

# 2008

## LEGISLATIVE RESULTS



**The 2008 legislative session was dominated by the state budget crisis.**

The Assembly and Senate Appropriations Committees held many bills that created new spending, even at minor levels, which blocked some environmental legislation. Of the ten high-priority environmental bills highlighted here that survived the legislature, seven were signed into law. Those included our top

legislative priority, SB 375, which addresses global warming through smart land use planning.

For 36 years, the California League of Conservation Voters has tracked California environmental politics. For a full review of 2008, see our Scorecard at [ecovote.org/scorecard](http://ecovote.org/scorecard) starting in November.

**SIGNED INTO LAW:** In true grassroots style, CLCV members helped pass laws through their participation in our Membership Action Campaigns. We generated hundreds of real-time phone calls to legislators and the governor and knocked on thousands of doors to generate letters, giving CLCV members a connection to Sacramento when it was most needed.



Land Use /  
Global Warming

**SB 375 (Steinberg):** Creates financial and regulatory incentives for local governments to approve housing and transportation projects that reduce urban sprawl and encourage less driving, making it the first law in the nation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions generated by poor land use and transportation planning.



Toxics

**AB 1879 (Feuer) and SB 509 (Simitian):** Reduces dangerous chemicals in consumer products by requiring the Department of Toxic Substances Control to establish a regulatory program to identify and regulate dangerous chemicals.

**AB 2911 (Wolk):** Properly places responsibility of preventing, responding to, and mitigating inland oil spills on the trained, on-the-ground responders at the Department of Fish and Game's Oil Spill Prevention and Response program, and makes the Oiled Wildlife Care Network responsible for the proactive search for and rescue of oiled wildlife.



Water

**SB XX 1 (Perata, Steinberg and Machado):** Allocates \$807 million of existing water bond funds to improve California's water systems including integrated regional water management, storm water management, and Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta ecosystem improvements.



Natural  
Resources

**AB 31 (de Leon):** Allocates \$400 million from Prop 84 to address the need for neighborhood parks and open space in the most park-poor communities throughout California, consistent with Prop 84 criteria.

**AB 2785 (Ruskin):** Requires the Department of Fish & Game to compile a database of the state's most critical wildlife corridors and habitat linkages.

**BAD BILL DEFEATED:** Because the state legislature currently generates very few anti-environmental bills that are likely to pass, CLCV spends the vast majority of our time in the legislature advocating for the passage of good bills. However, this year's AB 1991 was one notable exception to that trend. We are grateful to our members for mobilizing to defeat it.



Natural Resources

**AB 1991 (Mullin):** Would have set a dangerous precedent, exempting a project wholly within the Coastal Zone from the Coastal Act, by allowing the city of Half Moon Bay to sacrifice protected wetlands in order to eliminate city debt to a developer. **HELD IN COMMITTEE (Assembly Local Government).**

**FAILED IN THE LEGISLATURE:** Unfortunately, the budget shortfall kept several of the environmental community's priority bills from reaching the governor. As our electoral work establishes a greater environmental majority in Sacramento, "polluter pays" fees and other environmental priorities will fare better in future legislative sessions.



Energy

**AB 1920 (Huffman):** Would have allowed homeowners and small business owners who produce renewable energy to get paid by their utility company for any excess electricity they produce that goes back on the grid. **HELD IN COMMITTEE (Senate Rules).**



Toxics

**AB 2058 (Levine):** Would have required grocery retailers to charge a fee on single-use shopping bags, to encourage reusable bags and help offset the cost of litter reduction. **HELD IN COMMITTEE (Senate Appropriations).**



Water

**AB 2175 (Laird/Feuer):** Would have required a 20% reduction in statewide urban *per capita* water use by 2020 as well as improved agricultural water planning and practices. **HELD IN COMMITTEE (Senate Rules).**

**VETOED BY THE GOVERNOR:** These bills made it through the legislature to Governor Schwarzenegger's desk before he vetoed them—sometimes in contradiction to his previously stated commitments and environmental goals. This year, the governor vetoed more than 400 bills (or 35% of the bills that reached his desk)—the most in California history.



Air Quality

**SB 974 (Lowenthal):** A top CLCV priority; would have put a \$30 fee on each container passing through three of the nation's four busiest ports—Los Angeles, Long Beach and Oakland—to reduce health problems and premature deaths by improving port transportation infrastructure and reducing air pollution.



Toxics

**SB 1313 (Corbett):** Would have banned perfluorinated compounds (or PFCs, which are extremely potent greenhouse gases) from food in any concentration exceeding 10 parts per billion.



Good Government

**SB 1113 (Migden):** Would have allowed courts to award attorney's fees and other costs to successful parties in any action that ends up enforcing an important right affecting the public interest (including environmental protections).