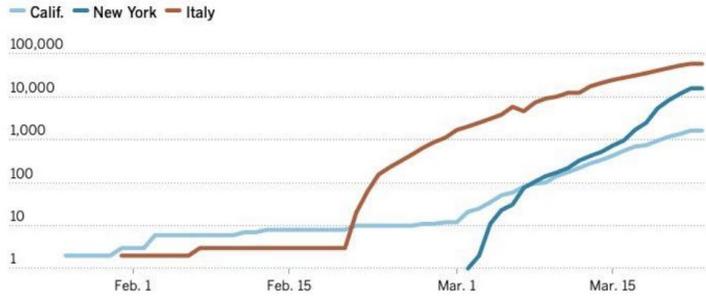


Claims	Facts
<p>Jay Obernolte said that public health data showing increasing coronavirus cases was a “scare tactic,” opposes vaccinating our children, and refused to wear a mask next to a pregnant colleague.</p>	<p>Suggested cites: Assemblyman Jay Obernolte Facebook, 3/27/2020; California Legislative Information, Senate Bill 277, 6/25/2015; The Cut, 9/10/2019; Victorville Daily Press, 6/22/2015; Phil Matier Twitter, 5/20/2020</p> <p>In 2020, Obernolte accused the Los Angeles Times of ‘scare tactics’ due to graph depicting the ‘number of coronavirus cases in New York approaching that of Italy, with California not far behind.’ In March 2020, Obernolte posted on Facebook describing how he was reading an article that “included this alarming graph, which appears to show the number of COVID-19 cases in New York approaching that of Italy, with California not far behind.” According to Obernolte,</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">I wondered how this could possibly be factual, given that California just passed 3,000 cases, while there are over 74,000 cases in Italy (over 20 times more). New York has 37,000 cases, which is only half that of Italy. It certainly doesn't look that way on the graph.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">But read the fine print on the bottom of the graph. Most graphs are plotted on a linear scale, but this one is plotted on a logarithmic scale ... That's why California's total looks so close to Italy's, even though it is actually 20 times less.</p> <p>He continued,</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">It it [sic] certainly important that we not underestimate the risks in this crisis. However it is equally important that we remain calm and make informed decisions based on what the data is telling us about the spread of the virus. I know that newspapers are in the businesses [sic] of selling more newspapers. But scare tactics like this graph are not helpful.</p>

COVID-19 grew exponentially in Italy, New York, California

The case count accelerated rapidly in all three areas.



Note: Cases are plotted on a logarithmic scale

[Assemblyman Jay Obernolte Facebook, [3/27/2020](#); [3/27/2020](#)]

In 2015, Obernolte voted against Senate Bill 277, which mandated vaccinations for school children. According to the California Legislative Information site, Obernolte voted against Senate Bill 277 on June 25, 2015. The bill was described as "An act to amend Sections 120325, 120335, 120370, and 120375 of, to add Section 120338 to, and to repeal Section 120365 of, the Health and Safety Code, relating to public health." Reportedly, "This bill would eliminate the exemption from existing specified immunization requirements based upon personal beliefs, but would allow exemption from future immunization requirements deemed appropriate by the State Department of Public Health for either medical reasons or personal beliefs." Senate Bill 277 passed the California State Assembly by a 46-31 vote and was approved by the Governor on June 30, 2015. [California Legislative Information, Senate Bill 277, [6/25/2015](#)]

Obernolte voted against bill which 's[ought] to combat fake medical exemptions' after tripling in exemptions to childhood vaccines. In September 2019, Obernolte voted with a 19-48 minority to oppose SB 276. In September 2019, The Cut reported that "California senator Richard Pan, a practicing pediatrician who chairs the Senate Committee on Health," introduced the bill. The bill reportedly "seeks to combat fake medical exemptions" due to increasing rates of medical exemptions to vaccines among children; reportedly, in the two years preceding the introduction of the bill, "the number of children in California who have been granted a medical exemption has tripled, according to California Healthline, which has serious implications." Reportedly:

under the bill, California's Department of Public Health will make the final decision regarding whether the underlying condition claimed in a doctor's medical exemption met the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's guidelines. Per the Los Angeles Times, state health officials estimate that more than 40 percent of California's yearly 11,500 medical exemptions would be denied under the legislation.

