



The Audacity of Nope...

Saturday, March 26, 2011

The current negotiations around the California budget have come down to the last few days.

The Governor wants a 2/3 vote to support the placement of a June ballot measure to consider a package of tax extensions to solve the California budget crisis--or to decide that we would rather the \$13 billion in additional cuts, to education, public safety, as well as even more to health and human services. But it's already too late to have a vote in the first week of June, and in a few days, it will be too late for any date in June.

Yet at this late date, the Senate Republicans presented a 53-point wish list as their offer--a ransom note with a series of demands to enact an agenda that was largely rejected by California voters last November. [Here's the full, long list.](#)

Put another way (as we did on Twitter [@healthaccess](#) last night), this very detailed list is the price to merely get 1/3 of 1/2 of the California Legislature to agree to merely let Californians vote on a budget solution.

And it's not like the Senate Republicans actually have presented a credible counter-proposal about how otherwise you would balance the California budget.

Others pointed out that the list is dominated by ideological non-budget items: attacks on unions, teachers, environmental laws, regulations, etc.

And what worse, many of the items related to the budget crisis would actually make the deficit worse. They would want to remove elimination of Enterprise Zones and other corporate taxes. They want restorations in certain programs--the Williamson Act, county fairs--while arguing for even steeper cuts when they ask for the "original" proposed cuts from earlier in the years. Such cuts would mean hard caps on doctor visits for Medi-Cal patients, and the full elimination of Adult Day Health Centers.

It's depressing that we have a political system that empowers such bad behavior. And that we haven't found two Senators outside the majority Democratic caucus to take the leadership role that's available in offering voters a choice about California's future.

POSTSCRIPT: Earlier in the day, Senator President Pro Tem described how "ridiculous" the process is...

Steinberg discusses budget status 3-25-11

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jRk6hhJ27TY>

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