



**DAMON CONNOLLY**  
Assemblymember, District 12

# NEWSLETTER

## DEAR FRIENDS,

I want to extend my gratitude for your continued support and engagement with my office in both Marin and Sonoma County.

This March newsletter, the 15th issue, covers this past month serving as the North Bay's State Assemblymember. This opportunity is the privilege of a lifetime and I look forward to the work we will accomplish together moving forward.

For this issue, I want to recap what I have been up to both in the district and out at the Capitol. I hope you enjoy and stay tuned for announcements on plans for this new legislative session!



## AD 12 UPDATES

**Committee Referrals**

**Lunar New Year**

**Letter to the CPUC**

**Letter to AT&T Commissioners**

**Ag Day 2024**

**District Updates**

**Capitol Updates**

**Funds Secured**

# COMMITTEE REFERRALS

My full bill package has been introduced for the 2024 legislative session, and each of my bills is now being referred to a committee for a hearing. Below is a recap of which committees will be hearing my bills in the coming weeks!



AB 2619 repeals NEM 3.0 and protects rooftop solar

**UTILITIES AND ENERGY**



AB 2196 codifies and expands the Beaver Restoration Program

**WATER, PARKS & WILDLIFE**



AB 3107 enables electricity to be shared across a right of way

**UTILITIES AND ENERGY**



AB 2143 moves code sections dealing with fairs to Food and Agriculture Code

**AGRICULTURE**



AB 2416 expands the Safer From Wildfires Program

**INSURANCE**



AB 1790 strengthens sexual harassment protections at CSU campuses

**HIGHER EDUCATION**



AB 2734 expands the Healthy Soils Program

**AGRICULTURE**



AB 1778 prohibits individuals under 16 from riding a class 2 e-bike

**TRANSPORTATION**



AB 1864 strengthens the regulations for pesticide use near schools

**ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY & TOXIC MATERIALS EDUCATION**



AB 828 protects endangered wetlands and access to clean drinking water

**SENATE RULES**



AB 99 restricts the use of RoundUp on state highways

**APPROPRIATIONS**



AB 1822 updates policy regarding misdemeanor sexual assault defendant competency

**PUBLIC SAFETY**



AB 2968 requires improvements to defensible space and evacuation protocols in schools

**EDUCATION  
NATURAL RESOURCES**



AB 2332 creates a pilot program for opioid treatment services at San Quentin State Prison.

**PUBLIC SAFETY**



AB 2149, also known as Alex's Law, establishes specific standards for large vehicular gates

**JUDICIARY**



AB 1926 expands healthcare coverage for metabolic disorders

**HEALTH**



AB 2897 expands the definition of a Community Land Trust

**HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**



AB 2251 authorizes school districts to exempt students with absences related to physical or mental health from additional graduation requirements

**PASSED OUT OF EDUCATION!**



## LUNAR NEW YEAR WITH THE CONSULATE GENERAL OF IRELAND, SAN FRANCISCO

I was honored to celebrate the Lunar New Year and the work of the Friends of the Laurel Tie with the Consulate General of Ireland, San Francisco, honoring the shared history of Irish and Chinese railroad workers and the continuous friendship between the Bay's Irish and Chinese Communities. Thank you to the Consulate General of Ireland in San Francisco for hosting this celebration!



# LETTER TO THE CPUC ON AT&T PETITION TO END LANDLINE SERVICES

In response to AT&T's proposal to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to cut landline services, I sent a letter to the CPUC President voicing the concerns shared by constituents with our office. This letter urges the CPUC to preserve landline service so that our residents in areas lacking reliable cellular service and prone to natural disasters are protected. Access to communication is a public safety concern, and I am urging the CPUC to consider the concerns of our constituents fully and fairly in the districts most impacted by the loss of landline services.

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COMMITTEES  
AGRICULTURE  
BUDGET  
ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY AND TOXIC MATERIALS  
JUDICIARY  
UTILITIES AND ENERGY  
BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE NO. 3 ON CLIMATE CRISIS, RESOURCES, ENERGY, AND TRANSPORTATION  
JOINT COMMITTEE  
VICE CHAIR: LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON CLIMATE CHANGE POLICIES

March 14, 2024  
Alice Busching Reynolds  
President  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94102  
**RE: AT&T Petition to End Landline Service**

Dear Ms. Reynolds:

I write to you to respectfully raise concerns on behalf of my constituents in Assembly District (AD) 12, which includes nearly 500,000 residents located in Marin and Southern Sonoma Counties, in relation to AT&T's applications to be relieved of its Carrier of Last Resort (COLR) obligations and to remove its Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) designation in areas of California.

In the North Bay and throughout the North Coast, many residents are located in areas, sometimes rural or heavily forested, where earthquakes, severe storms, floods, and catastrophic wildfires are common and cellular reception is unreliable. During these times, residents are only able to contact emergency services and obtain emergency updates via their landlines. Notably, even on a day with good weather, many of these areas *still* do not have reliable cellular service. These legitimate public safety concerns have been voiced to my office by many longtime constituents, particularly seniors, some who have never used a cellular phone and do not want to make the switch from their more reliable landline service.

