

# Letters to the Editor



Share your thoughts with our community! Opinions in Letters to the Editor are the express views of the writers and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly. All published letters will include the writer's name and town (please give us your phone number for verification purposes only), and should be 350 words or less.

**email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com;**

Regular mail: **Lamorinda Weekly, P.O.Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570**



**Editor:**  
The letter on March 16th regarding Jerry Brown and redevelopment failed to mention the way redevelopment works. An area is declared blighted and the property becomes part of a redevelopment project area. A bond is floated to fund the construction. This bond plus interest is paid back over 20 to 45 years using the increase in the property taxes being generated by the property improvement. In the meantime, we will have added more citizens, homes and businesses needing essential services. It's our property taxes that pay for essential services: emergency responders, fire fighters, police services and schools. Since only the original property tax rate at the time of a property being declared part of a redevelopment project goes to paying for our city's essential services, many cities with redevelopment projects are falling short of money to pay for essential services. Hence, fire stations are being closed, teachers and police are being laid off. The bond debt must be paid first and foremost or the investment rating of the city is put in jeopardy. In addition, by law 20% of the redevelopment bond money has to be used to construct low income housing.

Tish Gleason  
Orinda

**Editor:**  
Over the past two years there have been various articles and letters regarding the funding of MOFD by the taxpayers of Orinda and Moraga. Orinda's Revenue Enhancement Task Force and later FAIR and other individuals claim that Orinda taxpayers are paying over a million dollars per year more than they should in funding MOFD. MOFD, Ellen Dale and now former MOFD director Gene Gottfried counter that those analysis have been "thoroughly discredited". If I remember correctly, Orinda left Con-Fire and formed MOFD because the Orinda taxpayers were told by their city leaders that they were paying more than was coming back to serve them. Is this not happening again? Who has "thoroughly discredited" the notion that we are not again paying too much? The City? MOFD? Gene Gottfried? We hear others calling for a city task force to clear the air and discover the facts. I agree that this would be much more fruitful than listening to various parties tossing allegations back and forth in the press.

Rusty Hay  
Orinda

**Editor:**  
I think it is pretty obvious that many roads in Lafayette (and the rest of Lamorinda) need work. I personally will vote against any measure that is too general in nature. What I would support and I there are others like me, would be a measure that is also a business plan. It would spell out which roads would be repaired, the approximate cost of the repair and the time line. I do feel that we need more taxes to deal with our issues in this state. On the other hand, I am fed up with vague measures that end up allowing money to be directed at things other than the problem we thought we were voting for. We have lived in the area since 1980 and have supported, among others, three bond issues for the 4th bore. In every one of these, a study was done and 'consultants' were paid multi-hundred thousand dollars. Start putting straight forward measures on the ballot, clear about how the money will be used and we will all be surprised at the level of support.

Leonard Dorin  
Lafayette

### Lafayette Measure B

**Editor:**  
A longtime Lafayette resident, I have taught for 9 years at Happy Valley School, and my children grew up attending Lafayette schools from kindergarten through high school. I write to you as citizen, educator, and parent. Over the years I have witnessed firsthand the strength of our schools: small class sizes, curriculum strong in core academics and the arts,

and a supportive community that regards the education of its children as a sound investment.

After two years of significant reductions in state funding, and corresponding efforts to meet those shortfalls, we have reached a point where the current structural deficit threatens to impact our students as never before. I support Measure B because it is an effort to provide emergency, stable funding to help retain those programs that make Lafayette schools special. Funds provided by this measure will be directed to the schools, not the administration. They will not bring back what has already been lost, but without them, our students will experience a much different program than my children did. It is particularly sad for me to see, as a teacher, how the decline in funding has already impacted our students. I know that without Measure B, the immediate effect on the quality of Lafayette schools will be dramatic and alarming. When the schools falter, the desirability of the city soon follows. Please help support Measure B.

Sincerely,  
Kim Stern  
Lafayette

**Editor:**  
Preserving important Lafayette Elementary academic programs in these difficult days is critical. As a past school board member I have seen how important it is to come together as a community to maintain the highest quality coursework possible. Once a program is lost it is impossible to regain it. Measure B will allow us to keep our schools in the top 10% of the state. Measure B can't possibly fix all that ails the state but it can help maintain the excellence we have all come to expect in our community by allowing us to keep our funds local. Measure B will allow us to maintain the best of the best. None of the money will go to the state funds. Instead it will go 100% directly into the classroom which is where it belongs.

As those of us who no longer have children in the classroom we remember how important this is and we also know that good schools protect our property values. So I hope you will please join me in voting Yes on Measure B.

Sincerely,  
Judy Carney  
Lafayette

**Editor:**  
Why YES is the only answer: If we are a young family, our most important question is: where are the best public schools? If our children are in school, we ask: are our children getting the highest quality education from premier teachers? If we are seniors wishing to downsize, we ask: who is most likely to purchase this home where we raised our children? This cycle continues every generation and that is why we all chose Lafayette. Measure B is key to ensuring Lafayette continues to be the answer, because:

- 100% of Measure B funds stay in Lafayette (invest locally!)
- 100% go directly to elementary and middle school classroom instruction
- \$176 per parcel means just 50 cents a day (less than half the cost of a small coffee!), or less than \$15 a month
- Best News: Measure B is a temporary fix to an emergency situation, and sunsets in four years.

