



## GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

### Committee Members

Co-Chair, Mark Gastineau, Arrow Sign Co.

Co-Chair, Skip Moore, Bill Moore & Assoc.

Kozell Boren, Signtronix

Steve Clippinger, Integrated Sign Associates

Roy Flahive, Pacific Sign Construction

Joe Hupp, Hupp Neon

Steve Jones, YESCO

Terry Long, Ad Art Sign Co.

Gus Navarro, San Pedro Electric Sign Co.

Dub Northcutt, Structural Technology Consultants

Tim Pitts, CenSource

Gary Quiel, Quiel Bros Electric Sign Co.

David Schauer, Signtech Electrical Advertising

Patti Skoglund-Adams, Superior Electrical Advertising

Ray Smith, Federal Heath Sign Co.

Jeff Tanielian, Commercial Neon

Keith Wills, Western Sign Co.

Sharon Willison, Williams Sign Co.



Please join us!

In many ways, all CSA members are our grass roots network of ambassadors throughout the state.

Call Jeff Aran, CSA Government Affairs Director or Connie Seitz, CSA Executive Director to participate.



California Sign Association

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## LEGAL & LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

By Jeff Aran, CSA Government Affairs Director

### AT THE CAPITOL

As of this writing, no signage bills have yet to be introduced this legislative year. However, two proposed constitutional amendments prohibiting the use of eminent domain for private development have been introduced. To what extent this impacts or protects signs remains unclear.

### REGULATORY

Caltrans is starting the process of updating revisions to the Outdoor Advertising regulations. Please forward any suggestions to Jeff Aran as soon as possible. The Government Affairs Committee will be making several recommendations for improvements. Caltrans is also being sued by the billboard companies for raising the annual per board fee from \$20 to \$100 on grounds that the fee is unconstitutional and an unlawful tax. The suit follows prior suits against Caltrans for failure to comply with the administrative hearings process and against LA over annual inspection fees. Caltrans regulates "11,050 outdoor ad displays visible from state highways," according to the LA Times, and "needs the money to cover the expenses of administering the program" (and apparently for paying litigation costs).

Energy Commission is holding public workshops on the 2008 draft regulations February 26-27, and again in May.

### LEGAL

**ISA.** Jeff Aran has been honored to participate on an ISA Legal Task Force advisory committee. Other members include: Steve Kieffer, John Winston, Ken Von Wald, Roger Brown and David Hickey. Mark Gastineau has been invited to participate with ISA on the Title 24 Committee.

**Stolen Designs.** CSA received two inquiries from members during the past quarter pertaining to stolen designs. In one instance, the member company was driving past a retail store and coincidentally discovered a sign it had designed and displayed on its website, but not sold, being used by a local merchant. In the other matter, the member submitted drawings to a customer for a shopping center tenancy. The landlord refused to allow the member the right to build the sign, insisted that only approved vendors could be used and directed the tenant to use the other company. The designs were copied and the sign built. The member had no written contract with the merchant, but did receive a deposit—which the customer insisted be refunded. Both of these cases involve theft of copyrighted works and are not uncommon in the industry. Members must be reminded to protect their original work and to charge a fee in advance prior to releasing design work. The CSA Legal Department is considering drafting an educational Fact Sheet to disseminate.

### LOCAL NEWS RECAP

A number of cities this past fall have introduced moratoria or in the process of developing restrictive signs ordinances. Just a few reports from our news clipping service:

**Wheatland** (Yuba County) adopted a moratorium requiring new signs to be nonilluminated and wall mounted only.

**Lawndale** (Los Angeles County) passed a moratorium ("interim sign ordinance") prohibiting new permanent signs until the city had time to "tighten up its codes," reports The Daily Breeze newspaper. (CSA continues to see restrictive temporary moratoria used to ban new signs while ordinances are being revamped. Sacramento recently adopted a 6' "moratorium" height limit in one corridor while its overall design objectives are being reviewed—a two year process. The Government Affairs Committee will be exploring a possible legislative fix to this problem.)

## LEGAL UPDATE

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*San Anselmo* (Marin County), which has been feuding for years with one of its residents over the size of allowable banner signs, is now reconsidering what messages will be appropriate. The Pandora's Box this will open over content-control will no doubt land the city back in court.

*Dunsmuir* (Siskiyou County) has limited the size of projecting signs and prohibited outline neon tubing.

*Orland* (Butte County) tentatively approved a 330' separation requirement for on-premise pole signs.

**Grinch Steals Santa Sign.** Two years in a row now, someone has stolen the \$900 4'x6' banner sign used to promote photos with St. Nick at the Livery & Mercantile Shopping Center in Danville, located on Sycamore Valley Lane (printed with those magic words from the song, "*Here comes Santa Claus, right down Sycamore Valley Lane*").

On a more positive note, *Milpitas* (Santa Clara County) is pondering electronic reader boards in the city's "Great Mall Redevelopment" project area along I-680 and I-880. "Signs are very important for that first-time visitor," according to Diana Whitecar, the city's economic development director, according to reports in *The Post* newspaper.

## CSA'S GRASSROOTS PROGRAM: IT ALL BEGINS AND ENDS WITH YOU

*By Skip Moore, CSA 2nd Vice President and Co-Chair, Government Affairs Committee*

When the Strategic Planning Committee met this past year, we reviewed Goal 3 under Government Affairs, which reads, "Implement and enhance an effective and harmonious government relations program, and promote industry-wide proactive legislation." We viewed our accomplishments and objectives for the last 3 years and drafted new Objectives that will guide us for the next 3 years.

Objective 3.4 dictates for CSA to "maintain a grass roots network to keep the association, its member companies and users apprised of local ordinances that affect them." This is no lofty aspiration, but describes the fundamental force behind CSA's efforts in the public arena. As the term "grass roots" implies, it is a network established for the accumulation and dissemination of information. The more "roots," the healthier and more adaptive is the result. That's where you, the members of CSA, and sign industry specialists come in.

As I see it, there are two areas where the member can provide the roots. One is in the monitoring and awareness of local and regional issues that might affect the industry. The other is in providing advocacy to affect the outcome of those issues. While the CSA's Board of Directors, Executive Director Connie Seitz, Government Affairs Director Jeff Aran, and the chairs and members of the Government Affairs Committee try to stay informed and aware of the issues, they cannot replace the inherent strength of the broader based (and placed) membership.

So what do I mean when I described the first way you can help as "monitoring and awareness of local and regional issues that might affect the industry?" For the most part this means telling CSA about possible code revisions, unfair abatement procedures, improper design review processes, etc. that you become aware of in the course of your daily operations and through your local media. Awareness of these issues provides CSA with the most pro-active opportunity to work in your behalf to address them.

The other way you can help is by "providing advocacy to affect the outcome of those issues." Basically, this means getting involved in the Government Affairs process. This might involve attending a local Public Hearing held to review the revision to a local sign ordinance, or writing a letter to your State representatives regarding anti-sign legislation, or even providing expert advice to regulatory agencies. The more visible we are, the more the public officials are compelled to view the issues from our perspective.

I can assure you that the more involved each member becomes in this process, the more CSA will be successful at addressing the myriad of problems the sign industry encounters in the public arena. We can accomplish so much more if we have everyone's participation in the process. It all begins and ends with you.



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