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Environment, Climate Change Don't Seem to be on Mayor Faulconer's Agenda

by [Doug Porter](#) on July 24, 2014 · [3 comments](#)

in [Activism](#), [Business](#), [Columns](#), [Courts, Justice](#), [Environment](#), [Government](#), [Politics](#), [The Starting Line](#)



By Doug Porter

Delay, deny, and deflect are the backbone of the Party of No's strategy in politics. Our confrontation-adverse mayor would seem to be favoring the first of those options when it comes to environmental considerations affecting San Diego.

Yesterday organizations concerned with the potential impacts of climate change packed a hearing of the City Council's Environment Committee to urge Mayor Faulconer to quit stalling on this important issue. The presence of representatives of the American Lung Association San Diego Chapter, California Nurses Association, Environmental Health Coalition, San Diego Coastkeeper and San Diego 350 made it clear that this issue is important to many San Diegans.

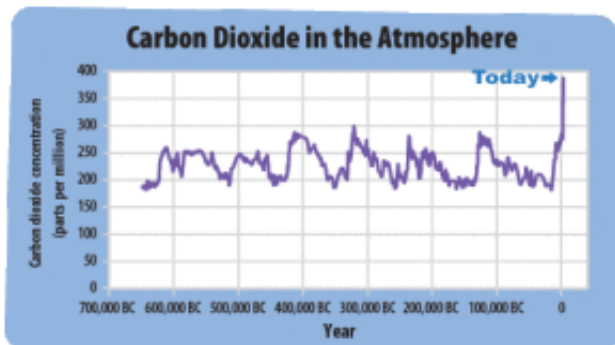
Councilmembers David Alvarez, Marti Emerald and Ed Harris voted for a resolution urging Mayor

Faulconer to reduce pollution and prepare San Diego for the impacts of climate change with strategies to measurably reduce greenhouse gas emissions over the next 20 years. Councilmember Lorie Zapf voted in opposition.

A draft Climate Action Plan released during the interim administration of Council President Todd Gloria has gone nowhere in recent months.

Actions urged by the resolution include:

- *Reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 15 percent by 2020 and 49 percent by 2035*
- *Achieving 100 percent clean energy by 2035*
- *Reducing energy demand in existing buildings*
- *Increasing use of public transit, walking and bicycling to 50 percent of commutes*
- *Prioritizing investment in economically disadvantaged communities;*
- *An Increase urban parks and forests*
- *Maximizing support of local, quality middle-class jobs that make the community healthier*
- *Bolstering resilience of local infrastructure, public health, and natural resources against climate change impacts*



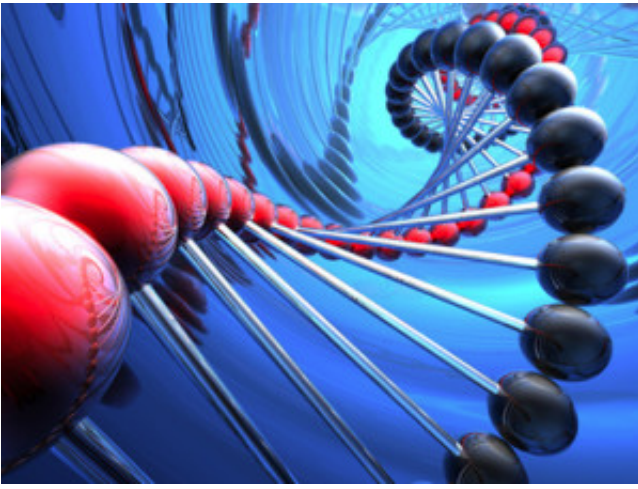
“San Diego is already experiencing the impacts of climate change—from the recent droughts and wildfires, to the health impacts of heat waves and air pollution – and these impacts disproportionately burden low-income neighborhoods,” said Kayla Race, policy advocate at Environmental Health Coalition and member of the City’s Economic and Environmental Sustainability Task Force. “We can’t afford to delay climate action any longer. We’re calling on Mayor Faulconer to deliver an aggressive climate action plan now and start creating real results and positive change for all San Diegans.”

