

San Diego Newsline

Downtown San Diego news — the budget, public safety, business, and the civic life of America's Finest City

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COUNTY

County Probation and Local Nonprofit Provide Free Turkeys and Community Resources



Illustration from a photo by Edward O'Connor (hober) · Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 2.0

San Diego County Probation and Community Wraparound teamed up to support people who may need extra help for the Thanksgiving holiday. Together, a resource fair was held to give away turkeys and provide information.

Two teens from the Youth Transition Campus and County Probation employees helped pass out Thanksgiving turkeys. The event was organized by Community Wraparound , a non-profit agency in Southeast San Diego

Probation officers also had a table at the event and talked to community members about how they connect people to community resources as well as employment opportunities.

Youth who go on excursions with Probation are selected based on good behavior and program participation.

“It felt good to give back to my community and just help people out. And it feels good working in the community,” said one teen, 16.

The other young man, 18, said, “Yeah it was fun and it felt good to give out food to them, knowing some needed it more than we did.”

Justice-involved youth are given regular opportunities to support their communities through various efforts including food packaging initiatives with local churches, Feeding America, Walmart, Smart and Final, and Aldi.

These hands-on opportunities

allow youth to provide essential aid to their community, fosters a sense of purpose and responsibility, and teaches them important skills.

Additional partners included the City of San Diego, Jacobs Center for Neighborhood Innovation, San Ysidro Health, Remnant Church, Peacemaker Project, Learn 4Life High Schools, and Platicando Con Mi Gente.

County Probation officers share a mission to protect public safety by supporting their clients to restore their lives, families and communities.

County of San Diego news release · Nov 26, 2025

COUNTY

Hearing and New Website Showcase County Housing Efforts

The Board of Supervisors held a housing workshop that focused on unincorporated land use policy and the need for regional housing solutions in support of the County’s commitment to address the region’s housing crisis.

The informational workshop set the stage ahead of upcoming Board decisions on initiatives related to housing and provided background and policy context.

This included details about housing production realities, and future planning decisions in the unincorporated area by Planning & Development Services, which manages long range land use planning to help determine how our communities will grow. In addition, County Housing and Community Development Services shared information about production progress and innovative partnerships.

Housing and Community Development Services supports those facing homelessness and provide pathways to affordable, stable housing for at-risk populations.

The workshop also provided a forum for stakeholder groups to share their unique perspectives and for all to understand housing trends to date – what type of housing we’ve permitted and where it’s been built and to consider future policies that influence housing on the limited land under County land use authority.

The County also announced a new one-stop Housing Hub to provide an overview and updates about the County’s comprehensive housing efforts. The website provides a single, user-friendly entry point for finding housing resources, data, and initiatives across departments.

Visitors will more easily find information about affordable housing programs, tenant and landlord resources, and opportunities to get involved. And, it will help builders explore permitting tools, funding opportunities, and data on housing needs and projects.

The website strengthens community awareness of the County’s housing work, supporting transparency and collaboration. It also showcases County coordination across different departments to implement the County’s Housing Blueprint goals.

County of San Diego news release · Nov 20, 2025

COUNTY

The Greatest Gift is a Safe Gift

The holiday season is here and kids across the county are excited for their presents. With that it’s important to make sure the toys they receive are age appropriate and safe.

Every year hundreds of San Diego children end up in an emergency

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DOWNTOWN, CITY & COUNTY

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The Greatest Gift is a Safe Gift

department from mishaps with toys. That’s why choking, swallowing or interacting with toys or jewelry made with lead, or those that have button or coin batteries are high on the list of doctors’ holiday concerns. Fortunately, San Diego parents can take steps to keep their family holiday safe from dangerous gifts.

First, make sure the toy is age appropriate: toy packaging will have a recommended age range. That label should also say “nontoxic” to ensure it is safe especially for infants and toddlers. Keep toys for older children out of reach especially because their small parts can be a choking risk. If a toy has a part that will fit through a cardboard

toilet paper roll, it is small enough to pose a choking risk.

If possible, avoid using or buying button or coin batteries or toys that require them. Button batteries and batteries in general should be kept away from children in a drawer or cabinet out of reach. Button batteries are particularly concerning as they are a common choking hazard with serious consequences. A battery can get stuck in the child’s throat and burn a hole. This burn can quickly turn into infection, permanent damage, or even death if it’s not treated fast enough. Immediately seek emergency care if you think your child swallowed a battery.

