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WEEKLY DIGEST
AUGUST 24, 2018

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Photo: YouTube.com

LOCAL CASTRO SPEAKS

Jarrar, Bartko and Bulldog Stadium Upgrades

August 21, 2018 | David Taub

Fresno State President Joseph Castro welcomed students and faculty back to campus Monday (Aug. 21) in a pair of assemblies at the Save Mart Center. A record 25,200 students enrolled, 78% from the Central Valley. Despite the uproar over controversial comments from a professor, the school announced charitable giving increased 22%. Castro spoke to the media after the events. Here are the highlights:

Randa Jarrar

Castro addressed the [Randa Jarrar controversy](#) during the faculty assembly and with the media. He is taking a pro-First Amendment approach. “More speech, clarifying our views, understanding each other, listening to each other—that makes our campus stronger; that makes our democracy stronger,” Castro said. Jarrar, known little outside academic and literary circles, boosted into the national scene after her Twitter posts following the death of former First Lady Barbara Bush. Jarrar called her an amazing racist.” Castro addressed the Randa Jarrar controversy during the faculty assembly and with the media. He is taking a pro-First Amendment approach. “More speech, clarifying our views, understanding each other, listening to each other—that makes our campus stronger; that makes our democracy stronger,” Castro said. Jarrar, known little outside academic and literary circles, boosted into the national scene after her Twitter posts following the death of former First Lady Barbara Bush. Jarrar called her an amazing racist.”

“If those kinds of comments were made directly to a student in a classroom, that is a whole different matter.”

—Joseph Castro on Jarrar

side academic and literary circles, boosted into the national scene after her Twitter posts following the death of former First Lady

Bulldog Stadium

Castro updated the progress on fixing and renovating Bulldog Stadium. Last season, the stadium fell into a partial state of disrepair, in part because of a broken water line. “We have strengthened the whole east side. I can tell you it is safe,” Castro assured. Additionally, the school installed rails to help older fans up and down the stairs. “Our next

phase, with (new athletic director) Terry Tumey’s leadership, is to enhance the overall experience there. We are going to improve bathrooms, make it more ADA compliant. We are going to look at ways to make the experience more comfortable for our fans of all ages,” Castro said. Tumey announced during the new student convocation, that freshmen will be able to attend the first football game of the season — Sept. 1 vs. Idaho — for free and be able to run on the field for the pre-game introductions. Castro said the improvements will come over time. He said the school needs to replace the field’s turf in the next year or two.

