THE BUSINESS PERSPECTIVE:

Hahn for Mayor

With many Angelinos voting by absentee ballot these days, I am going to take this opportunity, fifteen days before the Los Angeles mayoral election, to tell you why I am supporting the re-election of Mayor Jim Hahn.

As mayor, Jim Hahn has done a good job and deserves a second term.

Crime is down: Public safety is the most important service of city government, and Jim Hahn has delivered. Not only did Hahn recruit arguably the best police chief in the nation to head the LAPD, he has presided over a significant drop in crime (nearly 20 percent) throughout the city. A safer city means a better environment for people and business, and a mayor who makes the city safer deserves the chance to keep up the good work.

L.A.'s fiscal situation is stable: As other California cities are on the brink of bankruptcy, Los Angeles has a balanced budget with money to spare for hiring more police and providing a 3.75 percent tax break next fiscal year to businesses grossing more than $100,000 annually. (The city council last year passed his proposal to exempt all businesses grossing less than $100,000 annually—60 percent of the city's businesses—as part of the Greuel-Garcetti business tax overhaul). Lower taxes means a better environment for business.

Affordable housing is on the rise: Perhaps the single most difficult challenge to L.A.'s business climate is providing housing for its workforce. Under Hahn's leadership, permits for housing projects have doubled and he has championed policies for increasing the city's housing stock through investing in its housing trust fund and working with planners to prioritize adaptive reuse of older buildings in areas where the jobs are being created.

LAX will be modernized: After years of fierce opposition from the city council, Mayor Hahn was able to build strong support in City Hall and throughout the city for the Hahn-Misickowski Consensus Plan. Projects we all agree on will begin soon (runway safety, improved public transportation access), while other projects will be subject to more public review and city council votes.

Mayor Hahn's opponent is a seasoned officeholder with a voting record in Sacramento as a state legislator and in L.A. City Hall as a city councilmember. Here are some differences between the two:

Inclusionary zoning: Mayor Hahn opposed inclusionary zoning (mandatory affordable housing set-asides for new housing developments, which increase the cost of the projects), while his opponent voted for it as a city councilmember.

Workers' comp: As mayor, Jim Hahn actively lobbied and rallied other municipalities to support reforms to the state's workers' compensation system, which was ultimately passed last year. As assemblymember, his opponent supported the legislation that led to the huge increases in workers' comp costs.

State-local budget issues: As mayor, Jim Hahn aggressively worked to pass Prop. 1A last year, which seeks to finally put a stop to the decades-old practice of the state balancing its budget on the backs of the cities by raiding their treasuries. As Assembly Speaker, Hahn's opponent missed a unique opportunity to stop this unfair budgeting scheme once and for all.

Keeping L.A. together: Mayor Hahn was the leader in keeping the great city of Los Angeles together, while his opponent's position remains murky.

These are just a few of the tangible differences between the two candidates, which helped this Chamber's board of directors come to the decision to endorse Mayor Hahn for a second term. Other business organizations, including the Central City Association, are supporting Mayor Hahn, as are prominent business leaders such as Eli Broad, Bert Bockemuhn, and Fred Sands.

Hahn is often criticized for being uncharismatic and "too plain" for a city as vibrant for Los Angeles. His personality may not be the most outgoing of the two mayoral candidates, but he has a proven track record which will only grow in the years ahead.

So join us in supporting the business candidate for mayor—Jim Hahn.

And that's the Business Perspective.