

Letter: Make your voice heard regarding SnowGlobe

To the community,

I want to thank all of you for your support and empathy. Over the last few days I have gotten handshakes, hugs, phone calls and kudos from both friends and strangers. I appreciate that you let me know that you have the same opinion toward SnowGlobe that I do.

Again, while I appreciate you letting me know, our best bet is to let the City Council and city manager know. Below are the emails of your elected officials. Please let them know how you feel – yay or nay.

We just have to be louder than SnowGlobe.

Addresses:

Nancy Kerry: nkerry@cityofslt.us

Tom Davis: tdavis@cityofslt.us

Austin Sass: asass@cityofslt.us

Brooke Laine: laine@cityofslt.us

Jason Collin: jcollin@cityofslt.us

Wendy David: w david@cityofslt.us

Again, let them know.

John Spicola, South Lake Tahoe

Opinion: How to win at winter

By Lori Moore, New York Times

My first winter in the Northeast, I thought I was set.

When I was growing up in the South, the heaviest coat I ever owned was a corduroy pea coat – more of a jacket, really. But after a year of working in the powdery mountain snow out West, I moved to New York City with a heavy Patagonia fleece, a knit hat or two, and a pair of gloves. Nothing could faze me after 20-foot snowdrifts, so I thought.

I found myself raging at winter, which seemed to never end. Long after the date I was used to greeting the spring, snow was still falling.

In short, I hated winter when I first moved north. But now, I find myself looking forward to it. It took over a decade, but I have learned ways to not just deal with the coldest season but to seek out the joys of it.

Read the whole story

Opinion: Why is obesity getting worse?

By Kenneth Cusi, The Conversation

Gyms across the country will be packed in the new year with people sticking, however briefly, to their New Year's resolution to lose weight. Most of them do not know that the cards are stacked against them and that weight loss is much

more complicated than working out and not eating dessert.

Years into the obesity epidemic, millions of Americans have tried to lose weight, and millions of them have failed to do so long term.

It's so serious now that close to 40 percent of Americans are obese. The average woman in the United States today weighs about 168 pounds, or roughly the same as an average man in 1960.

Not that that guys' waists haven't ballooned, too. Men have gained on average nearly 30 pounds since John F. Kennedy's inauguration in 1961.

From 1976 to 1980, just under 1 in 7 American adults, or 15.1 percent, were obese.

Now, despite people's concerted efforts, obesity is at its highest level ever, with about 40 percent of U.S. adults and 18.5 percent of children, considered obese. This is itself an increase of about 30 percent, just since 2000 when roughly 30 percent of American adults were obese.

The U.S., and increasingly the world, is in the grip of a real epidemic – the seriousness of which is lost in our obsession with diets. One study estimated an additional 65 million obese Americans by 2030, and increased medical costs between \$48 billion to \$66 billion a year.

As an endocrinologist, I study obesity and treat people with obesity every day. Here are some things I see, and some things I see that could begin to address the problem.

Costs across the board

Obesity, defined as a body mass index of at least 30, is about far more than vanity. It impairs quality of life and exacerbates health risks involving many medical conditions in children and adults. Obese people incur more medical costs,

live shorter lives and miss more work than their thinner counterparts.

The health risks include gallbladder disease, osteoarthritis, gout, sleep apnea, polycystic ovarian syndrome, cardiovascular disease and a broad spectrum of cancers, such as pancreatic, liver, breast and kidney cancers.

Obesity also leads to metabolic conditions such as hypertension, Type 2 diabetes and nonalcoholic fatty liver disease, which has long been overlooked as a life-threatening consequence of poor eating habits. This disease was rare until 1980.

The medical costs associated with obesity are enormous – and growing. One study estimated the annual medical care costs of obesity in the United States in 2008 dollars at \$209.7 billion. To put that in perspective, consider that that's almost half the amount of the estimated federal deficit for fiscal year 2018. About 1 in 5 health care dollars are spent to treat obesity-related illness.

The costs are also high to individuals. Compared with normal-weight individuals, obese patients spend 46 percent more on inpatient costs, 27 percent more on outpatient care and 80 percent more on prescription drugs.

A sickness of American society?

Obesity's roots are in American culture, from the stress of the workplace to the onslaught of food advertising, to our tradition of holiday overindulgence. The taste buds of our youth are raised on junk food and sugary treats, habits that follow children into adulthood.