Responding to Bartko

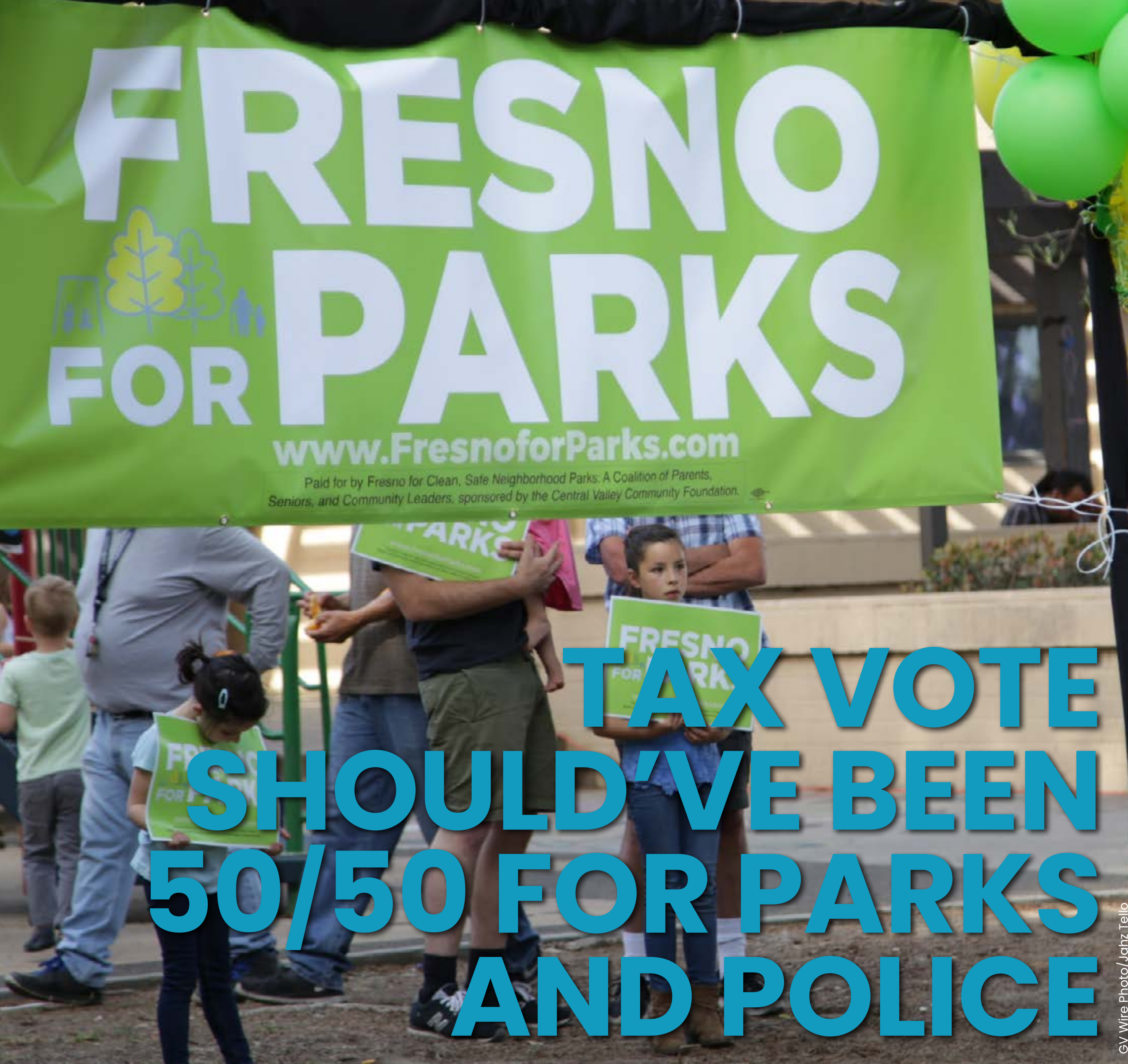
The man that Tumey replaced, Jim Bartko, recently landed a fundraising position at the University of Oregon. He talked about his separation from Fresno State in recent newspaper interviews. “I was blindsided,” Bartko told The Oregonian about his fateful meeting with Castro and Vice President Deborah Adishian-Astone. Technically, Bartko resigned in Nov. 2017, accepting \$75,000 in severance. He also told the paper that Castro and Adishian-Astone labeled him “an incompetent alcoholic” at the meeting. Bartko admitted to drinking issues, related to [revelations he was molested](#) by a basketball coach in his youth. Castro continues to defend the personnel move. “I believe based on the facts of the situation, that I did what any reasonable administrator would do. I am comfortable with that,” Castro said. “We are going to treat people with respect. We have to hold them accountable. I feel like in this case we handled it exactly the way it should be handled.” Bartko still filed a claim against Fresno State, saying he did not leave voluntarily.

“I believe based on the facts of the situation, that I did what any reasonable administrator would do. I am comfortable with that.” — Castro on former AD Jim Bartko

Jenkins Hiring

The Fresno Bee reported that the athletic department hired Meredith Jenkins, formerly an administrator at...

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August 20, 2018 | GV Wire

It has been said, “Two men look through the same jail cell walls, one sees mud and one sees stars.” Certainly, this is the way that I see the [Fresno parks sales tax initiative](#). First, I think some background is in order. At the ultimate fallout of the Great Recession, Fresno’s city government was debt-laden. This was the result of expensive borrowing to provide, among other things, minor infrastructure patchwork. At that point, nearly every budget line item was on the chopping block.

Decimated Parks System Points to the Need

It goes without saying that the parks department wasn’t remotely close to the highest priority. Budget figures from 2009

through today are evidence of the department’s decimation. For the layman, the brown lawns at Fresno’s parks served as the obvious sign. Years of Fresno’s poor ranking on parks surveys led to a push by then-Fresno Unified School Board President Luis Chavez and myself to open up Fresno Unified playgrounds, fields, and pools for weekend and after-hours use to help ease the burden off the parks department.

After all, these facilities do belong to the public. Elsewhere, the budget for the Fresno Police Department was placed on life support. Due to budget constraints, taxpayers had to reckon with the notion that the burden of ensuring public safety...