Visit this Rady Children’s Hospital webpage for other toy safety recommendations:

Choosing Safe Toys | Rady Children’s Health

Among other gifts to watch out for are antique toys or hand-me-downs which were already flagged as dangerous. Knowing what toys have been recalled , which toys may have lead and where to go to with concerns are essential.

Watch out for toys made in other countries or made in the United States before 1978, as they may have lead paint. Toys can only be tested for lead by a certified laboratory. At-home tests do not identify how much lead is present. It is best to check for recalls on old toys.

Lead exposure can harm a child’s brain and nervous system, slow their growth and cause learning difficulties. If you suspect your child has been exposed, remove the toy immediately. Anyone who is

concerned about lead poisoning should ask their doctor for a blood test.

Washing your hands and wiping down surfaces and toys are also great ways to ensure any lead dust in the environment is removed.

Eating foods high in calcium, vitamin C and iron protect the body from absorbing lead. Fun recipes in English and Spanish are featured near the bottom of the Family Lead Safety website.

To avoid choking, swallowing and other hazards, anyone giving a gift to a child should consider the following questions:

Are there parts that are too pointy or dangerous for the child’s age?

Can any small parts come off the toy, even by design?

Does an older child’s toy

Courts · Transit · Public safety

have parts that pose a choking hazard for another child or siblings?

Can the toy be crushed or broken apart if stepped on, sat on or from falling?

Those gifting sports equipment or anything with wheels should also include appropriate protective gear, like helmets and pads.

The U.S. Consumer Product and Safety Commission reports that toys for children 12 and under are inspected by the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM). All toys that have passed inspection will have a label showing it meets those standards.

By following safe gift giving you can keep your loved ones safe too!

County of San Diego news release · Nov 26, 2025

BUSINESS

San Diego commerce & the regional economy



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BUSINESS Local Advocacy Efforts

The San Diego City Council has approved a Citywide fee increase for valet parking spaces. The fee increase affects the cost of existing valet spaces and applications for new valet permits. Hotels and restaurants primarily use these permits to establish valet services, and are most concentrated in Downtown. The proposal before the City Council originally consisted of a \$600-per-permit fee, a \$5,000 fee for two valet spaces, and an additional charge of \$10,000 to \$15,000 per extra space, depending on proximity to the City’s recently established “special event” zone near Petco Park.

The Council ultimately voted 8-1 in favor of a compromise fee proposal presented by Chamber member the San Diego County Lodging Association and championed by Councilmember Whitburn. Under the compromise, fees will now be capped at \$7,500 per extra space and \$10,000 per extra space in the special event zone. The dissenting vote was cast by Councilmember Elo-Rivera, who favored the original

higher fee to recoup more revenue for the City from hotel guests. The Chamber supported the Lodging Association’s compromise proposal, signing onto a coalition letter urging the Council to adopt the compromise. City staff will also return to the Council’s Active Transportation and Infrastructure Committee next year for an update on parking meter utilization and revenue, including how this affects the valet parking space policy conversation.

In a companion item to the above, the City Council was set to consider an increase to the “streetary” permit, an existing permit the City grants to restaurants that set up outdoor dining in the public right-of-way. The permit was initially established in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and was made permanent in 2021. The Council was set to vote on a thousand-dollar-per-permit increase and a massive increase in Downtown. However, the item was pulled from the Council agenda at the last minute thanks to concern from a couple of Council offices and an opposition letter submitted by the Chamber and our partners at the California Restaurant Association. We outlined our concern about the lack of stakeholder engagement on the issue, as well as the potential lost revenue for the City, given that higher permit fees would likely have led restaurants to eliminate outdoor dining rather than pay

thousands of additional dollars in permit fees.

San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce news release · Nov 21, 2025

BUSINESS Member Spotlight – Episcopal Community Services

Alice is known for her kindness and generosity, but mental illness has created challenging obstacles along her path.

Alice enjoys tending to the garden at UTSH. August 2025.

After a particularly bad breakdown, Alice returned to her family’s house only to learn that her brother-in-law, in an effort to keep Alice and her breakdowns at bay, had obtained a restraining order against Alice. She violated the restraining order in a state of psychosis and promptly turned herself in.

