



KAYLA BARTKOWSKI Los Angeles Times

DENNIS TRANTHAM fills sandbags to protect his home in Long Beach on Sunday ahead of Hurricane Polo.

State’s donors giving left and center

Californians funding both moderate and progressive candidates in divisive races.

By BEN WIEDER AND GABRIELLE LAMARR LEMEE

WASHINGTON — California is sometimes described as the ATM of Democratic politics.

That’s certainly been the case in the most divisive Democratic races this year.

Donors from California have given more to far-left candidates and their moderate opponents in congressional races and U.S. Senate contests than donors from any other state — more than \$17 million combined, according to a Times analysis of the most recently available campaign finance filings.

More of that money — nearly \$11 million — went to more progressive candidates. That giving came from more than 95,000 individual donors, which was more than double the number of California donors who gave to their more moderate opponents. That includes 18,000 donors who gave to both progressive and moderate candidates.

There was a geographic divide in giving by Californians. The largest share of cash to progressive candidates came from donors in the Bay Area, while the largest share of financial backing to moderate candidates came from donors in the Los Angeles area.

The Times looked at [See Donors, A7]

Barriers to save homes could destroy beaches

Rocks and seawalls built for high surf will likely worsen erosion long after El Niño, experts say

By RONG-GONG LIN II

With California’s coast getting pounded by strong waves amid a strengthening El Niño, residents and government leaders are turning to big rocks and seawalls to protect homes and keep a railroad from falling into the sea.

But there is growing concern this defensive strategy will end up harming California’s famed sandy beaches.

“It’s kind of a double-edged sword, where it may have some short-term benefits, but long term, there’s a lot of work showing that some of those protection measures can have negative effects — both at the site, and immediately adjacent to the site,” said Jonathan Warrick, a research geologist with the U.S. Geological Survey.

The tension of short-term coastal protections versus long-term ramifications has played out along the coast for years, as rising sea levels pose a growing threat

to communities. But with a potentially historic “super” El Niño in the forecast this winter, the debate is coming to a head.

Rocks and seawalls might wind up saving coastal infrastructure this year, experts say. But the impacts on the coastline could linger far beyond a season of storms.

California’s coast is dotted with man-made barricades — rocks, seawalls, concrete, wood — aimed at keeping the elements at bay.

Such tactics, called hardening the coastline, are becoming increasingly urgent as the El Niño-rolled Pacific lashes the coast with fury, spawning erosion that’s unprecedented in recent times.

In Dana Point, coastal homeowners on Beach Road — part of the Capistrano Bay Community Services District — have [See Coastline, A6]

After Warner battle, Ellison faces Hollywood challenges

By STACY PERMAN

Last week’s settlement of the antitrust lawsuit between state attorneys general and Paramount Skydance over its planned merger with Warner Bros. Discovery marked a clear victory for David Ellison.

If approved by a judge, the settlement would clear the way for the emerging Hollywood mogul to complete the blockbuster \$11-billion purchase after months of uncertainty over whether the deal would overcome intense opposition in Hollywood.

What’s more, Ellison achieved the settlement without having to agree to any so-called structural remedies that California Atty. Gen. Rob Bonta had

been seeking.

But Ellison can hardly rest on his laurels. The Paramount Skydance chief executive will have to work hard to repair badly frayed relations with Hollywood talent who fiercely opposed the consolidation of two historic studios as a bad deal for workers. And the 43-year-old tech scion will be constrained by some of the terms that were imposed in the consent decree negotiated with Bonta and other attorneys general.

“I don’t envy David Ellison. You bought this ship, now you’ve got to sail it. And you’re facing threats on all fronts: bad will, everybody rooting for you to fail and operating a business in an incredibly uncertain, challenging time,” said Gabriel Kahn, a professor at the

USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism. “At the same time, you are going to have to mortgage everything to make these debt payments.”

As part of the deal, Paramount agreed to a slate of requirements that, if it fails to deliver, could induce financial penalties, litigation and other costs.

For one thing, Paramount would have to pay a penalty and divest the Miramax film studio if it does not distribute 30 or more films a year in theaters.

Paramount also pledged to spend \$300 million more each year on film production in the U.S. and further boost its film spending if the federal government adopts a film tax credit of at least 20%; it agreed not to sell or [See Paramount, A10]

L.A. Olympics annual reports missing details

Organizers won’t publicly disclose contract, insurance, venue information.

By JAMES RAINEY

Organizers of the 2028 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles have given vague and sometimes incomplete annual reports to the city on details of their preparations for what has been described as the largest athletic event in the nation’s history, records show.

