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## Moraga's Joint Legislative Town Hall a standing-room-only event



Photo Vera Kochan

From left: State Sen. Steve Glazer and Assembly Member Rebecca Bauer-Kahan

By Vera Kochan

A packed house of attendees from the Lamorinda area came to hear what State Sen. Steve Glazer's and Assembly Member Rebecca Bauer-Kahan's agendas were for California – and more specifically for Contra Costa County – at a Joint Legislative Town Hall hosted Feb. 28 by Campolindo High School in Moraga.

Glazer was a city council member and three-time mayor of Orinda. As senator for the 7th District, he serves Contra Costa and Alameda counties, which include 20 cities.

The newly elected Bauer-Kahan serves the 16th Assembly District which includes Moraga, Orinda and Lafayette. She is a Bay Area native who currently lives in Orinda.

Both Glazer and Bauer-Kahan began the new year with impressive legislative packages. Glazer is hoping

that some of his bills that didn't pass during Gov. Jerry Brown's administration may have a new chance under Gov. Gavin Newsome's leadership.

Glazer's legislative package of proposed bills includes: a state parks and beaches smoking ban with a \$25 fine; a \$4 billion higher education facilities bond act for construction and remodeling of existing facilities at UC and CSU campuses; renter's credit reform and expansion to provide financial relief to low- and middle-income families by increasing renter's tax credit; CalWORKS benefits for full-time students; a bill requiring transit operators to allow people to ride with their pets during emergency evacuations; a bill to prohibit landlords from requiring active-duty service members to pay last month's rent (in addition to the first and deposit) as part of the terms to rent; and restorative justice for the victim of a

crime. Bauer-Kahan wasted no time during her few months in office to come up with her own legislative package which includes: mental health diversion gun control prohibiting individuals from possessing firearms while under court-ordered treatment; removal of CalWORKS penalties for families whose children receive scholarships or rental assistance; a bill to protect college students by requiring out-of-state online (for-profit) colleges to abide by the same regulations that apply to in-state colleges; human trafficking victim confidentiality protections; Covered California application extensions; and increased illegal dumping penalties.

Audience members shared concerns about the condition of the BART system, specifically dirty trains, delays and increasing crime. Bauer-Kahan mentioned the addition of 100 new trains coming to the system with a larger rider capacity.

One audience member's comments elicited a smattering of applause from the rest of the crowd when he asked what was being done about all of the dead trees in the area creating a potential fire hazard. He was informed that any trees on privately owned land were the owner's responsibility, but if any trees are on federal land it's an uphill battle for cooperation.

For additional information, visit Glazer's website at <https://sd07.senate.ca.gov> or call his local district office at (925) 258-1176. Bauer-Kahan's website is <https://a16.asmdc.org> and her local district office number is (925) 328-1515.

## Parenting in the age of technology



Photo Vera Kochan

Erica Pelavin, LCSW, Ph.D., co-founder of My Digital TAT2, Inc.

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Over the last 15 years, there have been huge advancements in social media technology. Facebook was created in 2004, and by 2005 the average user sent 35 texts a month. By 2016, the average person sent 2,022 texts per month. The first iPhone was released in 2007, with the first iPhone app following the next year. As of 2018, teens have access to 3.8 million apps.

Many of these apps can be dangerous places for middle-

schoolers to traverse. Pelavin says it's important as a parent to know what your kids are viewing on social media, but they can be defensive about their presence there.

She suggests that parents express an interest in their child's favorite apps by asking non-threatening questions, and if the app is harmless enough, have the child explain the features and benefits of it.

Social media is a teen's outlet for coping with day-to-day life. "Teens use social media to connect with peers, investigate the world, try new identities and establish independence," says Pelavin. "If kids have struggles in the real world it may show up online. The same goes with their passions and interests. They search for fame and recognition. They're looking for acceptance, hoping to be noticed, struggling to stay relevant and are strategically posting."

Kids must understand the consequences of rumors, gossip and cyberbullying. Digital content can be taken out of context and words must be chosen carefully. Kids should only post positive things about themselves or others and remember that they can't undo a message once they hit "send."

Leaving a digital tattoo is virtually impossible to remove. Anyone has the power to be an ally to someone who has been cyberbullied by sending a message of support to the victim either publicly or privately. They can also report the bullying to an adult and refuse to participate in the attack. Bullying can only thrive when there is an audience.

According to Pelavin, kids must learn to balance digital use with device-free active and healthy activities. Many kids stay up late using their devices when they should be sleeping, thereby depriving them of quality awake time during school hours. She says, "Put devices to bed at least one hour before bedtime."

A fourth-grader she counsels told her, "My friend was sleeping over and we couldn't fall asleep. We Googled how to fall asleep, and it said, 'Get off of your device.'"

"Kids really do want forced family time – put all of the phones in a basket and have the 'no phones' rule apply to everybody during meal-time or other family activities," concludes Pelavin. "Our kids are watching us. If you abuse social media, so will they."

Info: [www.mydigitaltat2.org](http://www.mydigitaltat2.org) or (650) 427-0059

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