

# The Platform

Volume 15 No. 1



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PLEASE JOIN US

## The Alameda County Democratic Lawyers Club and the Metropolitan Greater Oakland Democratic Club

Invite you to a luncheon and discussion FRIDAY,  
MARCH 4, 2011, NOON TO 1:30 P.M. AT EVERETT & JONES  
RESTAURANT, IN JACK LONDON SQUARE, 126 Broadway,  
between 2nd Street and West Embarcadero, Oakland, CA  
94607 for an informative discussion.

MARCH 4, 2011, 12 NOON TO 1:30 P.M.

## State Insurance Commissioner Dave Jones and Assemblymember Mary Hayashi

will provide insight and lead discussion on

## Health Care Reform and Mental Health Parity

The meeting will begin at noon and includes a buffet lunch.  
Space is limited. Please sign up online at [www.DemLawyers.org](http://www.DemLawyers.org), or  
RSVP to Club Treasurer Guy Bryant at (510) 836-7563, or by e-mail to  
[treasurer@demlawyers.org](mailto:treasurer@demlawyers.org). The event is open to the public, \$25  
includes lunch. Please pay online at [www.DemLawyers.org](http://www.DemLawyers.org).

## FUTURE MGO CLUB PLANS

In January the Board held its annual retreat. Themes of the meeting included:

### Future Meetings

A tentative schedule for future meetings is as follows:

- The Oakland Redevelopment Agency and the effects of Governor Brown's proposal to eliminate state redevelopment funds.
- A special meeting to honor long-time MGO members.
- An endorsement meeting for the upcoming state special election.
- Discussion of new city administrator who will be place later in the spring.

Other possible meeting topics include: Mayor Quan's call for Oakland citizen volunteers; Oakland's Image; city

and state budgets; the City's Community and Economic and Development Agency (CEDA); Public Employee pensions; City maintenance issues including street sweeping, park maintenance, and road maintenance; new Oakland Athletics stadium proposals; the City Attorney's Office gang injunctions, and impact of underwater mortgages in the greater Oakland Area.

### Membership

The Board discussed both recruiting new MGO members, and getting more involvement from the current membership. We would like your feedback on topics that you would like to debate, and events that you'd like to see. Next month's Platform will include a survey to better receive your input.

### Oakland Schools Truancy

For the last two years truancy has been a major MGO issue; We have had speakers from the Oakland Unified School District and the Truancy Court. Board members participated in city meetings focused on truancy. Truancy is a huge issue here in Oakland, and while school attendance greatly affects each student's future, truancy rates also directly correlate with crime statistics and general City welfare.

Oakland schools put much effort into lowering truancy rates, and have had some success. School funding levels depend on average school attendance which provides additional motivation to address the issue. Our students need more people who are willing to give time to work with students as tutors,,,coaches, or other school volunteers.

## MGO'S LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY TASK FORCE: OUR CONTINUING FOCUS

Many of you know that over the last year and a half MGO has emphasized local government in the City of Oakland and Alameda County. We have done this by actions of our Local Government Accountability Task Force.

The Task Force identifies issues for MGO to address, gains support from the general membership, and then lobbies, speaks at government meetings, writes letters or meets with elected officials to present our views, concerns and recommendations.

Under this Task Force, we have supported the City Council's measures to cut down on nepotism in hiring and promoting in City government.

We've looked at the Pay-Go funds provided to each Councilmember for discretionary spending in his/her

district, to determine if this is best use of City money and if the funds were used

for expenditures which might not have been approved by the full Council.

We've investigated the operations of the Measure Y Oversight Committee, and the way the City Council addressed the findings of that committee to improve the operations of the Measure Y violence prevention groups.

We've looked at the qualifications and limitations put on members of the Public Ethics Commission as it relates to persons having direct family or financial ties to lobbyists, since the PEC is the group which regulates lobbyists.

This Task Force would welcome new members. Present members are Gary Sirbu, Ralph Kanz, Judy Cox, and Nancy Sidebotham. If you would like to join this active group, contact Joe Trapp, at joetrapp1@aol.com.

## **HARLAN KESSEL**

*Harlan Kessel, a longtime director of the east Bay Regional Park District, died August 27<sup>th</sup> of pulmonary fibrosis in Oakland.*

*Harlan was also a longtime member of the MGO Club and those who knew him can attest that he vigorously supported the issue that he believed in.*

*Mr. Kessel served on the Park District board from 1976 to 1992. He fought for open space and parks throughout the East Bay and he left a mark that will serve generations. We will miss him and continue to admire his accomplishments as a citizen and a politician.*

## **MGO PRESENTS**

# **REDEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS: BOON OR BOONDOGGLE?**

**Thursday, March 17<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 p.m.,  
Dimond Library, 3565 Fruitvale Avenue, Oakland**

**Academic, television commentator and recent mayoral candidate Joe Tuman will discuss the pros and cons of Redevelopment Districts, which have been used extensively in Oakland. As we know, Governor Jerry Brown (who used Redevelopment a lot for projects he advocated as mayor) is proposing that such districts be abolished in California. Come and learn**

- **What these districts are and how they function;**
- **What benefits do they provide for cities like Oakland?**
- **What are the disadvantages of these districts?**
- **What choices do we have in CA to save money but still provide benefits to cities?**

### **MGO DEMOCRATIC CLUB**

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[www.mgoclub.org](http://www.mgoclub.org)

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