

# Supreme Court grants mayor an extension

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Santa Cruz Mayor Jane Weed got a 30-day reprieve from the state Supreme Court Tuesday.

Weed's 1983 election to the City Council is in jeopardy because a state appellate court ruled Nov. 21 that her apparent victory was based on illegal votes. Instead, her political opponent, Bill Fieberling, won the election, the court said.

But on Dec. 31 Weed appealed the decision to the Supreme Court, which had until the end of this week to decide whether to hear the appeal. Had it decided not to, Weed would have been out of office.

What is being extended to March 31 is the deadline for the court to decide whether it will hear the case. If it decides on a hearing, Weed's term in office would be extended indefinitely until the court reaches a decision. If it declines the case, the appeals court decision stands and Weed is out of office.

A spokesperson at the Sacramento office of the Supreme Court, Bridey Newman, said the extension to March 31 will be the last for Weed. A case is given only one 30-day extension after the original 60 days from the date of the appeal have expired, she said.

Newman said the extension of the Weed case was one of only five Supreme Court cases extended Tuesday. That, she said, is not a very large number, indicating that Weed's appeal wasn't part of a large backlog of cases routinely extended.

Weed's case is significant for Santa Cruz because of the 4-3 liberal-conservative split on the City Council. If the liberal Weed is removed from office and replaced by the conservative Fieberling, the majority of the council will be of moderate/conservative bent.

The dispute over Weed's election stems from allegations that many student voters at UC-Santa Cruz did not live within the precincts where they voted, and that their votes, therefore, were illegal.

Weed's attorneys have argued that since election to the City Council is a general election anyway, it didn't matter where students cast their votes as long as they lived in the city. The attorneys also argued that many of the students alleged to have voted illegally did not have permanent addresses and did not have time to establish what the attorneys called voting records where they lived.