

APPEAL-DEMOCRAT

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Property rights pushed

By Eve Hightower/Appeal-Democrat

State Sen. Sam
Aanestad and his
guest speakers
rallied Mid-Valley



residents behind private property rights protection at a town hall meeting Thursday night in Yuba City.

Dave Nielsen/Appeal-Democrat

State Sen. Sam Aanestad talks Thursday night in Yuba City about the "Homeowners and Private Property Protection Act."

"A man's home is no longer his castle," Aanestad said in reference to last summer's Supreme Court ruling in *Kelo vs. City of New London*.

The city used eminent domain to condemn privately owned real property so that it could be used as part of a comprehensive redevelopment plan. The court ruled in favor of New London, which seized waterfront homes so they could be turned into offices, restaurants and upscale homes.

Inspired by the Supreme Court case and a Yolo County eminent domain issue, Aanestad is co-authoring The Homeowners and Private Property Protection Act with Senator Tom McClintock, R-Thousand Oaks. Assemblyman Doug LaMalfa has introduced the same legislation in the Assembly.

Their bills would prohibit local governments from taking private property and turning it over to private developers for increased profits and tax revenue.

Aanestad said in cases where local government is at odds with individual property owners, he supports property owners.

"I'm not bashing local government," Aanestad said. "No city council has voted for Sam Aanestad."

He illustrated his point with an example from Yolo County, where the county is using eminent domain to seize the 17,300-acre ranch in the Yolo Bypass and Cache Creek Settling Basin.

"Ladies and gentlemen, that should bother you to the core of 

your being," said former Sen. Jim Nielsen.

The county's use of eminent domain to acquire the ranch - a model of sustainable farming - has been the subject of debate for nearly two years.

The ranch represents the most significant remaining open space in Yolo County, and includes farmland, gas production wells, regional flood control opportunities and wetlands enhancement opportunities. The ranch also has thousands of acre-feet of water rights.

Aanestad urged citizens and local governments to support McClintock's and LaMalfa's proposals.

Representatives from Yuba and Sutter counties said supervisors support private property rights. The Yuba County board has already voiced its support. Sutter County Supervisor Dennis Nelson said his board will soon sign a resolution in favor of McClintock's and LaMalfa's bills.

Aanestad will host more forums on the eminent domain issue in Redding next week and Lincoln in the first week of March.

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Dave Nielsen/
Appeal-
Democrat
Tovey
Giezentanner,
spokesman
for the
Conaway
Preservation
Group, talks
Thursday
night to a
group
interested in
private
property
rights in Yuba
City City Hall.