There were dozens of public meetings over nearly four years leading up to the release of the draft Climate Action Plan. The Task Force— comprised of representatives from business, the environment, energy, the building industry, community and the Navy— continually stressed the importance of taking aggressive, enforceable and local action now to prepare for climate change and reduce pollution.

The resolution passed by the committee will now be considered by the full City Council in August.

On Tuesday representatives from Surfrider, Coastkeeper and the Sierra Club came before the City Council to urge the Mayor to take action on an ordinance restricting single use plastic bags. An environmental review necessary for the consideration of the ordinance has been stalled by Faulconer, who claims he’s waiting to see the results of legislation working its way through Sacramento. Although over 100 cities in California have placed restrictions on one-time use plastic bags, industry lobbyists have repeatedly blocked passage of statewide legislation on this matter.

Local Corporate Welfare Watch: Illumina’s Deal



Spin Cycle columnist John Lamb at [City Beat](#) looked into the justifications for the “historic deal” made between the city and the Illumina company this week. The result is an important article shedding light on how business is really done in America’s Finest City.

The ten year tax rebate deal, keeping the genome-cracking-device-manufacturing company from leaving town, saving “hundreds of high wage jobs,” was been heralded by city hall as a big deal. After all, cities like Memphis and Poway were purportedly aggressively courting Illumina.

The company was recently referred to by MIT as the “smartest company in the world.” Certainly they were smarter than the yokels at city hall.

Lamb checked-in with people in Poway and Memphis who should know about things like luring new companies and found a big pile of “huh?”

Here are the relevant quotes from [City Beat](#):

“That really surprises me, because we’ve never been in contact with the company,” Poway Mayor Don Higginson told Spin. “I checked with our economic-development director, and he said we were never approached by them...”

...The city staff report noted that “Illumina claimed that it had been offered financial incentives to move at least some of its manufacturing operations to Memphis” but did not offer details, which are often cloaked in secrecy.

Reid Dulberger, head of economic development for the Memphis area, told Spin he was “unfamiliar” with such an offer. Asked if it was in the ballpark, he would only add, “There is no ballpark.”

The article does go on to point out there are lots of nuances to this type of deal, including the possibility the deal was struck to keep shareholders happy by showing San Diego’s commitment.

But it’s an significant piece of reporting in that Lamb pierces the veil of corporate and government BS about why companies chose to relocate.

The paradigm of playing Texas vs California (give me money or else!) as a means for promoting libertarian “reforms” is part of that picture.

Looking in on the Big Government Meanies



Lisa Halverstadt at [Voice of San Diego](#) has set off on a quest to get to the bottom of the many tales of woe that have come to be accepted as truth about state and local governments being a restraining force on business.

In this [snippet](#) she talks about her investigation:

A [recent survey](#) promoted by the Chamber of Commerce found 14 percent of San Diego County companies are at least casually mulling a move elsewhere. Five percent of the more than 200 companies polled said they're seriously considering relocation.

Such threats amplify the growing sense that the city and state aren't friendly to business. Business leaders have bemoaned state regulations and recent City Council decisions to hike the [minimum wage](#) and [affordable-housing fees](#), dubbing both job-killers.

The concerns, the threats, the businesses leaving with one-way tickets: They all raise big questions about our economic future. Is San Diego shedding more jobs than it's gaining? How many companies are leaving our city? Are there onerous regulations burdening businesses more than they're safeguarding San Diegans? Are there specific laws we need to change? What would we need to do to better retain companies and what are we willing to do? And how worried should we be when we see headlines about Texas Gov. Rick Perry courting local companies?

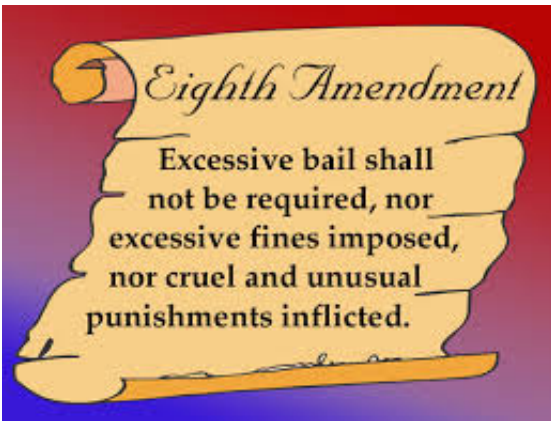
She also calls on readers for ideas and suggestions for what will, if past performance is any indication, a stream of stories on the subject.

