



TUESDAY | January 9, 2007

THE BUSINESS PERSPECTIVE:



Seeking Statewide Post-Partisanship



Coming up at the Chamber

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

FRI | Jan. 12
Business Opportunities in Jiangsu, China
[more info](#)

FRI | Jan. 12
Health Care Committee Meeting
Featuring Billie Greer, Office of Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger
[more info](#)

WED | Jan. 17
International Trade & Investment Committee Meeting
Featuring Kaylynn L. Kim, president of Kaylynn L. Kim & Associates
[more info](#)

WED | Jan. 17
Business After Hours Mixer
Taste of the Chamber
[more info](#)

THU | Jan. 18
Education & Workforce Development Committee Meeting
[more info](#)

FRI | Jan. 19
Land Use, Construction & Housing Committee Meeting
[more info](#)

TUE | Jan. 23
Referral Network
[more info](#)

WED | Jan. 24
Transportation & Goods Movement Committee Meeting
[more info](#)

WED | Jan. 24
Energy, Water & Environment Committee Meeting
[more info](#)

THU | Jan. 25
118th Annual Inaugural Dinner
[more info](#)

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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Last week I attended my first inauguration of a California governor. I have attended inaugurations in three other states, but did not know what to expect in Sacramento. Would it be a highly partisan affair? Would it be largely ceremonial? How would it impact my vision of California's future?

I was impressed to see Democrats, Republicans and independents from all walks of life and all regions of the state gather to hear Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger articulate his dreams for California – and more importantly his philosophy about how he, the 120 legislators, and the constitutional officers should govern California.

The governor's inaugural address was exactly what I wanted to hear. As I told my wife, I've been waiting 30 years for a governor to give that speech. Gov. Schwarzenegger articulated a call to move away from the partisanship that has gripped and paralyzed Sacramento and Washington, D.C., for many years. Until this past year in Sacramento, partisanship stalled reform in key areas including long-needed investments in our state's infrastructure. As the governor said in his address, "We don't need Republican roads or Democratic roads. We need roads."

“We face important issues that should unite us. We have an opportunity to move past partisanship...to move past bipartisanship...to move to post-partisanship,” said Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

The governor's most visionary call for leadership came with this statement, "We face important issues that should unite us. I believe that we have an opportunity to move past partisanship...to move past bipartisanship...to move to post-partisanship. Post-partisanship is not simply Republicans and Democrats each bringing their proposals to the table and then working out the differences. No, post-partisanship is Republicans and Democrats actively giving birth to new ideas together."

"I believe that it would promote a new centrism and a new trust in our political system. Centrist does not mean weak," the governor said. "It does not mean watered down or warmed over. It means well-balanced and well-grounded. The American people are instinctively centrist...so should be our government."

What a refreshing vision – both sides of the aisle sitting down together, to talk about problems and solutions, rather than submitting competing legislation and fighting it out. Such a process has the potential to bring legislators closer to the center of the political spectrum – where most of the voters are – and would produce positive results for our state.

The post-partisanship the governor spoke about will also place burdens on local leaders in every city and county in our state. It will mean listening to what other interests have to say and being willing to rethink our basic positions on issues – not on our values – but on specific legislation.

For example, for us as a business organization focusing on jobs and the economy, it means being willing, as we did last year, to support a reasonable increase in the state minimum wage. It also means opening our minds to health care reform that would insure more of our fellow Californians, so long as costs are shared reasonably.

As we embark on a new legislative session and on Gov. Schwarzenegger's final term in office, we pledge to him and to the members of the Senate and Assembly our full participation in the debates on key policy issues in a post-partisan way.

"It has been said that most places are united by their pasts...but California is united by its future," said the governor. "Other places are united by what was...but we are united by what can be. I will look to the future. I will look to the center. And I will look to the dreams of the people."

The Chamber has helped the citizens and entrepreneurs of L.A. achieve their dreams for 118 years. We applaud the governor for his vision and invite each of you to join us in building your California dream.

And that's *The Business Perspective*.

by Gary Toebben, President & CEO, Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce

L.A. Business THIS WEEK

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*The Business Perspective is a weekly opinion piece by Gary Toebben,
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