Member, and deeply appreciate their commitment and long-term dedication to the organization.

Thanksgiving Reception

ACC-OC held its annual Thanksgiving Reception for Members on November 15 at the Irvine Ranch Water District. Our Members drive our mission to be the authoritative regional voice for public policy issues, with focus on: education that empowers, policy that is collaborative and advocacy that is service-oriented. We are so thankful and grateful for all of our Members.



Enjoy this video that recaps the past year and why ACC-OC is so thankful for our members!

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UPCOMING EVENTS

91 Managed Lanes Tour

Join ACC-OC and OCTA for a tour of the 91 Managed Lanes!

Click [here](#) to register!



91 MANAGED LANES TOUR

Join ACC-OC and OCTA for a briefing and guided bus tour about the 91 Managed Lanes.

**STARTING LOCATION: OCTA
550 S. MAIN STREET ORANGE, CA 92868
CONFERENCE ROOM 07**



**MEMBERS: \$45
NON-MEMBERS: \$65**
PRICE INCLUDES A LIGHT BREAKFAST AND TRANSPORTATION
NON-REFUNDABLE 11/23



2018 Sacramento Advocacy Trip

Travel with ACC-OC, local elected officials, city staff and community partners to the State Capitol for a unique, local government focused advocacy trip. The selected March dates position the delegation to most effectively deliver our policy and legislative preferences.

Click [here](#) to register
Members Only!

SAVE THE DATE 2018 ACC-OC SACRAMENTO ADVOCACY TRIP Monday & Tuesday, March 5th and 6th, 2018

Travel with ACC-OC, local elected officials, city staff and community partners to the State Capitol for a unique, local government focused advocacy trip. The selected March dates position the delegation to most effectively deliver our policy and legislative preferences. The trip occurs during the beginning of the legislative process, and allows us to directly advocate for stances on bills that have been assigned to committees.



We will have the opportunity to speak to Legislators and state-wide policy makers on a variety of topics facing municipalities, including:

- Pension Reform
- Homelessness
- Workforce Development
- Affordable Housing
- Sober Living Homes
- Economic Development
- Transportation
- Cannabis Regulation

Open to Members Only!
Registration: \$1,175
Non-Refundable after January 31st

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THE CITY SQUARE

Don't forget, your favorite public policy show is now a podcast. Look for our show twice a month and catch up on all our public policy conversations below.

The City Square goes behind the scenes to take a look at ACC-OC's various committees and all of the research, analysis, and collaboration these groups are working on to improve Orange County. Join Al Murray from the City of Tustin, Tim Shaw from the City of La Habra and ACC-OC's Policy Manager Kelsey Brewer for an in depth conversation on the policy work taking place in our committees.

Episode 129: Catching Up With ACC-OC Committee Chairs

Download Podbean on [iOS](#) and [Android](#) or [subscribe on iTunes](#) to stay up to date

[Listen to more shows here.](#)

Connect with ACC-OC Online!

Stay up-to-date with our efforts on Facebook, Twitter, and now Instagram



The ACC-OC regularly updates its social media pages with our ongoing efforts as we host and attend events, meetings, and roundtables with Orange County's policy and community leaders.

Keep up with everything ACC-OC and add your voice to the issues by following us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)!

Also check out our newest social media page on [Instagram](#)!



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