



Los Angeles Area
Chamber of Commerce

TUESDAY | Dec. 13, 2005

THE BUSINESS PERSPECTIVE:

Susan Kennedy is the Right Choice



Coming up at the Chamber

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THU | Dec. 15

Economic Development and Land Use Committee Meeting
[more info](#)

TUE | Dec. 20

Transportation and Goods Movement Committee Meeting
[more info](#)

FRI | Jan. 13

Accenture Pancakes and Politics
[more info](#)

THU | Jan. 19

Export Seminar Series Session #1: Fundamentals of Export
[more info](#)

SAT | Jan. 21

L.A. Cash for College Day
[more info](#)

THU | Jan. 26

117th Inaugural Dinner
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THU | Feb. 16

Accenture Pancakes and Politics
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The Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce is the voice of business in L.A. County. Founded in 1888, the Chamber promotes a prosperous economy and quality of life in the Los Angeles region. For more information, visit www.lachamber.org

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Governor Schwarzenegger made a gutsy choice, but it was not the first one of its kind. He [reached out across the political aisle to select his new chief of staff](#), Susan Kennedy. From all of the brouhaha, you might think he selected a member of the Kennedy family to which he is related.

Enough, already.

Many Republican party officials and some GOP officeholders have [urged the governor to re-consider](#) this appointment of an extremely qualified, knowledgeable individual because of her political affiliations to Democratic Party candidates and activities. Some have even cited her lifestyle.

From a business perspective, all we care about is that she is qualified and can make a positive contribution to driving the governor's agenda. Looking at her recent tenure as a member of the [California Public Utilities Commission](#), she fits the bill. Her recent leadership on the telecommunications mergers is consistent with the goals of Gov. Schwarzenegger and the state's business community.

Equally important, she has a track record of building consensus to address economic problems, and she works well with leading Democrats. Kennedy will help the governor strengthen some important political relationships that are currently strained. Bipartisanship is good for the economy, and Sacramento needs more of it, not less.

So why all the drama over Susan Kennedy being appointed to the Schwarzenegger cabinet? After all, she is not the first Democrat Schwarzenegger has invited into his administration. A number of them play important roles in shaping the governor's economic recovery plan. And yet, still this criticism about bringing a Democrat into a Republican administration.

But that is the strength of it all. To be elected, and to properly govern this diverse state, Schwarzenegger needs to be the centrist he campaigned as in 2003. He must be able to reach out to all corners of the state, and to all wings of the political perspective, to effectively govern and unite the state. Unfortunately, we seem unable to have any serious political discussion (let alone talk about who will be the governor's chief of staff) without partisan slants taking over. It's too bad, because unless we have balanced discussions, we will not have quality policy decisions.

Gov. Schwarzenegger understands that and is setting the table in 2006 for more substantive dialogue and bridge building with state lawmakers—and the public. To that end, [Susan Kennedy is a perfect choice to help make this happen](#).

Gov. Schwarzenegger has made a good appointment, and we support him.

And that's *The Business Perspective*.

Russell J. Hammer
President & CEO
Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce

The Business Perspective is an award-winning weekly opinion column by Rusty Hammer, President & CEO, L.A. Area Chamber

L.A. Business THIS WEEK

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