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NUNES ‘FAKE NEWS’ ATTACKS ON BEE FOCUS OF VICE NEWS STORY

August 22, 2018 | David Taub

Vice News Tonight aired a report about Congressman Devin Nunes’ attacks on The Fresno Bee on its HBO show Tuesday. Correspondent Alexandra Jaffe spoke with Bee reporter Mackenzie Mays and editor Joseph Kieta. The story focused on [Nunes’ accusations that The Bee engages in “fake news.”](#) The congressman’s allegations followed a story by Mays that Nunes disagreed with. Vice’s six-minute piece included footage from an Aug. 14 protest outside of Nunes’ office in Clovis, a weekly event that usually doesn’t attract much local media attention. Mays was there that day.

Nunes Attacks After Winery Story

The Vice story focused on Mays’ May 23 story about a lawsuit settlement between Alpha Omega Winery and an employee regarding events on a charity yacht cruise...

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Screen Image from Vice News Tonight



NEED A NEW CAR?

[Air District Will Give You Up to \\$9,500.](#)

August 20, 2018 | Bill McEwen

Trade in your old, tired, gross-polluting car is the new mantra of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District. If you are driving a 1999 or older car, the air district wants to help put you in a new ride. Or, if you’re driving an old model that guzzles gas and belches emissions, the district will provide money to assist in buying a more air friendly newer car. It’s all part of the district’s [Drive Clean in the San Joaquin](#) program. Depending on the new automobile model purchased and where you live, the district will provide anywhere from \$2,500 to \$9,500. Funding for the program is provided by the state of California, and air district spokeswoman Jaime Holt said that the program will run for several years.

Cars Eligible for Funding

Types of cars you can receive financial assistance to buy:
Conventional – Gas powered vehicle meeting program fuel economy standards (example: Honda Accord)
Hybrid 20+ – Gas powered and electric motor vehicle with fuel economy from 20 MPG to 34 MPG (example: Toyota...

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AP Photo/Rich Pedroncelli

STATE FARMERS PROTEST

California Water Plan Aimed to Save Salmon

August 21, 2018 | AP News

SACRAMENTO — Hundreds of California farmers rallied at the Capitol on Monday to protest state water officials' proposal to increase water flows in a major California river, a move state and federal politicians called an overreach of power that would mean less water for farms in the Central Valley. "If they vote to take our water, this does not end there," said Republican state Sen. Anthony Cannella of Ceres. "We will be in court for 100 years." Environmentalists and fishermen offered a different take on the other side of the Capitol to a much smaller audience.

"For the 50 years corporate agriculture has been getting fat," said Noah Oppenheim of the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations. "Salmon fisheries have been tightening belts." The charged rhetoric came a day before the California State Water Resources Control Board was set to discuss its proposal to change water flows in the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta, which supplies water for the majority of California's people and massive swaths of farmland.

Doubling the Amount of Water

The plan would double the amount of water that must flow freely through the Low San Joaquin River and three of its tributaries from February to June, meaning less water can be diverted for farming or other needs. It's an effort to protect the state's declining salmon population; the state estimates just 10,000 fall-run salmon returned to the San Joaquin Basin in 2017, compared to 70,000 in 1985.

The change is an attempt to mimic natural water flows that help the salmon thrive. State water officials have called the Delta an "ecosystem in crisis." How California manages and uses its water has long been a topic of hot political debate, falling more along regional lines than partisan ones and pitting agricultural interests against

environmental ones. Beyond farming interests, politicians in the Central Valley say the plan would limit their access to drinking water. "When was it a crime to grow food to put on our tables," said Democratic Assemblyman Rudy Salas of Bakersfield. "When was it a crime to demand that we have safe drinking water?" The water board has postponed its final vote on the plan to an unspecified date. The Trump administration has also weighed in. Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke called it a "water grab" that would "cripple the Central Valley's economy, farms and community," after visiting the region with Republican U.S. Rep. Jeff Denham in July. He urged the state water board to delay its vote.

"If they vote to take our water, this does not end there. We will be in court for 100 years." — Rep. State Sen. Anthony Cannella

Hurting Their Businesses

Increasing flows would harm the federally-managed Central Valley Project's ability to move and store water through its network of dams and reservoirs, Zinke has argued. On Friday he tasked his staff with developing a plan to help maximize water deliveries, construct new water storage and reassess legal interpretations around California's water management.

Several farmers at the Capitol rally said the water board's move would hurt their businesses. "They want to control every drop of water in the state of California," said Harry Holland, a rancher in Browns Valley, an unincorporated community north of Sacramento. Supporters of the plan, though, had a different take. "The salmon are on the brink of extinction in the Central Valley," said Peter Drekmeier, policy director of the Tuolumne River Trust. "It's not just for the environment — it's for the fishers and all the people who enjoy salmon."



