

### **BUDGET BILL FINALLY SIGNED!**

This has been a record setting week in California. First, on Wednesday night the Oakland A's set a new record for the longest winning streak in the American League's 100 years of major league baseball. On Thursday another record was set when Governor Davis signed into law California's [budget bill \(AB 425 – Oropeza\)](#). The old record, set ten years ago, was wiped out this year when the state went 66 days without a new budget.

If this year's budget bill was considered a mess by most people in and around the Capitol, next year could prove just as bad, or even worse. The Legislature's [Legislative Analyst](#) recently estimated that the state could have another multi-billion shortfall next year. In addition, the Senate's two respective party leaders, [John Burton](#) for the Democrats, and [Jim Brulte](#) for the Republicans made candid remarks about the budget. Burton said: "It was basically a get-out-alive deal more than solving any kind of problem... How it's going to work next year is beyond me." (Contra Costa Times and San Jose Mercury News, 9/4/02.) Brulte said: "Frankly, unfortunately, I think this budget is mostly smoke and mirrors." (Contra Costa Times, 9/4/02.)

### **LEGISLATURE ADJOURNED EARLY SATURDAY**

The Legislature began its final recess on Saturday, August 31, after the usual 11<sup>th</sup>-hour flurry of activity taking them up to the final ticks of the clock. As usual, a significant number of the bills adopted and sent to the Governor contained last-minute provisions pertaining to very important issues. Some of these bills were heard for the first time last week in policy committees that were supposed to have last met on June 28. There also were bills heard by the Senate Appropriations Committee as late as Friday and Saturday – two weeks after the deadline.

Absent a special session (highly unlikely, since the budget has been passed and signed), this Legislature will not meet again, but will adjourn *sine die* (Latin for "without day," i.e., with no prospect of returning) on November 30. The 2003-04 Session of the Legislature will commence on Monday, December 2, at which time the returning and newly-elected members will meet to be sworn in and to organize their respective houses. That gives us two days during which California has no Legislature!

### **FOCUS NOW SHIFTS TO GOVERNOR'S OFFICE**

Now that the Legislature has completed its business, the focus of all legislative activity shifts to the Governor's office. Governor Davis has until September 30 to sign or veto all bills received by him after August 19 (Explanation: Article IV, §10(a)(4) provides that any bill "in the possession of the governor" by September 1 – including bills for which the usual 12-day deadline to sign or veto has not run -- need not be acted upon until September 30.)

Although the numbers are not exact, there are over 750 bills awaiting action by the Governor (either on his desk or in the enrollment process).

### **NEW ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

Assembly Speaker [Herb Wesson](#) announced the following new committee chairs: [Patricia Wiggins](#), Banking and Finance; [Jackie Goldberg](#), Education; [Fran Pavley](#), Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials; [Dario Frommer](#), Health; [Carol Liu](#), Higher Education; [Juan Vargas](#), Insurance; [Simon Salinas](#), Local Government; [Hannah-Beth Jackson](#), Natural Resources; [Gloria Negrete McLeod](#), Public Employees, Retirement and Social Security; and [Sarah Reyes](#), Utilities and Commerce.