

## **Rutherford Solid, Ethical Choice**

May 13, 2010

We enthusiastically endorse Janice Rutherford for the 2nd District seat on San Bernardino County's Board of Supervisors.

Rutherford is smart, capable, conservative and has an accomplished record without blemish.

The same cannot be said for incumbent Paul Biane, who pops up at the center of most of the recent scandals that have wracked county government.

The omnipresent taint of corruption has lingered far too long, and it's high time for change on the fifth floor of the County Government Center.

The relentless scandals emanating from the highest echelons of county government are not only an embarrassing indication of the failure of the current crop of elected leaders, they're an impediment to economic recovery.

Who wants to do business under such a cloud?

A vote for Rutherford is a vote for change.

As a city councilwoman, she has been part of an impressive team that has guided Fontana from the bench to the first string over the past decade. While Biane has blasted Rutherford for doubling spending by city government during her tenure on the City Council, he conveniently leaves out the fact that the city's population has also doubled and its reputation has sextupled over the same period.

Rutherford is a rock-solid fiscal conservative who long worked for Bill Leonard, a well-known conservative in the Assembly, Senate, Board of Equalization and now in the governor's administration.

Rutherford's anti-tax, pro-economic development credentials are unassailable.

We have to credit Biane for some accomplishments in his two terms on the board, where he certainly has been good for libraries in his district and pushed the North Etiwanda Preserve. We like that he directed \$1 million to the new library in Rancho Cucamonga, but we're offended by the fact that he had it named after himself. The same goes for the Fontana library, which has a room named for Biane.

And we can't help but be concerned by the fact that Biane has been implicated in the ongoing investigation into corruption in San Bernardino County.

Let's be clear: We're not assuming Biane is guilty of any legal wrongdoing in reaching our endorsement decision, even though he's clearly John Doe No. 3, unnamed and uncharged, in the corruption and bribery conspiracy alleged by the county district attorney and state attorney general.

He says he's innocent, and we accept that in the absence of any proof to the contrary.

But there's still more than ample reason not to re-elect the guy. Legality, after all, is a much lower hurdle than ethical and beneficial behavior.

He was a driving force in giving the Colonies Partners LP \$102million in taxpayer money to settle the flood-control dispute at the Colonies development in Upland. He and Bill Postmus were the ones who sent the attorneys out of the room to reach an earlier deal with Colonies, which fell apart under scrutiny. Prosecutors have alleged the settlement was the product of a wide-ranging conspiracy of extortion, bribery and collusion.

After Biane voted for the settlement, Colonies gave a PAC run by Biane's chief of staff \$100,000; whether it was bribery as the DA and AG allege, or simply a political contribution to like-minded politicians as Colonies Partners claim, voters don't have to like it, and the ensuing investigations and controversy are a clear indication that the matter was mishandled.

It's also hard to overlook the fact that Biane's chief of staff is out on administrative leave after claiming he's being harassed over his cooperation with the DA in the corruption investigation.

Whether it's Biane's alleged involvement in extending Rancho Cucamonga

Councilman Rex Gutierrez's cushy county job as a favor to Colonies partner Jeff Burum or his buying binoculars on the county dime, there are just too many things not to like about Biane's tenure.

It's time for him to go.

Luckily for 2nd District voters, Rutherford is one of five candidates opposing him. She is as or more capable than Biane, but with none of the ethical baggage.

Janice Rutherford would truly be a breath of fresh air on the tainted fifth floor of the County Government Center. Vote for her on June 8.