

HOMELESS IN PARADISE

July 30 - August 5, 2021

LET THE BOONDOGGLE-BUSTING BEGIN! – Part 11



DO YOU THINK IT'S WISE TO CHANGE HORSES MIDSTREAM?

By Wanda Sue Parrott

“**LOOKIN’** for Love in all the wrong places”* was the opening line of a popular song from 1980 sung by Johnny Lee. If I had my “druthers,” it would be the political Boondoggler’s metaphorical theme song for the forthcoming recall election.

Here's why: Governor Gavin Newsom is a Boondoggle-Buster whose progressive actions have broken long-ignored solutions to homelessness. Like the contemporary drover in this montage, he guides a metaphorical herd of homeless cattle across perilous waters.

Is he looking for love in all the right places by taking bold new approaches that upset his opponents?

If the state is forced to “change horses midstream” by a change of governors, what then?

Basic Guaranteed Income

Last week California lawmakers approved the first state-funded guaranteed income plan in the nation. The bipartisan support for the idea that has been gaining interest across the country received 36-0 votes in the Senate and 64-0 in the Assembly.

Inspired by Universal Basic Income (popularized in the *New York Times* Bestseller *Utopia for Realists* by Rutger Bregman, Little, Brown and Company, 2014), California lawmakers approved the first state-funded

guaranteed income plan in the U.S. on Thursday last week. Under this plan, \$35 million will be allocated for monthly cash payments to qualifying young adults who recently left foster care and to qualifying pregnant women. No strings are attached; there will be no restrictions on how recipients spend their cash.

In essence, they are getting free money. The California Department of Social Services will determine who receives funding and local authorities will determine sizes of payments, which are expected to average between \$500 and \$1,000 per month.

“Now, there is momentum, things are moving quickly,” said Michael Tubbs, an advisor to Governor Gavin Newsom, who was a trailblazer when he instituted a guaranteed income program as mayor of Stockton. “The next stop is the federal government.”

Back in March, the City of Compton initiated a guaranteed no-strings-attached income of \$1,800 every three months, and Oakland announced it will be kicking off its own guaranteed basic income program.

Is free money a controversial issue? You bet!

Other Legislation Signed Last Week

Governor Newsom’s [California Comeback Plan](#)* represents the hypothetical safe shore toward which the homeless herd is being driven in the montage:

Assembly Bill 140 (AB 140) includes \$2 billion in aid to counties, large cities, and Continuums of Care through the Homeless Housing Assistance and Prevention grant program (HHAP).

The \$10.3 billion Affordable Housing Package includes \$850 million incentivizing infill development and smart growth, \$800 million for preserving the state’s affordable-housing stock, and \$100 million for promoting affordable homeownership. Additional funding is included to scale up the state’s efforts to create more Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), invest in farmworker housing, and build more housing on state-owned excess lands.

Twelve-billion dollars, allocated over two years, confronts the homelessness crisis with: \$5.8 billion for Project Homekey, creating more than 42,000 new homeless housing units; \$2.75 billion for the Dept. of Housing and Community Development; \$3 billion for the Health and Human Services Agency to create clinically enriched behavioral health housing and funding for the renovation and acquisition of Board and Care facilities and Residential Care facilities for the elderly; 7,200 units of housing for extremely low income and homeless families; \$50.6 million for encampment resolution; \$45 million for services and housing for homeless veterans.

Last, but not least: \$1.1 billion for an 11,000 job-generating program to remove trash piles that look like petrified mastodon poop along California's once-beautiful byways.

How Does Changing Horses Midstream Feel?

As of July 22, qualified names certified by the Secretary of State left only 46 candidates to be listed on the ballot. When your ballot arrives by mail in August, you will be asked two questions:

1. Do you want Governor Gavin Newsom to be recalled? Yes or No? If you choose Yes, you may answer:
2. Which candidate do you vote for? Majority vote-getter will win.

Most-likely contender is Republican Larry Elder, radio talk show host and Fox commentator, whose ultra-conservative warning is: By making homelessness attractive, Newsom is inviting the homeless to flock to California for the freebies and good weather.

Gavin Newsom *is* controversial. In his 30 months in office, he has survived at least six attempts to oust him. Will he outlast the recall election on September 14?

According to *"The Boondogger's Bible—How to Fight Like City Hall to Win!"* a boondoggle is any act or set of actions that interrupt, delay, or cause to be unresolved any issue(s) that may or may not involve changing horses midstream. Do you think recalling the governor is wise?

Your answer could depend on the places in which you look for love.

If I were to vote on my preference for a theme song for a champion Boondoggle Buster, it would be "California, here I come!"

**"I don't *think* homelessness can be solved.
I *know* homelessness can be solved!
This is our cause. This is our calling.
Let us rise to the challenge and make
California stand as an exemplar of what
true courage and compassion can achieve.
Let's go to work."
Governor Gavin Newsom
State of the State Address
February 2020**

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CREDITS:

Cattle drover from Google Free Images; Lyrics to "Looking for Love" (recorded by Johnny Lee from the film "Urban Cowboy" starring John Travolta) by Wanda Mallette, Bob Morrison, and Patti Ryan. "California, Here I Come" by B.G. De Sylva, Joseph Meyer, and (sung by) Al Jolson.

The Boondogger's Bible - How to Fight Like City Hall to Win!! (\$17 from Wanda Sue Parrott, P. O. Box 1821, Monterey, CA 93942-1821) or from amazon.com.

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*Full text version of infographic referenced above; copy and paste into web browser address bar to view if link does not work: <https://www.gov.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/CA-Comeback-Homelessness-Plan.pdf>