After five months in jail, Alice was released and placed in an independent living facility (ILF) where she began psychiatric therapy. However, after a few months, Alice no longer qualified to live there. Just as she felt hope dissipating again, she learned about an opportunity to move to transitional housing at UTSH.

Life changed for Alice after moving to UTSH. She continued therapy and participated in support groups. The staff offered her continuous support and kindness. “There are people who are good, there are people who understand, there are people who work with you to make it better for

you. And that’s what I found here,” she said.

A few months ago, Alice went before a judge to address the charges on her record from violating the restraining order. Thanks to a letter written by Raul, UTSH’s Program Manager, her record was expunged. “Her positive energy, reliability, and eagerness to grow makes her a valuable member of both our program and the broader community,” Raul wrote.

UTSH helped Alice suppress her fears, regain her confidence, and prepare for independent living. August 2025.

Through counseling and community activities, Alice has prepared herself for independent living. Just a few weeks ago, Alice moved into her own apartment.

Because of her mental illness, Alice used to live in constant fear. “But with the support that I have, especially from Uptown Safe Haven, it’s really different,” Alice said. “To actually be in an environment where you learn to live in your own place makes it so that you have a better outcome when you do get there.”

Uptown Safe Haven is a transitional housing program that provides supportive services to chronically homeless single adults with moderate to severe mental health issues. To learn more about the incredible work of UTSH, visit https://www.ecscalifornia.org/uptown-safe-haven-1.

San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce news release · Nov 25, 2025

BUSINESS IPA in CDMX

Earlier this month, Chamber staff joined PROBAJA’s trade and investment delegation to Mexico City. The initiative consists of the State of Baja’s Secretariat of Economic Development and the Tijuana, Ensenada, Mexicali, and Tecate EDC in a joint effort to promote investment across the state. This marks the fifth year in a row that the Chamber joins this trade delegation to promote the CaliBaja region, visiting embassies, trade offices, and multinational businesses in Mexico City in order to promote investment opportunities, regional resources such as our local talent, and emerging sectors to together boost our economic and global competitiveness.

The agenda included conversations and presentations with the embassies of Switzerland, Canada, and the UK, and industries such as BIMBO, Bosch, and JLL. Top topic of interests included opportunities for talent growth, key sectors such as semiconductors, cleantech, agroindustry, and future investments coming to our region with the construction of the Punta Colonet Port south of Ensenada. In addition, the upcoming revision of the USMCA agreement and tariffs continues to be a priority.

San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce news release · Nov 21, 2025

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AROUND CALIFORNIA

Statewide news

CALIFORNIA

Newsom's Proposed Retroactive Tax on Billionaires Who Lived in California in 2025 Raises Questions About Future Revenue

The SEIU-sponsored one-time 5% levy on wealth over \$1 billion, calculated on 2026 net worth, has drawn criticism that it could prompt more high-net-worth individuals to leave the state.

California has been losing both residents and businesses for years.

Governor Gavin Newsom is pushing a measure that would impose a one-time 5% tax on individual wealth exceeding \$1 billion for people who resided in the state in 2025.

The proposal, known as the 2026 Billionaires Tax Act and sponsored by the Service Employees International Union, is listed on the Attorney General's website.

Marc Joffe, writing in the California Globe, explains that although the tax would be based on 2026 net worth it would apply to those living in California the prior year, in theory making it hard to avoid.

The roughly 220 billionaires targeted are highly mobile and able to live anywhere.

Those in favor say the one-time nature of the tax means it would not cause billionaires to leave.

But once a wealth tax is enacted the state could repeat it, so departure remains a real possibility.

Billionaires have the resources to challenge the unprecedented tax in court, where its constitutionality will be tested.

IRS data analyzed by the National Taxpayers Union Foundation shows California is losing a taxpayer every 1 minute and 44 seconds.

Florida gains a new taxpayer every 2 minutes and 9 seconds and Texas every 2 minutes and 53 seconds.

Florida is now collecting \$4 billion more per year for its budget.

California, New York and Illinois are among the states losing taxpayers at the fastest rates.

From 2018 to 2021 the ten states with the lowest income taxes gained a net \$391 billion in adjusted gross income that left the ten states with the highest income taxes, including California.