[The Cut, [9/10/2019](#)]

Obernolte in 2015: student immunization mandate 'will only open the door for further government intrusion into our lives.' In June 2015, the Victorville Daily Press reported that Obernolte opposed SB 277, which would "require vaccinations for most children in California's public or private schools, excluding only those with medical exemptions." Reportedly, "Obernolte said Monday that he and his wife had decided to vaccinate their children after 'a significant amount of research ... but it was exactly that: A choice.' Obernolte continued:

SB 277 infringes on a parent's right to make this choice, which directly challenges the constitutional freedoms that our country was founded upon...If we give the state the power to mandate immunizations as a requirement to receive a public education, it will only open the door for further government intrusion into our lives.

[Victorville Daily Press, [6/22/2015](#)]

In May 2020, Obernolte failed to wear mask while sitting next to pregnant colleague in Assembly. On May 5, 2020, Phil Matier tweeted a photo of some Republican assembly members not wearing masks in their seats around pregnant assembly member Buffy Wicks. Matier tweeted:

It might not be required -- but @KevinKileyCA, @J_GallagherAD3 and @JayObernolte -- when you see a pregnant @BuffyWicks -- why not just mask up?



Phil Matier
@philmatier

It might not be required -- but @KevinKileyCA, @J_GallagherAD3 and @JayObernolte -- when you see a pregnant @BuffyWicks -- why not just mask up?



12:49 PM · May 5, 2020 · [Twitter Web App](#)

[Phil Matier Twitter, [5/20/2020](#)]

To make matters worse, Obernolte has voted to cut \$700 million in funding for Social Security and job training programs for disabled veterans, deny health care to 200,000 people in our area, and even to cut funding for the Barstow veterans' home, threatening to eliminate jobs and housing for local veterans.

Suggested cites: California Legislative Information, SB 826, Introduced, 1/7/2016; California Legislative Information, AB97, Introduced 1/10/2017; [PR Newswire, 11/19/2012; California Legislative Information, 6/26/2020; California State Controller, 2/2020; Victor Valley News, 6/29/2020; California Legislative Information, SB 826, Introduced 1/7/2016, Voted 6/15/2016; AB 97, Introduced 1/10/2017, Voted 6/15/2017; AB 74, Introduced 12/3/2018, Voted 6/13/2018; SB 862, Introduced 1/10/2018, Voted 8/29/2018; Victorville Daily Press, 5/14/2020; California Health Care Foundation, 2/25/2019; Department of Health Care Services, 9/10/2019

Obernolte voted against FY 2017 budget allocating over \$357 million in social security funds to rehabilitation programs. In June 2016, Obernolte voted against the Fiscal Year 2017 budget. The budget included line items allocating \$353,938,000 to "Vocational Rehabilitation Services" and \$3,096,000 to "Independent Living Services." According to the budget:

The amount appropriated in this item that is payable from federal Social Security Act funds for vocational rehabilitation services for SSI/SSDI recipients shall be expended only to the extent that funds received exceed the amount appropriated in Item 5160-101-0890 that is payable from the federal Social Security Act funds. It is the intent of the Legislature that first priority of federal Social Security Act funding be given to independent living centers in the amount of federal Social Security Act funding appropriated in Item 5160-101-0890.

These line items included a total of \$357,034,000 in funding. [California Legislative Information, SB 826, Introduced, [1/7/2016](#)]

Obernolte voted against FY 2018 budget allocating over \$360 million in social security funds to rehabilitation programs. In June 2017, Obernolte voted against the Fiscal Year 2018 budget. The budget included line items allocating \$357,236,000 to "Vocational Rehabilitation Services" and \$3,107,000 to "Independent Living Services." According to the budget:

The amount appropriated in this item that is payable from federal Social Security Act funds for vocational rehabilitation services for SSI/SSDI recipients shall be expended only to the extent that funds received exceed the amount appropriated in Item 5160-101-0890 that is payable from the federal Social Security Act funds. It is the intent of the Legislature that first priority of federal Social Security Act funding be given to independent living centers in the amount of federal Social Security Act funding appropriated in Item 5160-101-0890.

These programs included a total of \$360,343,000 in funding. [California Legislative Information, AB97, Introduced [1/10/2017](#)]

Disabled veterans qualify for Social Security-linked independent living and benefits services, which the Department of Rehabilitation oversees. In November 2012, PR Newswire reported that "California's 29 Independent Living Centers (ILCs) serve as disability experts to veterans and their families while working hard to ensure they never hear 'that's not our service.'" Reportedly:

ILCs provide a full range of independent living services to veterans, including assistance with housing and housing modifications; peer support; benefits counseling; assistance with independent living; and outreach within the community to connect with veterans while creating awareness around the issues they face and accessible services.

