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2020 political resolutions

BY JEFF VONKAENEL / jeffv@newsreview.com

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Given the massive amounts of information coming at us, and the many things we could or should do, it is easy to be overwhelmed. New Year's resolutions are a way to take stock of our lives, set priorities and develop a plan of action. It is true in our personal lives, and for our community as well. The following are my political resolutions for 2020, as I try to think globally and act locally.

1. We need to house our homeless.

Our community has the resources and the compassion necessary to help our neighbors living without shelter. If a fire or a flood left thousands in our community homeless, we would move heaven and earth to help them. We need to act. We may not have the ideal solution, but we can do practical, immediate things to make a difference. Tents are better than sidewalks. Small houses are better than tents. Housing with supportive services are even better. Sacramento Mayor Darrell Steinberg has been taking the lead on this. We should give him more support and particularly help him overcome neighborhood objections.

2. We must elect a progressive Sacramento County supervisor to replace Susan Peters.

Our five-member Board of Supervisors has two progressive, smart and capable supervisors in Patrick Kennedy and Phil Serna, two very conservative supervisors in Peters and Sue Frost and one very experienced, middle-of-the-road supervisor, Don Nottoli. While knowledgeable, Nottoli is not a man of action. So we have had constant gridlock at the county—on housing as well as health and human services and county administrative issues. Current SMUD Board member Gregg Fishman, who has received the endorsement of both the Sacramento Democratic Party and Sacramento Central Labor Council, would make an excellent supervisor. It is important that we unite around a candidate who can win.

3. We need to improve county roads and public transit by passing a half-cent sales tax increase.

If approved in November, this measure would raise \$8 billion over the next 40 years. There is currently a healthy debate on how much should go for roads and how much should go for public transportation. Both are needed. We must work hard to get the two-thirds vote necessary. Just think how much better things would be if the voters in 1980 had approved a similar measure. You'll have time to think about it, while sitting in your car stuck in traffic or while waiting for the bus.

4. To reduce ever-increasing income inequality, it is important that we build a political coalition between Sacramento's progressives and labor unions.

Labor has been leading the way, fighting for an increased California minimum wage, working to provide effective worker protections against sexual harassment and supporting housing and tax reform. I have been impressed by the work of Yvonne Walker from SEIU Local 1000, Dean Murakami from American Federation of Teachers Local 2279, Fabrizio Sasso from Sacramento Central Labor Council and others. Progressives and labor leaders should work together to pass a legislative agenda.

5. And we must elect a new president.

Although I am the CEO of News & Review, these views are not necessarily the views of SN&R's editorial department, which may have different positions than me in its endorsements in 2020.

These are my political resolutions. I would be interested to hear yours. Email me at jeffv@newsreview.com. □

Jeff vonKaenel is the president, CEO and majority owner of the News & Review.

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