Economist Arthur Laffer and Chapman University Professor James Doti have said the one-percenters who pay 50% of the tax are "voting with their feet by leaving California in droves."

Companies that have left include Chevron, which relocated its headquarters from San Ramon to Houston after being based there since 1879, as well as X, SpaceX, Oracle, Hewlett Packard, Charles Schwab and Toyota Motor North America.

The moves have been attributed to the state's high taxes, fees and regulatory environment.

Even with a large deficit, spending continues on the high-speed rail project, extending Medi-Cal to illegal immigrants and a commission examining reparations for black citizens.

Jonathan Turley has written that "despite the towering deficit, Newsom and the Democratic Party continue to spend wildly on a boondoggle bullet train and to engage in last-minute redistricting to gerrymander the state further."

Turley, whose forthcoming book is titled "Rage and the Republic: The Unfinished Story of the American Revolution," questions whether the tax would ultimately produce more revenue than it costs the state in the long run.

When another California company moved to Texas, Governor Greg Abbott cited his state's "business-friendly climate—with no corporate or personal income tax—along

with a highly skilled and diverse workforce, easy access to global markets, robust infrastructure and a reasonable regulatory environment."

The Laffer Curve, popularized by economist Arthur Laffer, illustrates that tax rates that are too high can reduce government revenue by shrinking the tax base.

The proposal comes as Newsom is said to be considering a presidential run amid ongoing budget pressures in California.

State leaders have continued to pursue high taxes despite the outflow of residents and businesses to states without income taxes.

San Diego Newsline · Based on reporting by California Globe · Nov 24, 2025

CALIFORNIA

DOJ Lawsuits Target California Sanctuary Policies for Violating Federal Law

Federal suits challenge state laws providing in-state tuition and financial aid to those without legal status as well as measures regulating federal officers' appearance, which the government says discriminate against citizens and threaten agent safety.

Federal authorities have filed multiple lawsuits against California and some of its localities, arguing that the state's sanctuary measures obstruct federal immigration enforcement and discriminate against U.S. citizens.

The most recent complaint, filed this week in the Eastern District of California, challenges California Education Code provisions that extend in-state tuition rates, scholarships and subsidized loans to individuals living in the country unlawfully.

The suit states that these provisions treat U.S. citizens from other states differently by requiring them to pay higher rates.

The Department of Justice maintains that the policy violates 8 U.S.C. § 1623(a), which prohibits states from making

postsecondary education benefits available to those not lawfully present on the basis of residency unless citizens are eligible for the same benefit regardless of their own residency.

"California is illegally discriminating against American students and families by offering exclusive tuition benefits for non-citizens," Attorney General Pam Bondi said in a prepared statement.

Bondi added that the state shows "flagrant disregard for federal law."

The action names Governor Gavin Newsom, Attorney General Rob Bonta, the Regents of the University of California, the California State University trustees and the community college board as defendants.

Prosecutors are seeking a court order to prevent enforcement of the tuition provisions and the California Dream Act, which provides scholarships and subsidized loans to those without legal status.

This suit follows two executive orders signed by President Donald Trump that seek to prevent illegal immigrants from obtaining taxpayer benefits or preferential treatment.

Similar challenges have been brought against tuition policies in Texas, Kentucky, Illinois, Oklahoma and Minnesota.

Four days earlier, on November 17, the Justice Department filed another lawsuit contesting two California statutes known as the No Secret Police Act and the No Vigilantes Act.

Those measures, authored by state Senators Scott Wiener and Jesse Arreguin, prohibit law enforcement officers from covering their faces during operations and require them to be identifiable on their uniforms.

Federal officials contend the rules threaten the safety of federal officers who have faced harassment, doxxing

and violence.

"Law enforcement officers risk their lives every day to keep Americans safe, and they do not deserve to be doxed or harassed simply for carrying out their duties," Bondi said.

She added that the policies "discriminate against the federal government and are designed to create risk for our agents."

Assistant Attorney General Brett A. Shumate and First Assistant U.S. Attorney Bill Essayli echoed concerns that the laws chill federal operations and endanger personnel.

A third suit filed in June targets Los Angeles sanctuary ordinances that limit cooperation with federal immigration agents.

DOJ officials allege those policies contributed to recent unrest that required deployment of the California National Guard and the United States Marines.