FRESNO PASTOR, A CAMBODIAN REFUGEE, PARDONED FOR 1990S GANG KILLING

Eric Paul Zamora/The Fresno Bee via AP, File

August 19, 2018 | GV Wire and AP News

California Gov. Jerry Brown has pardoned three former prisoners facing the threat of deportation to Cambodia, including a Fresno man, Vanna In, who became a youth pastor after serving six years in the 1990s for murdering a rival gang member. “I feel like these things don’t happen to guys like myself,” In told reporter Justin Lim of yourcentralvalley.com about the pardon.

The three were among 36 pardons granted by Brown last week. He’s also commuted the sentences of 31 current inmates who can seek speedier paroles. Among the pardons are In, a Cambodian refugee who entered the United States

at age 3. He served six years for the murder of a fellow gang member at age 17 but was released in 2001.

Hope Now for Youth Works With Gang Members
He subsequently went to work for Hope Now for Youth, which works with former gang members. “I wanted to come back and lay some roots, be grounded and give back as much as possible because Fresno is a part of me,” In explained to Justin Lim. Brown’s pardon noted that In has “helped dozens of individuals to turn away from gangs and become law law-abiding, productive citizens.” In also became a youth minister at North Fresno Church. Hundreds of supporters...

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BILL TO END BAIL IN CALIFORNIA HEADS TO GOV. BROWN

August 22, 2018 | AP News

SACRAMENTO — A bill approved Tuesday by the California Senate to end bail and replace it with a risk-assessment system is headed to Gov. Jerry Brown, who has indicated he supports it. Senators approved the bill 26-12. It would make California the first state to completely end bail for suspects awaiting trial. The measure, SB10, requires Brown’s signature to become law. Lawmakers who crafted it say Brown was involved in negotiations on the policy.

“Today, the legislature took an important step forward in reducing the inequities that have long plagued California’s bail system,” Brown said in a statement. Senators supporting the bill say it would end a system that discriminates against low-income people. Sen Bob Hertzberg, who authored the bill, said the current system unfairly upends suspects’ lives simply because they are poor before they are tried in court...

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VIDAK URGES PASSAGE OF REVISED DRINKING WATER BILL

August 23, 2018 | Randy Reed

State legislation to fix outdated drinking water systems in California has gotten a boost from a key change in the way the program would be funded. Under an updated bill in Sacramento, a voluntary fee on all public water system users in the state would be used to create a Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund. In the previous version of the bill, the water fee was mandatory.

Vidak Supports Legislation
Gov. Jerry Brown worked with the sponsors of the [original bipartisan legislation](#), including state Senator Andy Vidak (R-Hanford), on the updated version. “The legislation builds upon the original proposal for a Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund, with changes made to ensure broad support and effective implementation,” said Steve Maviglio, a consultant...

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Photo: NBC News

U.S. ELECTIONS GURU NATE SILVER

Gives Janz & Heng Little Chance of Winning

August 17, 2018 | Bill McEwen



Nate Silver, founder & editor of FiveThirtyEight.com

Noted statistician Nate Silver, who analyzes political elections for a living, sees two Republican incumbents in the Valley's congressional delegation losing their seats in the November election. Neither of them is Rep. Devin Nunes of Tulare.

In "The 5 Big Takeaways From Our House Forecast" posted Friday at fivethirtyeight.com, Silver sets the odds for the 435 races in the House of Representatives.

97.77% Chance Nunes Holds Seat

Those odds will cause heartburn for Democrats hopeful that Fresno County prosecutor **Andrew Janz will knock off eight-term incumbent Nunes** in CA-22. Silver gives Nunes a 97.77 percent chance of winning. In CA-16, the heartburn will be on the Republican side. Silver gives seven-term incumbent Democrat Jim Costa of Fresno a 99.77 percent chance of defeating challenger Elizabeth Heng of Fresno.

Odds Favor Democrats Cox, Harder

What about Rep. David Valadao's race with Fresno area businessman TJ Cox? Silver says there's a 64.34 percent chance that the incumbent Republican from Hanford will go down to defeat. Up in the north Valley, Rep. Jeff Denham of Turlock has just a 29.23 percent chance of beating Democratic challenger Josh Harder of Turlock, according to Silver.

Rep. Tom McClintock, whose CA-4 district stretches from the northern California border into the Valley, has an 87.5 percent probability of winning, Silver says. The Republican, who has held the seat since 2009, faces Democrat Jessica Morse. The way Silver sees it, House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy of Bakersfield is virtually unbeatable (99.89 percent chance of winning) in CA-23.