American society is structured around productivity and long work hours. This leads to unbalanced lives, unhealthy lifestyles and unhappy people. Stress and lack of sleep can contribute to obesity.

For many families struggling between paychecks, the foods that make the most financial sense are the processed, packaged, fatty choices serving up the most calories.

Meal portions at restaurants have sharply increased in recent decades as well. The percentage of our food budget spent on out-of-home dining climbed to 46 percent in 2006, up 20 percent since 1970. The temptation of unhealthy food greets us on every street corner, in our breakrooms and at our favorite supermarkets. We Americans are eating too much yet we can't seem to reverse it. Why?

Some blame the epidemic on the advent of the microwave and the growth of fast food options since the 1970s. Also, our food choices have changed, with food industries mass market fattening foods to children.

Americans are more sedentary than we were decades ago. Our lives are tied to computer screens, big and small, in both our jobs and our homes. Our children are now raised on hand-held devices that serve as surrogate playmates in a world where "playing ball" is more likely to be done via internet connection than the actual playing field.

Blaming the victim?

Many of us invoke "willpower" in our fight against fat, blaming and shaming ourselves and others for not losing weight. While many people have lost weight in the short term, they struggle to break the cycle of food addiction and unhealthy food choices. Yet scientists have learned that this is not about a shortage of willpower but about an abundance of physiological factors that make the body hold onto fat.

Patients standing alone with just their willpower and the latest diet to guide them invariably face great difficulty against a complex disease like obesity. Going it alone may be a barrier to appropriate treatment options, such as behavioral modification counseling, anti-obesity drugs and bariatric

surgery.

Weight regain is common, as structured diets are hard to follow over the long haul. The body resists long-term calorie restriction by sending signals to our brains that trigger a craving for food, making diets prone to failure.

Because of the frustration of failure, many people are simply giving up on slimming down, making obesity an accepted social norm. One study has shown a declining percentage of men and women trying to lose weight since 1988, perhaps due to a lack of motivation after failed efforts.

Fixes

Even so, we're making some progress battling this epidemic. Studies show obesity appears to be plateauing in Caucasians, though not in ethnic minorities. But the numbers are already so high, "plateauing" seems more euphemistic than hopeful.

Scientific research has shown that the fixes are not about dieting, however. The solutions are complex and will take time and resources. Patients need more support than they are receiving.

Clearly, our country needs a greater systematic effort in the realms of public health, the government and industry. For starters, our political leaders should make combating obesity a top priority. Our nation faces many challenges, and the obesity epidemic has fallen to the bottom of a long list of health care problems.

Schools could play a role. Students should receive additional education in schools on good eating habits and how to control stress.

As someone who sees this devastating illness every day, I believe that health care insurers need to be more willing to pay upfront to manage obesity before it becomes a much more

expensive disease to treat. Given the structure of health insurance now, physicians simply cannot spend the time needed with patients to properly communicate and educate.

Studies have shown that many insurers exclude treatments for obesity.

Each of us needs to become an advocate for a healthier way of life. Adults can start by teaching our youngsters about good dietary habits, by insisting on a better balance in the workplace, and by demanding more accountability from the food and health industries, and our government. Doing that will help ensure a brighter and healthier future for our children.

Kenneth Cusi is a professor of endocrinology at the University of Florida.

Letter: How to combat unruly VHR renters

To the community,

In recent years much has been written about the battle locals are waging against VHRs that destroy the peace of their neighborhoods. Although I have read most of what has been written, the following is a perspective I have not seen.

As an owner of long term rentals, I know if there is a problem at our property that, ultimately, the buck stops with me. Not with my property manager, but with me.

California Civil Code guarantees residents the right to the peaceful and quiet enjoyment of their homes. Several recent lawsuits have been settled in favor of citizens who have had

the peace of their homes destroyed by a nearby party house or other disruption.

It seems that locals here who have lost their quiet homes because VHRs have taken over their neighborhoods, could consider this alternative to complaining endlessly to the rental agencies:

- Carefully document with video and photos the disruptions you endure.
- Call law enforcement and document that too.
- Buy a book on small claims court procedure so you know the proper steps to take to make a complaint.
- Learn who owns the VHR that is a problem by calling the Tax Assessors Office.
- File your complaint. There are no attorneys in small claims court so you don't need to worry about the costs of a regular lawsuit. You can be awarded up to \$10,000 for your damages including the stress and suffering you have endured. These complaints are being seen more and more in small claims court. You won't be alone.