There have been a ton of comments already and I wish her luck in sorting out the competing claims. It's been my experience that nobody can match an aggressive *wanna-be* entrepreneur for bullshit output. Blaming government for the consequences of poor management decisions is all-to-common.

My idea is that she should ask for an off-the-record peek at the tax returns of the geniuses making exorbitant claims as a means of verifying their business acumen. Or lack thereof.

We'll check back from time-to-time to see how she's doing.

Arizona: Cruel and Unusual



I'm posting about this because I didn't see much in the way of local coverage on the Arizona execution gone bad yesterday.

From the [Guardian](#):

The controversy engulfing the death penalty in the United States escalated on Wednesday when the state of Arizona took almost two hours to kill a prisoner using an experimental concoction of drugs whose provenance it had insisted on keeping secret.

Joseph Wood took an hour and 58 minutes to die after he was injected with a relatively untested combination of the sedative midazolam and painkiller hydromorphone. The procedure took so long that his lawyers had time to file an emergency court motion in an attempt to have it stopped. For more than an hour, he was seen to be "gasping and snorting", according to the court filing.

The attempt to execute Wood had begun at 1.52pm, with sedation of the prisoner confirmed five minutes later. The office of the Arizona attorney general, Tom Horne, announced at 3.49pm local time that Wood was dead.

An [Arizona Republic](#) reporter who witnessed the execution says he counted "about 660" gasps for air from the now-dead man.

One reporter who witnessed the execution, Troy Hayden of Fox 10 News, said it was "very disturbing to watch ... like a fish on shore gulping for air. At a certain point, you wondered whether he was ever going to die."

State officials and the victims' families, however, took issue with other witness descriptions, saying that Wood was not conscious after the first few minutes and that the noises he made sounded like snoring.

And geez, if you're gonna execute somebody, at least get his name right when you brag about it.

From [Talking Points Memo](#):

A short time after Arizona inmate Joseph R. Wood III was executed on Wednesday in what reportedly was a [gruesome two-hour ordeal](#), the state attorney general's office there sent out an email announcing the death.

There was a problem with the announcement, though: It had Wood's name wrong.

News outlets, including TPM, received the announcement at 3:56 p.m. Arizona time, just seven minutes after Wood was pronounced dead. The first paragraph of the announcement was this:

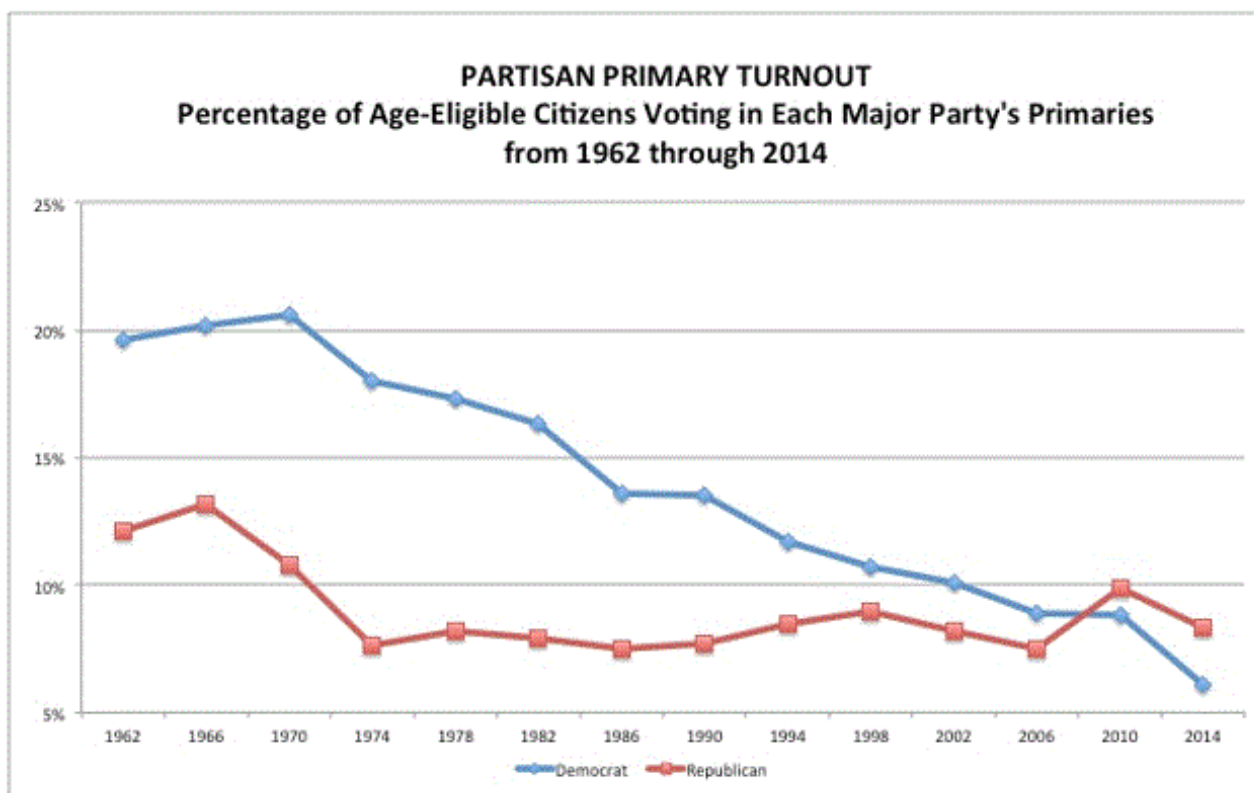
PHOENIX, AZ (Wednesday, July 23, 2014) – After several days of legal maneuvering, Attorney General Tom Horne is announcing the execution of 55-year-old, Robert G. Jones, ADC #086279. The execution commenced at 1:52 p.m. at the Arizona State Prison Complex (ASPC)-Florence. He was pronounced dead at 3:49 p.m.

The name that appeared in that paragraph, Robert G. Jones, was that of an inmate who was [put to death by Arizona on Oct. 23, 2013](#).

A second press announcement later on did correct the mistake.

Chart of the Day: Voter Turnout

From the *Washington Post*:



No wonder there are so many wingnuts in office.

On This Day: 1968 -The United Auto Workers and the Teamsters formed the Alliance for Labor Action (ALA), later to be joined by several smaller unions. The ALA's agenda included support of the civil rights movement and opposition to the war in Vietnam. It disbanded after four years following the death of UAW President Walter Reuther **1974** - The U.S. Supreme Court unanimously ruled that President Nixon had to turn over subpoenaed White House tape recordings to the Watergate special prosecutor. **1987** - The movie biography of Richie Valens, "La Bamba," opened.

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Doug Porter

Doug Porter was active in the early days of the alternative press in San Diego, contributing to the OB Liberator, the print version of the OB Rag, the San Diego Door, and the San Diego Street Journal. He went on to have a 35 year career in the Hospitality business and decided to go back into raising hell when he retired. He won awards for 'Daily Reporting and Writing: Opinion/Editorial' from the Society of Professional Journalists in 2013 and 2014. Doug is a cancer survivor (sans vocal chords) and lives in North Park.

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[John Lawrence](#) July 24, 2014 at 12:10 pm

“Is San Diego shedding more jobs than it’s gaining? How many companies are leaving our city? Are there onerous regulations burdening businesses more than they’re safeguarding San Diegans? Are there specific laws we need to change? What would we need to do to better retain companies and what are we willing to do?”

The “onerous regulations burdening business” meme is frankly a lot of BS. What this is all about is corporations playing states off against each other for tax giveaways. This is all detailed in David Cay Johnston’s book, “Free Lunch: How the Wealthiest Americans Enrich Themselves at Government Expense and Stick You With The Bill”.