One example of ILCs reaching out to veterans can be seen at the Independent Living Resource Center, Inc. (ILRC-Satellite) located in Santa Barbara, CA, which

received a grant and specifically hired a veteran to lead a Veteran Outreach Services program. Initially, the new hire circled throughout three counties and began building a large network of contacts. During this process, veterans became aware of the services ILRC-Satellite provides, and it wasn't long before word spread and veterans were approaching the Center with a broad range of issues, in particular, homelessness.

The loss or potential loss of benefits is a significant issue in working with veterans. Like ILRC-Satellite, the Disability Services & Legal Center (DSLCL) in Santa Rosa, CA has staff focused on assisting veterans with benefits, including Social Security (SS). In particular, DSLCL staff recently accompanied two veterans, who had been denied SS and were facing eviction from their homes, to a hearing that resulted in the judge awarding benefits on the spot.

[PR Newswire, [11/19/2012](#)]

In 2020, Obernolte voted against FY 2021 budget including funding for the Barstow Veterans Home and its 216 employees. According to California Legislative Information, Obernolte voted against AB 89, the Budget Act of 2020, on June 26, 2020. The bill reportedly included funding for the Barstow Veterans Home, which, according to the California State Controller in February 2020, employed 216 California residents. Despite voting against the bill that would have provided funding for the Home, Obernolte reportedly claimed he remains “steadfastly committed to keeping this home open,” according to the Victor Valley News. [California Legislative Information, [6/26/2020](#); California State Controller, [2/2020](#); Victor Valley News, [6/29/2020](#)]

Obernolte voted against every state budget containing funding for Barstow Veterans Home between 2016 and 2019. According to California Legislative Information, the Budget Act of 2016 included \$23,859,000 for “Veterans Home of California at Barstow.” Similarly, the Budget Act of 2017 contained \$24,224,000 for the “Veterans’ Home of California at Barstow,” and the Budget Act of 2019 contained \$26,815,000 for “Veterans Home of California at Barstow.” Obernolte voted against all three of these budget bills. While Obernolte voted against the Budget Act of 2018, it did not contain funding for Barstow Veterans Home. [California Legislative Information, SB 826, Introduced [1/7/2016](#), Voted [6/15/2016](#); AB 97, Introduced [1/10/2017](#), Voted [6/15/2017](#); AB 74, Introduced [12/3/2018](#), Voted [6/13/2018](#); SB 862, Introduced 1/10/2018, Voted [8/29/2018](#)]

Barstow Veterans Homes has 200 residents. In May 2020, the Victorville Daily Press reported that “Newsom’s revised budget proposed to ‘initiate the closure’ of the Veterans Home of California-Barstow.” Reportedly, “Assemblyman Jay Obernolte said he will fight against the state’s budget proposal as the vice chair of the Assembly Budget Committee, as well as a member of the Joint Legislative Budget Committee and the Budget Conference Committee.” In a statement, Obernolte claimed it was “unconscionable to balance the budget on the backs of our veterans and even worse to displace the 200 residents who currently call this home.” [Victorville Daily Press, [5/14/2020](#)]

Obernolte voted against FY 2019 CA state budget. According to the California Legislature, Obernolte voted against the FY 2019 state budget. [Senate Bill 862, [8/29/2018](#)]

FY 2019 budget allocated \$99.2b to Medi-Cal. In February 2019, the California Health Care Foundation reported that “spending on Medi-Cal represents 17% of the state’s General Fund spending, with total expenditures for 2018–19 of \$99.2 billion.” [California Health Care Foundation, [2/25/2019](#)]

231K people in Assembly District 33 were eligible for Medi-Cal in 2019, including seniors, persons with disabilities, caretakers and children. In January 2019, the Department of Health Care Services released “Medi-Cal certified eligible counts” for California State Assembly Districts, which listed that Assembly District 33 had 231,619 residents eligible for Medi-Cal, the state’s federal Medicaid program.

Aid Code Group	Eligibility Count
ACA Expansion Adults Ages 19 to 64	60,559
Adoption/Foster Care	6,236
Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP)	17,413
Long-Term Care	212
Other	597
Parents/Caretaker Relatives & Children	111,580
Seniors and Persons with Disabilities	30,446

	Undocumented	4,576
	Total	231,619
[Department of Health Care Services, 9/10/2019]		