

NEWS RELEASE

Contra Costa County Supervisor

JOHN GIOIA (joy-a)

District One

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 2, 2004

SUPERVISOR JOHN GIOIA JOINS OTHERS TO REMIND WEST COUNTY RESIDENTS TO VOTE

What: News Conference

Where: Richmond Fire Station, #66

4100 Clinton Avenue

Richmond

When: Wednesday, June 2, 2004

10:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

RICHMOND, Calif., Contra Costa County Supervisor John Gioia will be joined by others at Richmond Fire Station #66 to remind West County voters to vote in the current election. The all mail-in ballots, West County's first ever in this special election, are due Tuesday, June 8 at the County's Registrar's office in Martinez.

"The ballots must be received at the Registrar's office by next Tuesday," said Supervisor Gioia. "That's why we're gathering to remind voters that they should send in their ballots by Friday if they want to make sure their votes count."

West County voters are deciding whether or not to pass two parcel tax measures in the special election. Measure B would raise \$8 million to benefit the West Contra Costa Unified School District. Measure D is a \$52 per parcel annual tax to help the West County Healthcare District keep Doctors Hospital open. Tenet Healthcare Corporation, which currently operates the hospital, will be terminating it's lease agreement July 31 and close.

"If Doctors Hospital closes, West County residents will be in a dire healthcare crisis," said Supervisor Gioia.

According to the County's Registrar's Office, nearly 40% (37,254) of the 95,536 mail ballots have been returned.

"These are important issues for West County residents," said Supervisor Gioia who worked with Steve Weir, the head of the County's elections office to locate two sites in West County so voters can drop off their ballots.

"We want to make sure that everyone who wants to vote will have an opportunity to do so," said Supervisor Gioia.

In addition to Richmond Fire Station #66, the First Baptist Church of Pinole at 16550 San Pablo Avenue in San Pablo will also be open on June 8 from 12 noon to 8 p.m. for residents to drop off their ballots. The Elections Office will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. to anyone who wishes to cast their ballots in Martinez.

Ballots, however, will not be available at the two West County sites.

In addition to Supervisor Gioia, Richmond Mayor Irma L. Anderson, Pinole City Councilmember Maria Alegria; Interim Richmond Fire Chief Michael Banks; United Teachers of Richmond President Terri Jackson; West Contra Costa Healthcare District Executive Director Jim Beaver; Dr. Laurell Hodgson, emergency room physician at Doctors Hospital; Don Melin, former hospital patient and 37 year San Pablo resident; West County mayors, and other elected representatives will also be at the news conference.

Note to editors/reporters: Staff will be available to assist with interviews.

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