A review by The Times of five years of annual reports from LA28 shows that the organization appears at times to have curtailed the reporting requirements that are spelled out in its 2021 contract with Los Angeles.

The private nonprofit organization’s yearly reports haven’t outlined progress on roughly two dozen venues around Greater Los Angeles. Nor have they included details about contracts LA28 signed with companies providing such services as security and preproduction work for the opening and closing ceremonies.

The incomplete updates leave the city’s taxpayers with less information than

promised on matters such as who is winning business — and the attendant jobs and profits — from contracts that soared to \$687 million in value last year. They also don’t have as clear a picture on things like the progress on plans to install a running track at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum and swimming pools inside SoFi Stadium in Inglewood.

L.A. City Controller Kenneth Mejia demanded last month that LA28 release a much more detailed accounting of its activities than it has in yearly reports to City Hall. He has asked for bank statements, more detailed revenue and expenditure accounting and other documents.

Mejia said he is aware of LA28’s assurances that robust ticket and sponsorship sales will ensure a healthy bottom line. LA28 has estimated the Summer Games will generate \$2.6 billion in revenue from domestic sponsorships and \$2.5 billion from ticket sales.

Even so, Mejia wants more information to be sure that those reports are accurate, especially because the city previously agreed to help cover any deficit should the Games lose money.

“L.A. taxpayers need to [See LA28, A5]

City attorney race led by undecided

A poll shows Marissa Roy holds 20%, John McKinney 10% in the downballot contest.

By SONJA SHARP

California Deputy Atty. Gen. Marissa Roy has a lead in the race to replace Los Angeles City Atty. Hydee Feldstein Soto, who lost her seat in a historic primary rout this spring, new polling shows.

Among likely Los Angeles voters, Roy leads by 10 percentage points over her rival, Los Angeles County Deputy Dist. Atty. John McKinney, following the pair’s shocking electoral upset in June, according to a poll released last week by UC Berkeley’s Institute of Governmental Studies and co-sponsored by The Times.

The spread closely mirrors City Councilmember Nithya Raman’s breakaway lead in her bitter fight to unseat Mayor Karen Bass, who has outraised her for months.

But that’s where the similarities end.

The mayor’s contest has been called a “knife fight” for its no-holds-barred campaigning. It has also drawn sustained — and occasionally sensational — national attention since Raman’s buzzer-beating entrance in February.

By contrast, the city attorney’s race remains all but unknown: More than two-thirds of likely voters are still undecided, versus about a third who remain uncommitted in the mayor’s contest, polling showed.

L.A.’s top litigator commands a budget of nearly \$200 million, plays a role in shaping city ordinances, and wages court battles on behalf of the public. The city attorney also prosecutes misdemeanors — a job most other cities keep separate. Each year, the office weighs some 120,000 violations, deciding whether to file charges and how to pursue them.

More recently, city attorneys across the country have championed activist litigation [See Poll, A6]

Teaching Soviet-era resistance locally

Workshops focus on a method used by dissidents to bypass censorship



CARLIN STIEHL For The Times

WENDY Raigosa uses repurposed materials in her project at Wende Museum’s samizdat workshop.

By MIRANDA HUANG

Crayoned letters, scraps of fabric and cutouts of Neil Armstrong crowd the bright room as artists old and young construct collages using mementos from the Cold War’s space race, a decades-long competition between the United States and former Soviet Union to achieve technological superiority and flaunt nationalism.

The intensive crafting is part of the twice-monthly “Samizdat Sundays” workshops at the Wende Museum in Culver City.

Taught by L.A.-based

artist and poet Kate Ingold, the workshops center on samizdat, a practice in which Soviet dissidents hand-typed literature, criticism and poetry to bypass state censorship. Each week, Ingold opens the workshop with a new prompt related to speech suppression — an issue with renewed currency today.

“[Samizdat] means working within the limitations of the material or the space that you have,” Ingold said. “It was a way for people to make things outside of the institutional parameters that the Soviet Union was [See Samizdat, A7]



RONALDO BOLANOS Los Angeles Times

USC LOSS COMPOUNDED

Desman Stephens’ illegal hit earned a suspension. Coach Lincoln Riley’s response was a foul of its own, writes Mirjam Swanson. **SPORTS, D6**

Evicted at 87, she inspires a revolt

Tens of thousands rally and many camp out in Madrid after a woman lost her home of seven decades. **WORLD, A3**

Orchestra gets high-profile aid

Actor Seth MacFarlane curates LACO project. **ENTERTAINMENT, E1**

Opinion Voices **A11**

Weather
Partly sunny.
L.A. Basin: 83/65. **B5**

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