Perhaps if we hold responsible the owners of the properties that have invaded our neighborhoods, we will see a more serious effort to uphold California law and allow locals to enjoy their homes quietly, peacefully and lawfully.

It's time for VHR owners to stop hiding behind their management companies.

Carla Ennis, Tahoe Paradise

Opinion: Immortal California property taxes

From: Joe Mathews

To: California Association of Realtors

Re: Death and Taxes

Yes, all Californians eventually will die.

But why can't our property tax discounts live forever?

That's the question inspired by your glorious new idea: a ballot initiative to make our state's Proposition 13 property tax savings even more generous.



Joe Mathews

Your "People's Initiative to Protect Prop 13 Savings" is as Californian as the Golden Gate Bridge. It provides a concrete symbol of an undeniable reality: Limiting property taxes is the fundamental organizing principle of postmodern California.

Under our Prop. 13 regime, the taxable value of every California home was set as of March 1, 1975 (when Olivia Newton-John won the Grammy for "I Honestly Love You"), or whatever subsequent date Californians first bought their houses. From that original base, the assessed value of a home cannot increase by more than 2 percent annually—no matter how much the actual value goes up.

In this way, Prop. 13 provided homeowners with an escalating discount on property taxes as the value of their homes rose. And groups like yours have made this subsidy the most heavily protected part of our state's finances. Californians will cut school funding, or local government services, and they will raise the state income tax or sales tax, but property tax savings are untouchable.

But something as fundamental as Prop. 13 can always use more protection. So your new initiative shores up a fundamental weakness: Homeowners don't get to keep their low property taxes forever. Tragically, they lose that discounted tax assessment once they sell their property and move on to a new home.

Fortunately, this is an outrage your initiative would address.

Your proposal would allow anyone over 55 to sell their California house and carry those same low property taxes to their next home, no matter the new home's market value, or its location in the state, or the number of moves they make. Your tax savings would follow you, not just your house, for as long as you live in California.

This historic change would represent, to borrow a line from President Abraham Lincoln, a new birth of freedom. Prop. 13 only protected older homeowners from being forced out of their homes by rising property taxes. Your Son-of-Prop-13 also defends the very opposite freedom; it mercifully frees older homeowners who might feel trapped in their homes by their own unwillingness to surrender those property tax savings.

If your initiative passes, longtime homeowners will finally be free to sell their homes at the huge profit they've run up over the years, without losing their property tax discount in the process. Hallelujah!

(Yes, this would also create more commissions for Realtors, but I'm sure that's just a coincidence.)

No Californian in touch with the established values of our state could oppose such a proposal. But—forgive me—I must admit to one concern: Your plan does not go far enough.

So here I propose—very modestly—an amendment: Don't limit Prop. 13 protections just to those who are old and alive. To express the central importance of property tax discounts in our state, I propose that every California homeowner be entitled to property tax savings that remain yours even after you die.

It would be up to you—and your estate—how to exercise your immortal tax savings. After death, for example, you could transfer the property tax savings—as a whole, or divided up into pieces—to whomever you want.

Think of the children—especially children related to these longtime homeowners with all their equity. Under my proposal, that equity could be passed on without a reassessment that would make higher property taxes cut into your inheritance.

I recognize that not everyone in California will see the genius of my plan, or yours. For one thing, your plan would cost local governments \$2 billion, and mine would cost many billions more. For another, critics have argued that Prop. 13 is generational theft. Prop. 13 effectively reserves for older homeowners money that would be better spent on education, housing, and infrastructure so that California—with the nation's highest poverty rate—could live up to its image as a state that defines a better future. Your and my proposals, by expanding Prop. 13's protections, would make this situation worse.

These critics mean well, but they don't recognize what our state has become. Don't they know that the old represent the fastest-growing demographic in our state (the proportion of Californians 65 and older should double by 2030)—while the number of children is in decline? So shy prioritize the

education of the next generation, when old people are the future?

Sure, some people would call my idea extreme. Some people might suggest that I am prioritizing property tax savings over the idea of California as the state of the future.

Some people just don't understand what California is really all about.

Joe Mathews writes the Connecting California column for Zócalo Public Square.

Opinion: Is road bike riding worth the risk?

By Aaron Gulley, Outside

The impact was as sudden and unexpected as lightning on a cloudless afternoon. One moment I was pedaling on a side road to my house after wrapping up a trail ride. The next I was 20 feet off the road on my back, tangled beneath my mountain bike in a stand of chamisa. People talk about their lives flashing before them in such moments, but for me there was only the sound of breaking glass and a searing pain in my left side as the car hit me from behind.