As noted in a letter to the CPUC by my Congressional Colleagues in the California Delegation on February 20, 2024, hundreds of thousands of Californians were without power due to the Pineapple Express weather system storms, floods, and landslides *this year*. Additionally, the earthquake of 2022 left Californians without power for such an extended period of time, people were unable to charge their cellular phones. The only way to call for emergency services and stay in touch with the outside world was via neighbors that had landlines. I share my constituent's concerns that if landlines in these areas are removed, many North Bay residents will be stranded during times of emergencies. This potential scenario is unacceptable.

As the CPUC considers AT&T's proposal to discontinue landline services in certain areas, I implore the Commissioners to ensure critical communication services are preserved in all areas of California where cellular reception is unreliable and the potential for natural disasters or prolonged power outages are a recurring risk. I join my Congressional colleagues in encouraging you to fully and fairly consider the concerns from our constituents in the districts that will be most impacted by the loss of landline services.



# LETTER TO PG&E COMMISSIONERS DEMANDING HALT TO RATE HIKES

PG&E has increased their rates every year since 2019, forcing hard working Californians to pay more and more for their utilities annually. Along with eight other legislators I sent a letter to the CPUC demanding an immediate halt to PG&E implementing and approving any more rate increases until at least 2026. The constant rate increases are out of control and cannot continue.

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COMMITTEES  
CHAIR, LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT  
BUDGET  
HUMAN SERVICES  
INSURANCE  
PRIVACY AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

March 15, 2024

California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Commissioners:

We, the undersigned legislators, are writing to request that the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) put an immediate halt to implementing any planned rate increases and approving any additional rate increases proposed by the Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) until at least 2026.

To say that Californians are facing an affordability crisis is a gross understatement. Inflation is rising, wages are stagnant, the rent is too damn high, and yet PG&E keeps increasing their rates because the CPUC allows them to. The company caused an explosion in 2010 that killed eight people, and caused catastrophic wildfires in 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2021. The 2018 Camp Fire, caused by a faulty PG&E transmission line, is the deadliest and most destructive wildfire in California history, killing 85 people. Since these major disasters, PG&E has exponentially increased their rates every year since 2019, forcing hard working Californians to pay for the company's failures. Ratepayers should not be paying for what the company's shareholders are responsible for.

Residential electric rates across the state have nearly doubled since 2014<sup>1</sup>, and PG&E is, by far, the most expensive power provider in California.<sup>2</sup> Most recently, the CPUC approved PG&E's 2023-2026 general rate increase which, according to the company itself, will result in, "[an] increase of approximately 12.8% in 2024, 1.6% in 2025 and decrease by 2.8% 2026. The typical bill will increase by about \$32.50 in 2024, \$4.50 in 2025, and decrease by almost \$8.00 in 2026."<sup>3</sup> Also recently, the company announced record profits of \$2.2 billion in 2023, an increase of nearly 25% from 2022.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.publicadvocates.cpuc.ca.gov/press-room/reports-and-analyses/q4-2023-electric-rates-report>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.sfm.org/tim-newsroom/lure-becomes-california-most-expensive-power-provider>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.pge.com/en/regulation/general-rate-case.html>

This year alone, the CPUC approved a 13% rate increase in January and just last week, March 7, the commission approved another rate increase that will increase PG&E bills by an average of \$5 per month. A third rate increase for 2024 is also expected in the coming months.

The constant rate increases are out of control and cannot continue. I personally hear from my constituents on a daily basis that they cannot afford their utility bills. Many constituents of mine in the East Bay have an average monthly PG&E bill of \$400, many others with even higher bills. One senior in my district told me that she tried boiling water to stay warm, almost causing a house fire. I know that all constituents in PG&E's service territory are facing the same problems. Californians simply cannot afford to pay these exponentially high bills that seem to climb with no end in sight. In fact, nearly 15% of non-low-income and nearly 35% of low-income PG&E customers are in arrears on their payments.

The constituents of the undersigned legislators, and all Californians in PG&E's service territory, demand that the CPUC cease implementing and approving any more rate increases until at least 2026. Californians, who you also represent, need a break from the constant onslaught of utility rate increases. PG&E is a profitable company, and we must hold them accountable and start making them pay for their own mistakes.