Silver Infamously Got One Race Wrong

Silver cut his teeth analyzing baseball and then moved into politics. He made his bones as a political forecaster in 2008 by correctly predicting the outcomes in 49 of the 50 states in the presidential election won by Barack Obama.

In 2012, he went 50-for-50 in the presidential race. For the record: Silver's FiveThirtyEight team gave Hillary Clinton a 64.5% chance of winning the 2016 presidential election. Donald Trump won't ever let Silver — or anyone else — forget that. So, while Silver is very good at what he does, he's not perfect.



August 23, 2018 | AP News

MONTEZUMA, Iowa — The systems offered by the U.S. government to check the legal status of workers like the Mexican man now **suspected of killing an Iowa college student** can be easily exploited through identity fraud and gaps in government systems, experts say. In the case of Cristhian Bahena Rivera, the 24-year-old now charged with murder in the death of Mollie Tibbetts, Rivera's ex-employer said Wednesday **he provided an out-of-state ID card and Social Security number**. He worked at Yarrabee Farms for almost four years under a false name, said Dane Lang, part of the family that owns the dairy. Yarrabee Farms did not use the federal E-Verify program, Lang said Wednesday, correcting

information he had given a day earlier. Instead, the company used the Social Security Administration's verification service. The family is now looking into adopting E-Verify, he said. Both E-Verify and the Social Security Administration's program, immigration experts say, can be beaten with a state ID and a Social Security number belonging to someone else.

Thriving Black Market for Forged Identity Documents
There is a thriving black market for forged or stolen identity documents. And while employers are supposed to check those documents, they are barred by federal law from refusing to accept an ID card that meets legal requirements...

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INTERIOR SECRETARY WANTS PLAN TO BOOST WATER DELIVERIES

August 20, 2018 | GV Wire

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke issued a memo Friday outlining his expectations that federal officials quickly come up with a plan to increase irrigation deliveries to farmers south of the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta. "The time for action is now," Zinke wrote in an Aug. 17 memo.

Zinke Wants More Water Reliability From CVP

Zinke's focus is the Central Valley Project, which is operated by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. "Today, the Central Valley Project is in such a desperate state of repair that it cannot effectively achieve its design capacity operations without the assistance of California's own State Water Project to move water," Zinke said. "Beyond neglecting our infrastructure, actions taken by the various agencies have significantly reduced the water available for delivery south" of the delta, Zinke said...

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WITH PUSH FROM PETA, ANIMAL CRACKERS BUST OUT OF THEIR CAGES

August 21, 2018 | AP News

After more than a century behind bars, the beasts on boxes of animal crackers are roaming free. Mondelez International, the parent company of Nabisco, has redesigned the packaging of its Barnum's Animals crackers in response to pressure from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals. PETA, which has been protesting the use of animals in circuses for more than 30 years, wrote a letter to Mondelez in the spring of 2016 calling for a redesign.

"Given the egregious cruelty inherent in circuses that use animals and the public's swelling opposition to the exploitation of animals used for entertainment, we urge Nabisco to update its packaging in order to show animals who are free to roam in their natural habitats," PETA said in its letter...

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AP Photo/Ebrahim Noroozi

WHO DO US SANCTIONS CRIPPLE?

Not Iran's Regime Leaders.

August 22, 2018 | Jamie Ouversen

I have to admit that imposing sanctions on a country recognized as a bad actor in regional or international affairs is appealing. Let's punish the bastards and make them change their evil ways! But have you thought about who really gets hurt? And if sanctions actually work? Let's use Iran as an example because President Donald Trump re-imposed U.S. sanctions on the Middle East country Aug. 7.

The Iran Regime vs. the Iranian People

Sanctions cause instability in a country's economy (as I broke down in my last video). Iran's regime consists of the unelected Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei, the Guardian Council, and the Revolutionary Guard Corps. Did you know that Iran's regime owns 60 percent of

"During imposed sanctions, the rulers of the country will be the last ones to feel the pain of sanctions." — Trita Parsi, president of the National Iranian American Council

the economy through state-controlled enterprises? Their enterprises aren't feeling the same economic pressures that are squeez-

ing the other 40 percent of businesses in Iran. Islamic scholar Hamid Entezam tells GV Wire: "The Clerical Regime in Iran has lived in relative isolation since its inception. Isolation is a two-sided phenomenon; it deprives a nation from outside assistance or interference. Therefore, the outside world has limited influence to alter the regime's behavior." During sanctions, the regime restricts subsidies on food staples, electricity, water and gas to preserve resources. Thus those inside the regime still benefit while many Iranian citizens can barely afford meat among other necessities.