Short-circuited with adrenaline, I leapt from beneath my bike and sprinted down the roadway toward the scuffed and dented late-model Nissan, which was easing to a stop in the bike lane several hundred yards up the road. I gripped my phone—I don't remember pulling it from my thigh pocket—to get a photo of the car's license plate, and I was screaming as I ran: "You hit

me! You f*%#ing hit me!" I now realize that, by saying those words aloud, I was trying to make sense of what had happened. To the driver's credit, despite my rage, he didn't flee.

Read the whole story

Opinion: Bad legal advice costing EDC taxpayers

By Larry Weitzman

As to where the county continues to bury its head, you can decide for yourself as the El Dorado Superior Court issued its final ruling on the \$33 million plus case of Austin v. El Dorado County, et al.

I previously wrote that a tentative ruling was issued by the court on Oct. 20 that denied the demurrer of El Dorado County, et al, claiming that the plaintiff's lawsuit was barred by the statute of limitations, saying that the Austin complaint wasn't timely filed. The court scheduled oral argument for Dec. 1, allowing the defendants, EDC, et al, another chance to make their case. The hearing lasted for about 1 hour and 40 minutes with the defendants monopolizing most of that time pleading their case, even giving the court 10 reasons why the SOL should apply and submitting new cases. Plaintiff said none of these arguments apply.



Larry Weitzman

On Dec. 11, the court issued its final ruling writing, "After careful review of the moving and opposing papers and further consideration of the arguments of the parties following oral argument, the court adopts its tentative ruling as the final ruling on the submitted matter."

In plain language the court said EDC, et al, lost and SOL is no defense. The court did sustain a minor part of the demurrer to join some developers in the suit, which is perfunctory matter.

The bottom line is that the county and the rest of the defendants have no defense. There is no such thing as substantial compliance, which you may hear about from county counsel. This case is based on the statutory requirement of the county, et al, filing five-year Nexus studies which among other items need to "demonstrate" a clear and continuing need for the subject fees charged builders. The law says if you don't file the studies timely, the county, et al., must issue immediate refunds of all unexpended MFA fees including TIM fees, park fees and fire fees. The county has already ceded to refund the sheriff's substation fees.

The amount of unexpended fees at the time of the lawsuit was about \$33 million and for an additional year EDC continued collecting fees illegally which could amount to an additional \$10 million to \$20 million. It could even be worse in that money spent after the five-year filing date which is approximately July 2011 must also be refunded as it was illegally spent as the county's obligation to refund occurred

one day after the five-year Nexus study due date. The county could be on the hook for an amount far in excess of the \$33 million prayer of the original Austin complaint, perhaps an amount in excess of \$50 million. Making matters worse is EDC now has no defense as there are official county documents in which the county admits to the failure to follow the statutory provisions of the Mitigation Fee Act.

In February 2015, I stood in front of the entire Board of Supervisors and told them in plain language that this was going to happen and explained the MFA to them. I looked my own supervisor, Mike Ranalli, in the eye and told him he is sitting on a ticking time bomb. He obviously did nothing and made no inquiry or investigation, for if he did, the Austin Case would have likely never happened. The board now, not liking being told things they don't want to hear or being placed in the public record decided to limit speakers' and the time they can talk by a new board edict against the First Amendment. Ranalli spoke in favor of limiting speech in front of the board and voted for the new edict.

In March 2015 I wrote a column on the MFA time bomb facing the county and again in October 2015, explaining the Walker decision which is now the law regarding the MFA, the failure to file Nexus studies, the mandatory requirement of making refunds to the owners of properties upon which those fees were paid and the impact it will have on the county. Supervisors who showed up at the Monday morning El Dorado County Taxpayers Association breakfast meeting also heard this from me repeatedly. It's not like that can plead ignorance. Maybe they can plead stupidity, incompetence and negligence, but not ignorance. The buck stops with them, only they won't be liable for the tens of millions of dollars, you and I will. And Ranalli wants you to rehire him with your vote? First Ranalli must make the decision to rehire or fire county counsel, Mike Ciccozzi. It will make your decision to rehire Ranalli even easier.