For any questions, please contact Assemblymember Ortega's Legislative Director, Stephanie Gerstle Esparza, at [Stephanie.GerstleEsparza@asm.ca.gov](mailto:Stephanie.GerstleEsparza@asm.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

LIZ ORTEGA  
Assemblymember, 20th District

MIA BONTA  
Assemblymember, 18th District

DEVON MATHIS  
Assemblymember, 33rd District

JOAQUIN ARAMBULA  
Assemblymember, 31st District

LORI WILSON  
Assemblymember, 11th District

TIM GRAYSON  
Assemblymember, 15th District

GAIL PELLERIN  
Assemblymember, 28th District

AISHA WAHAB  
Senator, 10th District

DAMON CONNOLLY  
Assemblymember, 12th District

# AG DAY 2024

It was fantastic to spend the spring equinox celebrating a sunny Ag Day 2024 at the State Capitol! California generates 11% of the agricultural value for the entire United States. Ag Day, held annually at the California State Capitol on National Agriculture Day, is a celebration recognizing California's agricultural community by showcasing the bounty of crops and commodities produced in our state. It was especially great to learn from growers that came directly from AD 12 to celebrate Ag Day at the Capitol and promote agriculture, including both the Marin County and Sonoma County Farm Bureaus. It is fantastic to see AD 12 show up to represent agriculture in our community. Thank you to our California farmers, growers, and ranchers for the rich agriculture that fuels our nation.



# DISTRICT UPDATES: SNAPSHOTS

Even though I'm staying busy up in Sacramento during the week, I greatly value my time at home connecting with constituents in AD12. I have had many great opportunities to attend events, tours, and productive meetings with constituents throughout the North Bay in both Marin and Sonoma Counties. Here are some snapshots of some of the meetings and events my office participated in over the past month. As always, our door is open, if you want to schedule a meeting or send an event invite, please reach out through our website by clicking [here](#).



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE AT CORTE  
MADERA LION'S CLUB MEETING



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE AT CITIZEN MARIN  
MEETING



GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY FOR US  
101 HEARN AVENUE OVERCROSSING



DISCUSSED LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES  
WITH NORTH BAY LEADERSHIP  
COUNCIL



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE WITH THE  
DEMOCRATIC CLUB OF SOUTHERN  
SONOMA COUNTY



CELEBRATING READ ACROSS AMERICA  
WEEK WITH AD12 ELEMENTARY  
STUDENTS

# CAPITOL UPDATES

## SNAPSHOTS

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While I am out in Sacramento during the week, I greatly value my time meeting with diverse organizations that are pushing initiatives that are beneficial to our community in the North Bay. It's especially exciting when I have the opportunity to meet with constituents from AD12 lobbying out in Sacramento! Here are some snapshots of some of the meetings and events my Capitol office participated in over the past month. As always, our door is open, if you want to schedule a meeting or send an event invite, please reach out through our website by clicking [here](#).



**PARENT AND STAFF LEADERS FROM COMMUNITY ACTION MARIN ON THEIR HEAD START ADVOCACY DAY**



**DISCUSSED EDUCATION AND AGRICULTURE IN AD12 WITH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FROM PETALUMA REPRESENTING FUTURE FARMERS OF AMERICA**



**SONOMA STATE UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT AND REPRESENTATIVES FOR CSU ADVOCACY DAY**



**PRESIDENT PITCHFORD AND STUDENTS REPRESENTING DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY**

# CAPITOL UPDATES

## SNAPSHOTS - CONTINUED

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REPRESENTATIVES OF CA DISABILITY SERVICES ORGANIZATION



REPRESENTATIVES AND AN ATHLETE LEADER FROM SPECIAL OLYMPICS NORTHERN CALIFORNIA



REPRESENTATIVES FROM HOME CARE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA



REPRESENTATIVES FROM UNIONIZE CALIFORNIA

# FUNDS SECURED

**CAVSA RECEIVES  
\$2 MILLION GRANT FROM  
MHSOAC TO FURTHER  
VETERAN SUPPORT IN  
CALIFORNIA**



Assemblymember  
**DAMON CONNOLLY**



**\$2 MILLION DOLLARS FOR THE MENTAL  
HEALTH SERVICES OVERSIGHT AND  
ACCOUNTABILITY COMMISSION FUND  
FOR VETERANS**

**CALIFORNIA DISTRIBUTES  
\$50 MILLION TO BOOST  
HABITAT RESTORATION  
PROJECTS**



**DAMON CONNOLLY**  
Assemblymember, District 12

**\$2 MILLION DOLLARS TO THE CA DEPT  
OF FISH AND WILDLIFE FOR THE  
BEAVER RESTORATION PROGRAM**



**CALHOME  
FUNDS  
AWARDED**

**\$4,845,500**

IN FUNDS FROM THE 2023  
HOMEOWNERSHIP SUPER NOTICE OF  
FUNDING HAVE BEEN AWARDED TO

**DRY CREEK  
RANCHERIA  
BAND OF POMO  
INDIANS**



**DAMON CONNOLLY**  
Assemblymember, District 12

**\$4,845,500 IN CALHOME FUNDS  
AWARDED TO DRY CREEK RANCHERIA  
BAND OF POMO INDIANS**

As always, my door is open and my staff are available to assist you. Feel free to contact me through my website, or by calling one of my offices.

**With gratitude,**

Damon

Damon Connolly  
Assemblymember, 12th District



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