"Sanctuary policies were the driving cause of the violence, chaos, and attacks on law enforcement that Americans recently witnessed in Los Angeles," Bondi stated.

The state has maintained sanctuary protections since 2017, when Senate Bill 54 passed along party lines and was signed by then-Governor Jerry Brown.

In February, Newsom signed legislation authorizing \$50 million for legal defense efforts against the Trump administration.

Newsom's office responded to the recent filings by calling them "three meritless, politically motivated lawsuits" and promising to meet the challenges in court.

The actions underscore ongoing tension between federal immigration authority and state policies.

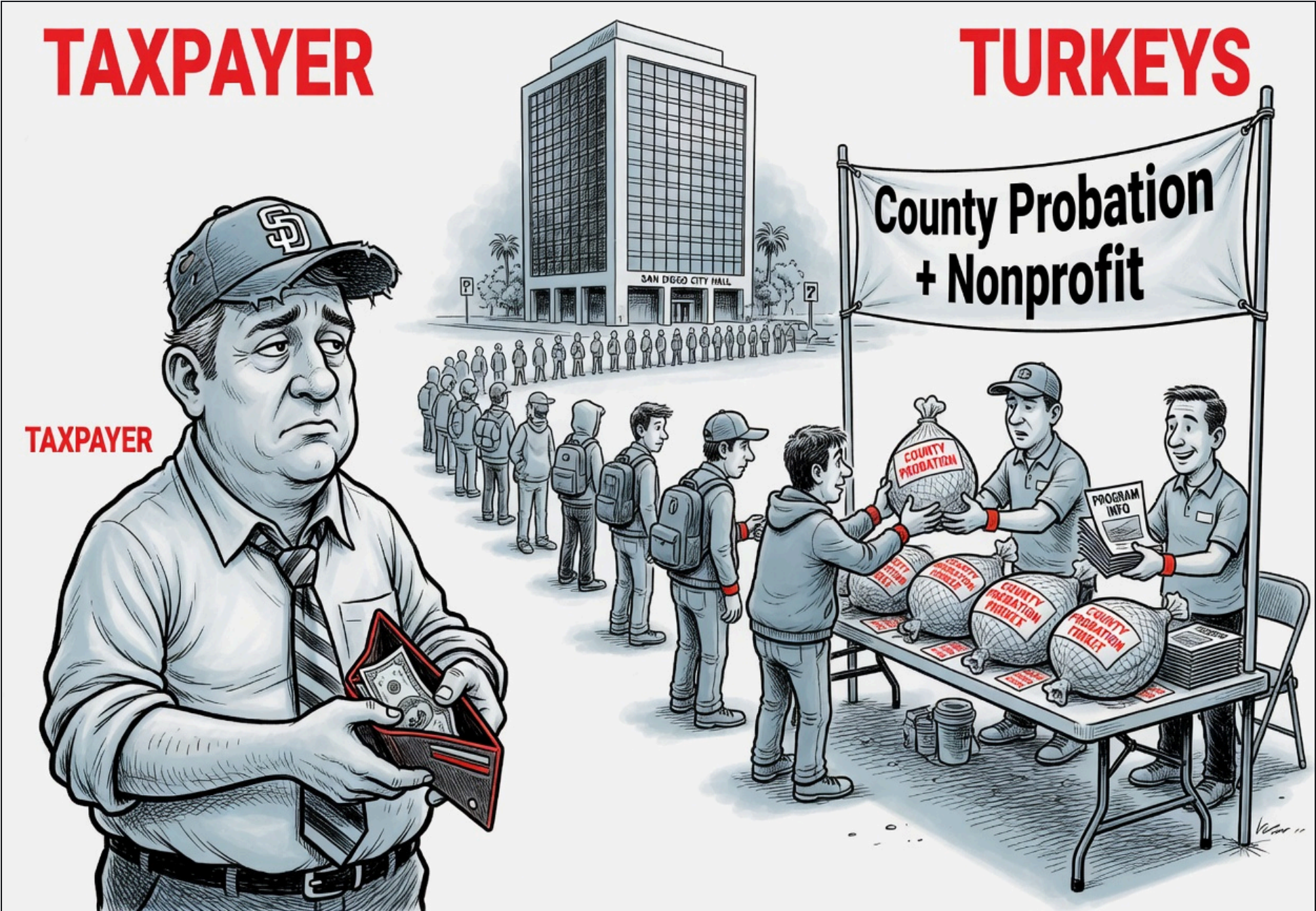
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SAN DIEGO NEWSLINE