On Nov. 9, I sent a question to county counsel asking for comments on the tentative ruling issued (which became the final ruling) to which he stated: "We are pleased that the court sustained our demurrer, though we disagree with portions of the court's tentative ruling. We look forward to the oral argument on Dec. 1."

Notice no comment to the fatal loss on the SOL issue. In a second request for a comment on the loss on the SOL issue, Ciccozzi did not respond.

The county has incurred an estimated \$300,000 in outside legal fees alone (county legal time has yet to be determined) so far on a failed defense and plans to spend hundreds of thousand dollars more in the briefing stage of the case of which they have no credible defense. With respect to the outside legal fees to date, I recently sent to following inquiry to the county's public information officer and received this response:

Carla, how much money has been spent (paid) to date on the Austin v. EDC litigation?

Sincerely, Larry

What's the angle of the column you're writing, and when might we expect to see it (in either the Lake Tahoe News or Mountain Democrat)?

Regards, Carla

What is EDC hiding? More important what is Ranalli and Novasel hiding? The response speaks for itself and considering the response, can you say, "no transparency in EDC." So much for the good governance manual on which EDC just spent tens of thousands of dollars. The county policy is "delayed justice is a victory" as when the final judgment comes down, neither the county counsel nor any of the board members will still be in office, leaving the mess for someone else to take the blame.

County counsel, I am sure, keeps telling the board that they will win on appeal. One has to wonder about the amount of his lifetime retirement? Every outside lawyer who has looked at this case has said the county has no chance which makes the chance on appeal slim and none. County counsel must know this, yet he tells the board something else, something they want to hear, the board hoping against hope that it's not a lie. But it is.

So how does that help the county. It doesn't. It will cost the county millions of additional dollars, throwing good money after bad money in legal fees, while the legal rate of interest adds to the eventual full judgement and then there is no chance of a lesser settlement.

As I have written before, the county needs to get an independent legal opinion, not an opinion from someone who is buried so deep in his bad advice that another opinion could cause his immediate termination and certainly a non-renewal of his contract which is up for renewal in a few months. As you can clearly see, Ciccozzi can't let an independent opinion happen, the risk to him is too great, however the risk to the residents of this county for it not to happen (getting a truly independent case evaluation) and to who county counsel owes a fiduciary obligation is far greater. County counsel cares much more about himself, his paycheck and retirement than the people he works for.

The EDC Board of Supervisors has been advised of this clear conflict time and time again. Two members are up for re-election, Ranalli and Sue Novasel. If they fail to act in the best interests of the county, which at a minimum is the hiring of an independent counsel and an evaluation of this matter, they are not doing their job which is to represent the best interests of their respective constituents and not the interests of themselves.

Larry Weitzman is a resident of Rescue.

Letter: Time to admit SnowGlobe needs silencing

To the community,

As many of you know, I am vocal critic of SnowGlobe. Well, after another year I feel like it's kind of tradition for me to write my letter and vent about the event.

I will preface this letter with a reminder that I am not against events in the area. I just want events to be at a proper venue and I want them to not shake the walls of my house.

Days before SnowGlobe I reached out the City Council to try to get them to turn down the bass. There were numerous articles that they were expecting louder than usual sound and I thought maybe I could get a jump on it and talk some sense into the people involved.

I was fortunate enough to acquire a meeting with [City Manager] Nancy Kerry and [Councilman] Tom Davis (they were the only ones to reply) to express my frustrations about the event. They offered to pick me up where I live and give me a tour of the event.

During this meeting I found out that they refer the area where I live as "the war zone." This term was used more than once. For them to know that the noise/bass is overwhelming for this area and do nothing shows very poor leadership. The utter disregard for the residents of Pioneer Village was really surprising.

I asked if they could turn it down and was told that at one

point in the past they turned it down 20 percent and it did nothing. So I asked them if they could turn it down more. They said if they turn it down more than that it doesn't have the impact that the artist or the concert-goers want. What about the residents?

I asked what the long-term plan was for the event. Any chance of it being moved to a proper venue? They said it's staying in its present location. What about the disruption to our area, surrounding areas and the wildlife center that's going in? Ya, I played the cute animal card.

I asked why it keeps growing and why it has moved closer to the road/my house when it has been controversial from the first time. Blank stares

I mentioned a well run event is held at a proper venue and that it is also courteous to its neighbors. This event does neither. More blank stares.

A well run, well placed event doesn't cause this much controversy within the community.

I offered for both Nancy and Tom to stay at my place for the three days that the event ran and was promptly told no.