The companies are looking for free property tax, sales tax give backs and other subsidies. They want free land too.

Forget about the jobs leaving San Diego; the real issue is that the tax base is leaving San Diego if the company stays in San Diego or not if government gives in to them, because that’s the price these corporations are demanding. It’s all about the taxes. And if city officials give in, all corporations will demand tax give backs as the price for remaining in whatever jurisdiction they are now located in. The only way to end this is to call their bluff and invite them to leave if they don’t want to pay taxes. Some of them will; most won’t. But they won’t stop trying to get government to give them back their taxes at the expense of government programs that benefit the rest of us.

[Reply](#)



bob dorn [July 24, 2014 at 2:08 pm](#)

Two days ago I read that a federal court judge suggested it might be better if we returned to the firing squad or guillotine rather than hold these displays of torture. The older methods were more certain. Are these states engaging in torture?

[Reply](#)



michael-leonard [July 24, 2014 at 7:06 pm](#)

Leaving aside for a moment the question of whether or not to have a “death penalty,” veterinarians all over the world put animals to sleep each day with no trouble at all. So, what the H is the problem?! Seriously, why can't a state (an entire STATE!) manage to kill these people?

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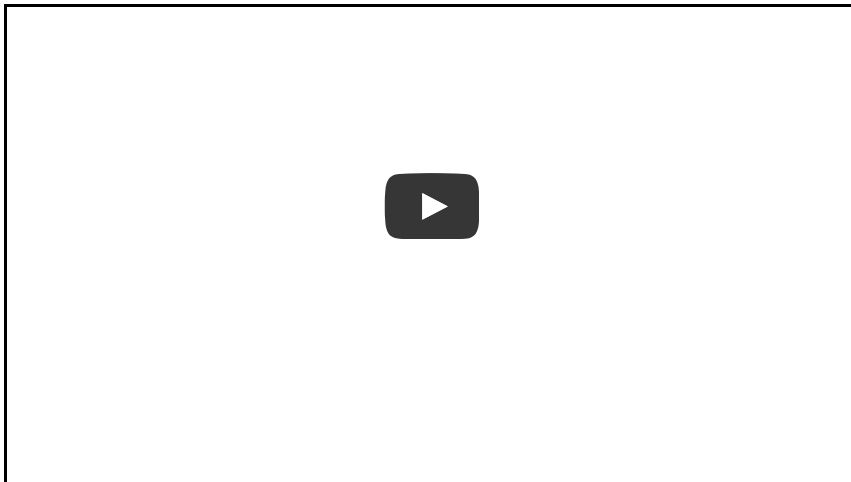
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Very insightful of a very frightening picture of the world we have created. 1984 goes on and on for ever.

maria on [The History of Neighborhood House in Logan Heights: Two Generations of](#)

[Carriedos and Tennis Comes to the Barrio](#)

Adela, thank you for your comment. I hope people realize how much history is our community.

Frank Thomas on [Extreme Weather Watch: August 2014 – Southwest US May Face](#)

[Megadrought](#)

John, Exxon Mobil's statement was briefly noted in the March 29th issue of New Scientist: "Oil giant Exxon Mobil is ...

[John Lawrence](#) on [There's Always a Bad Smell Downwind of Carl DeMaio](#)

I realize they got it free. But it cost the taxpayers \$750,000. And yes they paid \$5K for shipping. The ...

[John Lawrence](#) on [Extreme Weather Watch: August 2014 – Southwest US May Face](#)

[Megadrought](#)

That's an amazing statement from Exxon Mobil. Now will they relinquish their immense subsidies and tax breaks?

[John Lawrence](#) on [The Fight to Save the Minimum Wage Hike Intensifies in San Diego](#)

It's not really about small business as Doug has pointed out. It's about the fast food industry as well as ...

[Jeremy Caley](#) on [San Diego For Free: Brews & Views at Alcohol-Friendly Public Spaces in San Diego](#)

Great article, is this list still current today?

[Anna Daniels](#) on [Living the Wage is Indeed a Challenge in San Diego](#)

Public transit is an important issue, David. Todd did mention it in one of his tweets--he couldn't afford to ...

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