

## Council Calls For Activation of "Law Enforcement Mutual Aid" for Oakland

After hearing rumors reported on TV (and confirmed with some of our members in Oakland) that a protest of national scope is planned for next Wednesday in Oakland, the Bay Area Council called for immediate activation of the California Office of Emergency Services "Law Enforcement Mutual Aid" for Region II.

As Jim Wunderman [expressed in a letter to the region's Chiefs of Police and Sheriffs](#):

This week, we had a tremendous demonstration of why having 9 separate counties and 101 cities in the Bay Area can hamper our region's ability to respond to a serious crisis. Despite the heroic efforts of the Oakland Police Department, on Wednesday night, a peaceful protest regarding the tragic death of Oscar Grant at the Fruitvale BART station in Oakland got seriously out of hand, resulting in injury, destruction and an atmosphere of fear in Oakland and across our entire region. Oakland's Police Department is already shorthanded and needed help protecting both the rights of the protestors and the innocent bystanders and business from splinter groups bent on violence. Next week the situation threatens to spiral desperately out of control....We have seen before the amount of pain and damage these events can cause in cities like Seattle. Oakland and the Bay Area's residents and businesses cannot afford this kind of mayhem, especially at a time of national hope and change. We cannot let jurisdictional lines interfere with an orderly management of these protests. If the situation gets out of hand, it will be an event that will harm Oakland in immeasurable ways. None of this should be interpreted as interference of people's right to protest. Public dissent is critical to a well-operating democracy. We just do not want the sincere, well-intended concerns of local protestors to be overwhelmed by violent outside forces that have different axes to grind. At a time of need, we cannot let Oakland stand on its own. This is a moment for our entire region to stand together.



Heath Berger / Special to The Chronicle

## Survey Says: California Needs Constitutional Reform

*The San Francisco Business Times* recently conducted a survey asking how California could ultimately fix its ongoing fiscal gridlock. At the time of printing, the results showed that 64 percent agreed that government is fundamentally broken and constitutional reform was in order. Twenty-eight percent of respondents felt the State's woes could be fixed by electing better legislators and seven percent thought nothing was wrong. The Bay Area Council is holding a [Constitutional Convention Summit](#) in Sacramento on February 24, 2009. The purpose of this Summit is to gather citizens, activists, stakeholders and State leaders to prepare for a Constitutional Convention. Not only will process, legal issues and procedure for a Convention be discussed, but also what resulting reforms should be pursued in the Convention. It is open to the public and Weekly Flash readers are encouraged to attend.

## Quote of the Week

"In November, we used words like dire, bleak and awful and since then the problem has gotten a lot worse," he said. "And we're running out of adjectives." – [Mac Taylor](#), the state's legislative analyst on California's financial dilemma.

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