I'll just mention that there are a bunch of VHRs next to me. I think the people that OK SnowGlobe should stay there during the event.

At one point Tom Davis asked me if he should call Harveys to complain because he can hear their music in the summer. Really? That's your response to my complaint, deflection.

Now on top of all the existing issues over the last few years the community now has to deal with a road closure and it slowly taking over Bijou park.

So just to recap ... the event has been controversial and disruptive from the first time, it's in a spot that is not

conducive for an event like this, it disrupts many surrounding neighborhoods with noise even though we have continuously requested they turn it down. And now we have it growing and closing our roads.

I find it a bit amusing that the city and the people who put on this event get surprised when you point out that they are putting a round peg into a square hole. "Ya know, it just doesn't fit there. It's a nice peg but it doesn't fit the space."

This morning I read that LTCC wants to distance itself from the event. I ask: How can this event move forward without the cooperation from LTCC? Will it want more of Bijou park?

I also read that the city wants to mitigate the sound. Tom and Nancy had mentioned a sound cloud technology when I met with them, but they also freely admitted it would not help with the bass issue.

There were also statements that the city thought it was better than years past. It wasn't. At times the bass was as bad or worse than years past. Add in the additional fireworks and road closure I would have to say it got worse. Really? Fireworks in the middle of a forest?

I will say that the clean up/breakdown has been better than in the past.

Also now we find out that the promoter did not follow through on the promise for a field cover. Why do you keep doing business with someone who doesn't follow through on agreed to conditions?

Some people have said I should compromise. I reply, are they compromising with me? I asked them to put it in a proper location, I asked them to turn it down. I got an event that grew bigger, moved closer to my house and is still rattling the walls of my house. It's been seven years and we constantly

ask them to turn it down. It's a constant valid complaint from more people than just me.

I'll say it again: It's been seven years and we want you to turn it down.

If you eliminate the bass that invades people's houses, you might find most of us tolerable to the event.

Now I have come up with another compromise. I am asking the city and/or SnowGlobe to pay to relocate me and my family to a VHR in the county for the three days the event runs. Look, I know a lot of you are laughing at this request but that is where I am at with the noise/bass level. You have my email. I await your response.

Again, have your fun, listen to your music, make some money, bring people to the area, but be courteous to your neighbors and act accordingly for the area you occupy.

John Spinola, South Lake Tahoe

PS – You want to hear a crazy thought, all of this SnowGlobe fiasco could have been avoided if the city had required a completion/surety/performance bond when they OK'd the convention center.

Opinion: Career-ready out of high school is a myth

**By Anthony P. Carnevale, Andrew R. Hanson and Megan Fasules,
The Conversation**

Unlike old-fashioned vocational education, high school-level

career and technical education doesn't really prepare people for jobs directly after high school. While the stated end goal of K-12 education in America is for students to be "college and career ready," the reality is the existence of career-ready high school graduates is a myth. The expectation that high school produces career-ready adults in a 21st century economy is unrealistic and counterproductive.

While there have been efforts to revive vocational training in high school, it has become clear that, for today's students to be prepared for tomorrow's jobs, all pathways must lead to a credential with labor market value, such as a certificate, associate's degree or bachelor's degree. Good jobs that only required a high school education, in blue-collar fields and the military, have declined, while the jobs that took their place in fields like health care, information technology and business services require more than a high school education.

On average, CTE courses comprise only 2.5 out of the 27 credits high school students earn, not nearly enough coursework to prepare students for an entry-level job with a career ladder. What's more: CTE "concentrators" – that is, students who take at least three CTE courses – and who don't go on to obtain a college degree, certificate or certification earn 90 cents more per hour than nonconcentrators.

This matters because – as we've shown through research here at the Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce – half of young adults are failing to successfully launch their careers. If we fail to recognize that the game has changed and that high school is no longer enough, we will also fail to prepare future generations for tomorrow's jobs.

Not your parents' high school

The movement away from the tightly focused job training in high school – and toward the richer mix of academic and career-related learning in CTE – began in 1983 with the

publication of "A Nation at Risk." That seminal report urged the nation's schools to adopt a set of new academic basics that stripped K-12 education of its vocational mission and watered down academic track in favor of a highly standardized academic college-prep curriculum for all students. The shift was driven by both changing economic and political realities – specifically, the postindustrial restructuring of the American economy and the criticism that vocational education put advantaged and disadvantaged students on separate educational tracks.