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THE NEWSLINE CARTOON

COMMENTARY

Opinion — the views of the writers named, not news reporting

COMMENTARY

California’s Economy Increasingly Relies on AI, Raising Risks of Bubble Burst or Tech Exodus

Marc Joffe, a visiting fellow at the California Policy Center, warns that the state’s finances are increasingly tied to a handful of AI-focused tech giants, leaving it vulnerable to industry setbacks or out-migration of innovators.

California continues to post strong headline economic figures, but its growth is becoming ever more dependent on the technology sector, according to Marc Joffe, a visiting fellow at the California Policy Center.

With the tech industry now heavily committed to artificial intelligence, the state’s finances are vulnerable to either a bursting of the “AI Bubble” or an exit of AI innovators to other states, Joffe writes.

He cautions that while California’s nominal GDP ranking is impressive, such comparisons can be misleading because states and countries vary widely in costs and

population sizes. When adjusted for purchasing power, the state ranks 11th globally, still competitive with nations that have far larger populations.

California’s GDP per person remains exceptionally high but trails Washington D.C., New York, Massachusetts and Washington state. Among sovereign nations, it is surpassed by Ireland, Luxembourg and a few smaller countries.

Joffe notes that the state’s per capita GDP figure is heavily influenced by the enormous incomes of a small number of tech leaders and therefore does not fully reflect living standards for the broader middle class.

Although economic policies pursued by Gov. Gavin Newsom and former Gov. Jerry Brown have drawn criticism, the state’s overall economic growth has outpaced the national average since 2010.

In more recent years, however, states such as Florida, Texas and Arizona have recorded faster GDP growth, largely fueled by substantial population gains.

Joffe argues that California’s future economic performance will be closely linked to the fortunes of its technology industry. To illustrate how much more tech-dependent the state has become during the Newsom administration, he compared market capitalization data for large publicly traded companies.

At the end of 2018, about 60 percent of the market capitalization of California’s large publicly traded companies came from tech firms. Today that share has risen to around 80 percent, driven by rapid appreciation in the value of NVIDIA, Apple, Alphabet (Google), Broadcom and Meta (Facebook).

All five companies are now worth more than \$1 trillion, whereas none exceeded \$750 billion in 2018.

By contrast, the state’s other historic economic pillar — movie and television production — has contracted sharply. On-location shoot days in Los Angeles dropped 53 percent between late 2019 and late 2024, while sound-stage occupancy fell from about 90 percent to 63

percent.

Major studios cut staff, prop houses closed and vendors filed for bankruptcy, leading Joffe to conclude that entertainment can no longer be viewed as a cornerstone of California’s economy.

Meanwhile, California’s publicly listed tech companies are placing large bets on artificial intelligence, as are private firms such as OpenAI and Anthropic that were not included in the market-cap calculations.

Joffe writes that California’s growth may well continue and even accelerate in the near term due to AI, but state and local officials risk squandering that opportunity by making the tax and regulatory environment even less hospitable.

A handful of tech companies have already departed California, including X, HP and Oracle. Joffe warns that more could follow if voters approve a billionaire wealth tax next November or if lawmakers expand the AI regulations enacted in 2025.

An additional danger is the possibility that the AI boom

is in fact a bubble. The collapse of the “Dotcom Bubble” at the start of the century reduced state revenues and contributed to the recall of Gov. Gray Davis. A similar downturn in 2026 or 2027 would have much more serious budgetary consequences.

Over the long run, an improved business climate together with the state’s substantial human capital could help other industries expand and restore economic diversity, Joffe writes.

For now, however, California policymakers should focus on retaining the state’s tech superstars and hope they continue to thrive.

San Diego Newsline · Based on commentary published by the California Policy Center · Nov 26, 2025

ABOUT THIS PAPER

San Diego Newsline covers downtown San Diego first — City Hall, the Gaslamp Quarter, East Village, Little Italy, Barrio Logan and the waterfront — and the county around it. Every item names its source; read the originals and our standards at sandiegonewsline.com.