Measure B is not a tax, it's an investment...in our homes, our children, our community. Great public schools are the proud legacy each generation has left for the next in Lafayette. We cannot take and not give back, because Lafayette citizens have never done this. We need to sustain this legacy. YES, these are challenging economic times. YES, California, and Lafayette, public education have been dealt a huge blow. This is why YES ON MEASURE B is the only vote that sustains our long-term investment. Whether we are young families or retirees, YES we can give \$.50 a day not only to benefit our children but in our own personal interests. Giving back is its own reward.

Kathy Merchant  
Lafayette

**Editor:**  
My wife and I have lived in Lafayette for over 20 years. We have raised three sons here and all of our grandchildren are now attending Lafayette schools. When my children attended our Lafayette public schools, the schools were funded by property taxes. As a result of various state legislative changes, now only about 14 cents of every property tax dollar comes back to the School District. I am deeply troubled by the lack of support currently provided by our state for the education of our children.

As a former CEO of an international corporation, I have seen first-hand how critical it is to educate our students so that they may compete in a global society. According to a recent report by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United States has fallen from the top of the class to average in the world education rankings. The report, which examines the knowledge of 15 year olds, ranked the United States 14th out of 34 OECD countries for reading skills, 17th for math and 25th for science. According to the report, the United States needs to "make the choices needed to show that they value education more than other areas of national interest." I cannot agree more. While the state struggles to solve its financial crisis, we need to act locally to support our schools. It is our responsibility to support and educate our children so that they may ensure the future of our country. Please Vote Yes on Measure B.

Most sincerely,  
Rick and Janet Cronk  
Lafayette

**Editor:**  
How does it feel to be a cheapskate? According to the US Census Bureau,

Californians enjoy the 8th highest per capita income in the US. No surprise there, we've always known that the good life abounds in the Sunshine State, right? Unfortunately we are putting the future of our state in great jeopardy. California ranks near the bottom in terms of per pupil spending - Education Week ranked us 42nd, behind most of the poorest states in the Union including Mississippi, Louisiana and Alabama. And we are dropping fast - in the last 3 years, the Lafayette School District has been forced to cut \$1,100 in annual funding per student.

In case you are wondering, there is a direct correlation between classroom

spending, test scores and earning potential.

If passed, Lafayette's Measure "B" will provide emergency funding to preserve core math, science, art, and music curriculums. 100% of Measure "B" funds will be spent on classroom instruction, none on administrative overhead. All for a paltry \$.50/day per Lafayette household.

Please invest in the future - the same way that our parents and grandparents invested in us and vote yes on Measure "B" - or risk being called worse than a cheapskate.

Kevin Cornish  
Lafayette

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### Join our Public Forum

If you have significant knowledge about an issue facing Lamorinda or one of its cities that requires more than the 350 words to which we must limit Letters to the Editor, don't despair! You can submit your letter to our Public Forum section. Just send your letter to [letters@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:letters@lamorindaweekly.com) and let us know you'd like to be considered for the Public Forum.

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# Recycling Is a Bright Idea!



## One Cart for All!

The burgundy carts permit recycling of paper and paper products commingled with glass, plastic, tin and aluminum containers. The lid label shows what materials are acceptable.

<p><b>OK FOR RECYCLING</b></p> <p>Paper</p> <p>Cardboard, Boxes, packages</p> <p>Carbonless paper</p> <p>Catalogs</p> <p>Detergent boxes</p> <p>Egg cartons (paper only; no Styrofoam)</p> <p>Envelopes with metal clasps</p> <p>Envelopes (plastic windows OK)</p> <p>Gift wrap (non-metallic)</p> <p>Junk mail</p> <p>Magazines</p> <p>Manila folders</p> <p>Newspapers and inserts</p> <p>Office paper</p> <p>Paper bags</p> <p>Paper towel &amp; toilet paper tubes</p>	<p>Pet food bags</p> <p>Post-its</p> <p>Shredded paper (in a paper bag)</p> <p>Telephone books</p> <p>Detergent bottles</p> <p>Food containers (no Styrofoam)</p> <p>Household cleaning containers (empty)</p> <p>Lids and caps</p> <p>Milk jugs</p> <p>Prescription bottles (empty)</p> <p>Salad dressing bottles (rinsed)</p> <p>Shampoo and conditioner bottles</p> <p>Tub containers (yogurt, cottage cheese, margarine, #1-#7)</p> <p>Water jugs</p>	<p>Tissue paper (gift type)</p> <p>Metal</p> <p>Aluminum cans</p> <p>Aluminum foil (clean)</p> <p>Aluminum pie plates</p> <p>Cookie sheets</p> <p>Food cans (clean)</p> <p>Pet food, Steel, Tin cans</p> <p>Glass (Rinsed; all colors; lids, caps OK)</p> <p>Bottles</p> <p>CRV beverage containers</p> <p>Jars</p> <p>Plastic (Containers only; empty; rinsed; with chasing arrows #1-5 &amp; 7; lids, caps OK)</p> <p>Baby wipe containers</p> <p>Bleach bottles</p>	<p>Buckets without handles</p> <p>CRV beverage containers (soda, water, juice)</p> <p><b>... and many more please check our website</b></p>
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**DON'T PLACE IN BURGUNDY/BROWN CART:**

- Plastic bags, plastic film wrap, Styrofoam, paper or plastic cups, paper towels, Kleenex or other facial tissues, plastic utensils, sharps, metal or plastic hangers, mirror glass and disposable diapers.
- Garbage, organic or green waste materials.

Place all recyclables in the burgundy/brown recycling cart, and be sure all materials fit in the cart with lid closed.

## Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority

Call VWM at 925-935-8900 for more information or check out the **CCCSWA website at [www.wastediversion.org](http://www.wastediversion.org)**.