At the same time, it became clear that high school degrees no longer provide enough general or career-specific education to prepare young people for good jobs.

Since the 1980s, the relationship between education and careers has changed in other profound ways. The narrow job-specific training provided by traditional vocational courses, such as auto mechanics, was no longer enough in an economy where skill requirements were constantly rising at a fast pace. In modern economies, narrow vocational preparation at the high school level leaves workers without enough general education to land middle-class jobs.

Toward a college prep curriculum

Furthermore, in an increasingly diverse society, many policymakers in the '80s and '90s became convinced that narrow vocational and academic tracking by race, class and gender was inefficient and unfair. This tracking left poor and black students in shop class and women in home economics – a reality that was characteristic of the comprehensive high school curriculum that had been in place since the end of WWII. Such tracking created indefensible differences in education and career opportunities for people from different backgrounds.

With vocational education and the watered down education track removed, the K-12 system became the host for a standards-based

academic curriculum designed to prepare students for college and life in a modern democracy – but not for work in a particular job.

As a result of the curriculum reforms since 1983, there is no longer much room for career preparation in high school. For instance, an average of 22 of the 26 credits required for a high school degree are reserved for academic courses necessary to meet state graduation standards in subjects such as English, math and science.

Because of the shift from vocational to academic preparation, high school curriculums have become one-size-fits all. They no longer have a direct relationship with most college majors or careers. Career preparation has shifted to the postsecondary sphere. Even the much heralded Career Academies haven't been shown to land students in living wage jobs, even eight years after graduation.

CTE programs – commonly in health care, agriculture, and business – that gradually replaced the old-style job training provide little actual job training. Compared with traditional vocational training programs, CTE is available to a much broader diversity of high school students by race and class. As a result, CTE today is much less likely to be accused of tracking by race, class and gender.

Modern CTE programs have multiple functions. CTE programs provide hands-on learning models. They also provide employability skills such as communication, teamwork, problem solving, initiative and self-management. Those skills are portable across occupations and different work settings. Modern CTE programs also help foster career exploration across in-demand career fields. But there is substantial room for improvement.

How CTE must change

We first have to recognize that the current vision is only

working for half of our young adults. That is, less than half of young adults earn a bachelor's degree, associate's degree or industry-recognized certificate postsecondary credential – the current standard for career readiness – by the age of 30. The advantaged half of our high school students earn college degrees, and most, if not all, move on to successful career pathways.

Our research shows that among those who earn college degrees and certificates, the vast majority make more than the average high school graduate.

Recent developments in federal policy, such as the Every Student Succeeds Act, are not enough to meet the challenge of helping the forgotten half of young Americans. The act includes the words “career readiness,” but the career-ready high school graduate only exists in the collective imagination. Similarly, reauthorizing the Perkins Act, the chief federal funding source for CTE, would be a positive step. Ultimately, however, the major reforms must take place at the state or regional level.

In the best cases, a handful of states, like Delaware and Tennessee, are successfully developing pathways to in-demand careers. Middle school students are exploring careers that suit their talents and interests. High school students are gaining employability skills and practical work experience in career fields so that they are ready to shop for postsecondary programs in their junior year.

We must scale up this new model in more states and cities across the country and invest more in programs that connect education to work. Only then will we reach the forgotten half of young adults who aren't making it in today's economy.

Anthony P. Carnevale is a research professor and director of the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce. Andrew R. Hanson is a senior research analyst at

the Center on Education and the Workforce, Georgetown University. Megan Fasules is a research economist, Georgetown University.

Letter: Fed up with VHRs in S. Lake Tahoe

To the community,

I bought a home in the 1600 block of Venice Drive in the Tahoe Keys in 2005 and moved to beautiful Tahoe. I knew nothing about VHRs.

There are at least eight of them on my block. Most full-time owners have moved away because of them. This New Year's all of them were full and all of the renters lit firecrackers, cherry bombs and rockets off for 20 minutes.

I hate living in this town.

The Napa City Council call us the South Lake Tahoe vacation home rental ghetto.

I want to move, but I can't sell my home without loosing \$300,000 to \$400,000. People are not buying here because of the VHRs no matter what the rental agents and Realtors are saying. The renters are coming here to party and the owners and agents are renting there R1 zoned homes to make money. They care nothing about the people who live here.

The city has to make more changes against VHRs, but I think I am stuck here where I hate living because of all the noise from them.

Joe Sinnott, South Lake Tahoe