

FCLCA Summer Update  
July 24, 2024

From: Kevan Insko, Director  
[kevan@fclca.org](mailto:kevan@fclca.org)

Many thanks to FCLCA donors and activists for your support in 2024.

It's been a very busy six months here in Sacramento: in the face of a large deficit, the governor and Legislature hammered out a state budget for 2024-25, and this year's bills that are continuing to move forward have passed the house they originated in and the policy committees of the second house.

The Legislature is now on its summer break and will return on August 5, when the Appropriations Committees in each house will decide which bills move forward to the floor. All will be decided in the Legislature by the end of August, and then Gov. Newsom will have a month to sign or veto bills.

**Here are a few highlights of what you've helped make happen so far this year.**

Because of your support, **FCLCA was able to play a leadership role in two particular bills this year** concerning issues of long-standing concern to Friends and like-minded people: capital punishment and militarism/the draft.

**The first is Senate Bill 1001 authored by Sen. Nancy Skinner.** FCLCA is a co-sponsor of this bill along with the California Catholic Conference and Bend the Arc. SB 1001 amends the Penal Code to ensure that California does not engage in cruel and unusual punishment by sentencing to death or executing persons with intellectual disabilities. The bill passed the full Senate and the Assembly Public Safety Committee and will be taken up by the full Assembly in August. FCLCA continues to meet with legislative offices to secure votes for passage and send the bill to Gov. Newsom. FCLCA has also been actively organizing outreach to Gov. Newsom to grant universal clemency to all on California's death row.

**FCLCA played a key role in organizing opposition to Senate Bill 1081,** promoted by the federal Selective Service System (SSS) and authored by Sen. Bob Archuleta. This bill would have forced people under age 26 to automatically register for the military draft when they applied for a California driver's license or I.D. card. An ad hoc coalition of Quaker organizations, immigrant rights groups, civil rights organizations, and peace and justice groups wrote letters, sent emails to legislators and lobbied intensively at the Capitol. Individuals sent over 1,000 messages of opposition to legislators. The bill passed the Senate, but we kept up our opposition, resulting in the author pulling the bill from consideration during its committee hearing in the Assembly. The bill will not move forward this year. This was at least the sixth time such a bill has been introduced.

**In the face of a huge deficit and proposed cuts in vital programs, budget advocates including FCLCA carried out a six-month campaign to protect the progress made over the last few years.** In the main, the safety net was protected, although some newer or proposed programs to help immigrants and low-income families were delayed. We successfully lobbied against cuts in the CalWORKs and CalFresh program; to maintain commitments to school meals for all and In-Home Supportive Services; to keep critical immigrant legal services, and to continue funding for the Multifamily Housing Program and Homeless Assistance Program. We advocated cutting prison spending as a way to maintain safety net programs, and the final budget showed a reduction of \$750 million over a three-year window, with ongoing reductions of \$560 million per year. Advocates continue to call for the closing of five prisons, which could save \$1 billion annually.

**Among other criminal justice reform bills** that FCLCA is supporting, ACA 8 asks California voters to prohibit slavery and involuntary servitude and prohibits the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation from disciplining an incarcerated person for refusing a work assignment. It was passed by the Legislature and will appear on the November ballot.

FCLCA is also advocating for SB 94, which authorizes an individual sentenced to life imprisonment without the possibility of parole for a conviction in which one or more special circumstances were found to be true, to petition for recall and resentencing if the offense occurred before June 5, 1990, and the individual has served at least 25 years in custody. SB 94 is on the Assembly Floor.

**FCLCA also opposed a number of bills this year that would expand incarceration.** Many of the bills that expand penalties for retail theft and fentanyl were held and will not move forward; however, Proposition 36 will appear on the November ballot and would increase penalties. Proposition 36 will be taken up by the FCLCA Board prior to the election. Several compromise bills were enacted by the Legislature but will not take effect if voters pass Proposition 36.

**In the area of environmental legislation,** we are disappointed to report that SB 252, which requires California public pensions to divest their holdings in the largest oil companies will not move forward this year. Last-minute amendments proffered by the Assembly Public Employees and Retirement Committee would have delayed divestiture until 2045 and contained other big oil friendly provisions. The bill's author, Sen. Lena Gonzalez (D-Long Beach), wisely pulled the bill and has pledged to bring back a new bill next year.

Environmental bills that are moving forward include AB 1864, which would strengthen the regulation of pesticides in school zones; AB 2316, which prohibits public school districts from serving foods containing any one of seven harmful food colors that are linked to behavioral difficulties; and AB 1851, which enacts a statewide goal of zero lead in drinking water consumed in schools or childcare centers and creates a pilot program that includes testing and remediation when lead exceeds 5 parts per billion. These bills are all now in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

**Ballot Propositions** - As you know we have an election coming up in November and 10 propositions will be on the ballot. Right now, FCLCA committees are reviewing, analyzing and working on finalizing recommendations on these measures, which will then be shared with our supporters and publicly on our website. We've heard many times over the years that people find the analysis and recommendations invaluable to voting. **Again, your support makes this effort possible.**

Thank you!