During the 2012 Iranian sanctions, for example, the price of chicken increased 30 percent and the price of vegetables went up 100 percent. During Saddam Hussein's rule in Iraq, comparable sanctions were imposed on Iraq and the effects were similar. Trita Parsi,

president of the National Iranian American Council in Washington, D.C., famously used this analogy: "The last chicken sandwich in Iraq would always be eaten by Saddam Hussein himself. During imposed sanctions, the rulers of the country will be the last ones to feel the pain of sanctions." During the 2012 Iran sanctions, unemployment increased to 35% because of layoffs stemming from the inability to import necessary goods and raw materials. But most in the regime kept their jobs and had no problem putting food on the table. The regime funneled economic resources to its base of support.

How Sanctions Affect Currency

The Iranian rial value fell and decimated the life savings of many Iranians. The sanctions also obstructed the transfer of money to foreign banks. With the depreciation of the rial, a high demand for the U.S. dollar resulted. This was due to the need to pay for foreign expenses and to protect the value of Iranian savings before the rial became completely worthless.

The regime's reaction to the increased demand for the dollar was to order the Iranian Central Bank to impose a limit on the supply of foreign currency to individuals. This eventually led to banning any Iranian from trading rials for dollars and ultimately created a regime influenced black-market foreign currency exchange that was almost twice the price of the official rate. However, the regime still had access to trade the rial at the official rate and pocketed the profits from the black market while sending many Iranians into destitution.

How to Effectively Deal With Rogue Nations

Sanctions that are imposed on a country are an injustice to the people who have little to no influence on the regime's bad behavior. The citizens bear the brunt of the sanctions while the country's regime moves forward...

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ISRAEL DETAINS JEWISH-AMERICAN CRITIC AT AIRPORT

AP Photo/Sebastian Scheiner, File

August 20, 2018 | AP News

JERUSALEM — A prominent Jewish-American commentator who has been critical of Israel's policies says that he was detained by Israeli airport authorities and interrogated about his political views before he was allowed to enter the country. The questioning of Peter Beinart was the latest in a string of incidents in which Jewish critics of Israel have been interrogated about their politics by border officials.

The Israeli government called the incident a mistake. Beinart, a contributor to The Atlantic, CNN and the Israeli daily Haaretz, considers himself a supporter of Israel, but has been an outspoken critic of the government's hard-line policies to-

ward the Palestinians and close alliance with President Donald Trump. He has warned of a growing rift between Israel and the predominantly liberal Jewish-American community, and said that Israel must establish a Palestinian state to ensure its survival as a Jewish-majority democracy. Such views are shared by many on Israel's political left. In an interview, Beinart said he was pulled aside Aug. 12 when he arrived.

Asking About Political Activities

Beinart said he was sent to a small room where a security official asked about his political activities and whether he was involved in groups that advocate violence, threaten...

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AP Photo/Andrew Harnik

TRUMP HONORS FEDERAL IMMIGRATION OFFICIALS AT THE WHITE HOUSE

August 20, 2018 | AP News

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump used a White House event Monday to pay tribute to federal immigration officials, returning to the fight over the U.S. southern border. The president was honoring employees of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Customs and Border Protection. The federal agencies have been thrust into the debate over the Trump administration's separation of migrant children from their parents after they illegally crossed the U.S.-Mexico border.

"We love you, we support you, we will always have your back," Trump said. He added: "For America to be a strong nation, we must have strong borders." Trump has assailed [some Democratic lawmakers for seeking to abolish ICE](#) ahead of the November midterm elections. In a letter to state and...

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POPE ON SEX ABUSE: 'WE SHOWED NO CARE FOR THE LITTLE ONES'

August 20, 2018 | AP News

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis issued a letter to Catholics around the world Monday condemning the crime of priestly sexual abuse and its cover-up. He demanded accountability but offered no indication of how he plans to sanction complicit bishops or end the Vatican's long-standing culture of secrecy. Francis begged forgiveness for the pain suffered by victims and said lay Catholics must be involved in the effort to root out abuse and cover-up.

He blasted the clerical culture that has been blamed for the crisis, with church leaders more concerned for their reputation than the safety of children. "With shame and repentance, we acknowledge as an ecclesial community that we were not where we should have been, that we did not act in a timely manner, realizing the magnitude and the gravity of the damage done to so many lives," Francis wrote...

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