



Business Steps Up



Coming up at the Chamber

[View all upcoming events on our web calendar.](#)

WED | June 7

L.A. Youth at Work Train-the-Trainer Session
[more info](#)

THU | June 8

Member Orientation
[more info](#)

THU | June 8

New Member Reception
[more info](#)

FRI | June 9

Accenture Pancakes & Politics
[more info](#)

FRI | June 9

Health Care Committee Meeting
[more info](#)

TUES | June 13

Referral Network
[more info](#)

WED | June 14

Doing Business with China Series
Topic: Intellectual Property Rights
[more info](#)

THU | June 15

Export Seminar Session #6
Topic: Making Export Sales & Getting Paid
[more info](#)

THU | June 15

Land Use, Construction & Housing Committee Meeting
[more info](#)

MON | June 19

Education & Workforce Development Committee Meeting
[more info](#)

TUES | June 20

Cash for College Scholarship Awards Reception
[more info](#)

WED | June 21

International Trade & Investments Committee Meeting
[more info](#)

TUES | June 27

Referral Network
[more info](#)

WED | June 28

Joint Environmental Quality & Transportation & Goods Movement Committee Meeting
Topic: Climate Change, featuring Terry Tamminen
[more info](#)

THU | June 29

Technology Industry Council
[more info](#)

Government often takes the attitude that regulations are essential to do everything from cleaning the environment to protecting workers. It's been said that the public's interest is not of primary concern to business.

But recent actions by Los Angeles area businesses show that companies are doing their part.

This column has commented several times on the need to rebuild California's infrastructure, so that it is capable of handling the demands of the 21st century economy. Our status as America's leading port of entry requires a world-class transportation system, to ensure that goods arriving at the Ports of L.A. and Long Beach will reach their destinations in cities across the country.

With growth at our ports comes an increase in demand for rail and trucking facilities. Government officials--from local councilmembers to the state legislature--often announce legislation that will further regulate industries we rely on to grow our economy.

But the private sector is already stepping up.

Just last week, the shipper Maersk Line [announced a pilot environmental initiative](#) that is expected to remove nearly 400 tons of vessel-related emissions annually from the company's fleet that calls on the ports of L.A., Long Beach and Oakland.

Maersk Line has voluntarily switched from "bunker" fuel with relatively high sulfur content to low-sulfur distillate fuel on the main and auxiliary engines of its vessels. This occurs when they approach 24 miles from port, while they are docked, and 24 miles out when they depart. Pilot results from this switch show substantial reductions in pollutants. Maersk Line projects a 73 percent annual reduction in particulate matter, a 92 percent reduction in sulfur dioxide and at least a 10 percent reduction in nitrogen oxide.

The company has also adopted a "replace, don't retrofit" strategy for its terminal vehicles that will run cleaner and meet newer Environmental Protection Agency standards.

At the same time, BNSF Railway is [working to build a new Southern California International Gateway Facility](#). This will further facilitate the movement of goods from the ports to rail lines, which will reduce traffic on burdened roadways. It will, in turn, reduce traffic, emissions and maintenance costs throughout the L.A. region.

BNSF is also voluntarily investing hundreds of millions of dollars in new locomotive and other technologies to do their fair share to reduce emissions and improve air quality in California. Union Pacific is also making similar investments.

The challenge ahead to plan and coordinate the billions of dollars of investments that will be needed to make our goods movement system the most efficient and environmentally clean in the world can't be met by the private sector or the government alone. It will take a voluntary and cooperative spirit by all concerned.

Elected officials should take notice that working *with* business brings more action than over-regulating them. Other businesses should take notice that voluntary actions give them recognition as good stewards of our community and are the best argument against costly and unproductive over-regulation.

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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business in L.A. County.
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