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Santa Cruz City Councilmember Tony Madrigal Joins March for California's Future

DINUBA, CA—Santa Cruz City Councilmember Tony Madrigal caught up with participants in the “March for California’s Future,” a 260-mile trek from Bakersfield through the heart of the Central Valley to Sacramento, midway between Tulare and Visalia two days ago.

It was a homecoming of sorts for Madrigal who was born and raised in Turlock.

“I care about the future of the state and the direction it’s headed, and we cannot continue to do more of the same with these budgeting practices,” said Madrigal.

Madrigal is referring to the pattern in Sacramento of cutting state funding for public service programs and education while simultaneously granting wealthy individuals and multinational corporations tax breaks. This has the effect of increasing the tax burden of people who have to work for a living while enlarging budget shortfalls through decreased state revenues.

Madrigal said that what was needed in Sacramento was a fairer tax system and greater investments in public services and education.

“Everybody gives so much to the state, and I want the state to do a better job of providing for everyone’s future,” said Madrigal.

These are the same priorities that motivated Watsonville teacher Jenn Laskin to volunteer to walk 260 miles through the Central Valley over the next 34 days.

“There is a lot of need here in the Central Valley, greater than in many places in California, but many people are not making the connection that legislators elected here in the valley are among those using the two-thirds requirement to slash services,” Laskin said. “It's a long conversation. This whole system was put into place so that the average person can't understand what's going on.”

Laskin said that marching through the Central Valley creates an opportunity to engage and educate the people of this area in a conversation about these issues and how they impact the entire state.

Sponsored by the California Federation of Teachers (CFT) and a coalition of labor, education, and civil society groups including the American Federation of State County & Municipal Employees (AFSCME), hundreds of firefighters, nurses, in-home care workers, students, and police officers will join the marchers for parts of their 260-mile trek from Bakersfield to Sacramento.

For more information, please visit www.fight4cafuture.com