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September 05, 2007

San Diego councilman gains influence

SACRAMENTO -- San Diego City Councilman Jim Madaffer is at ease on the political stage. But soon, he will take center stage with a new title.

Madaffer on Friday will be elevated to president of the California League of Cities, a statewide organization that represents municipal interests in Sacramento and Washington.

Madaffer's ascension comes at a critical time for cities. The state is doling out important transportation and housing bond revenues, another ballot fight over government land seizures looms and the one-two punch of Mother Nature and a federal judge has plunged California into a water crisis.

But Madaffer is no stranger to controversy. He has served on the city council since 2000 - a sometimes-troubled period for the city that knows how.

He also has helped shape state policy while serving as second- and first- vice president of the statewide league over the years.

Madaffer will take office on the closing day of the annual League of California Cities convention in Sacramento.

When he does, Madaffer will become the second league president from San Diego County in the past 10 years. Greg Cox was president in 1987-1988 while he was on the Chula Vista City Council.

The league president serves a one-year term. The position is unpaid.

- Michael Gardner, Copley News Service

Madaffer was part of a team that successfully forced the governor

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and lawmakers to support a ballot measure that sharply limits the state's ability to raid local revenues.

Madaffer also helped beat back a 2006 statewide proposition that would have sharply curtailed the government's ability to take private property. This year, Madaffer is supporting a compromise measure pending in the Legislature that would curb some abuses but allow cities to continue to use eminent domain.

Securing a ballot spot and voter-approval of the city-backed legislation, ACA [8](#) will be one of his top priorities as president, Madaffer said.

"Eminent domain reform is crucial," Madaffer said. "There are a number of cities that have abused eminent domain. It's gotten a bad name."

Madaffer also would like to see more incentives to reward cities that link jobs, housing and transportation in growth plans.

He also proposes to emphasize affordable housing.

"We have a housing crisis in California," Madaffer said. "It's important that cities own up to that and not just build shopping malls and auto centers."

Not all of the work will be in the state Capitol. Madaffer also will represent California's 478 cities on lobbying forays to the nation's Capitol.

One of his goals is to push Congress to return more of the taxes Californians send to the federal treasury.

Posted by Michael Smolens September 5, 2007 12:30 PM | [TrackBack](#)

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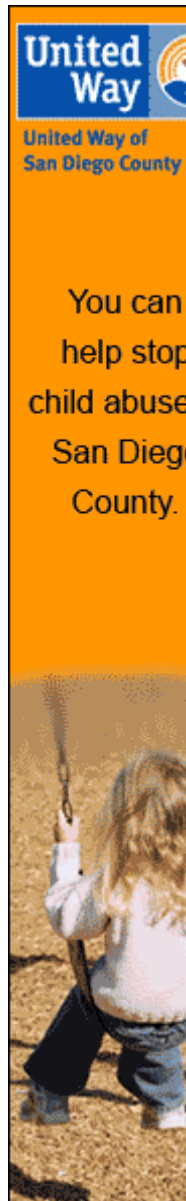
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