Chamber delivers the goods on federal transportation dollars

The Chamber’s Access D.C. lobbying trip to Washington D.C. last April continued to pay off when the Los Angeles region received an estimated $4.5 billion in federal transportation funds. At a press conference in August with several members of Congress, L.A. Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa credited the Chamber and its Mobility 21 Coalition for securing more of the region’s fair share.

The federal money will go toward local transportation projects, including carpool lanes, the Gerald Desmond Bridge, the Alameda Corridor East Project and the Metro Gold Line Extension. The bill also guarantees that, by 2008, California will see a 92 percent return on the state’s federal gasoline tax contributions. This amount still ranks near the bottom of federal allocations to states, but it is an improvement from the previous transportation spending bill.

“I’d like to thank the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce,” Villaraigosa said at an August press conference, acknowledging the Chamber’s role in advocating for federal transportation dollars this year. Transportation & Goods Movement Committee Co-Chair Fran Inman, Majestic Realty Co., also spoke at the event, highlighting the importance of these projects in speeding the movement of goods through L.A.’s transportation corridors.

The funds were an even greater victory because the federal transportation bill originally faced a veto threat from President Bush. On its Access D.C. trip, the Chamber’s Transportation and Goods Movement teams lobbied the Senate not only for the bill itself but for the addition of funds to the original $284 billion transportation reauthorization bill. When all was said and done, the Senate voted overwhelmingly to add $11 billion.

43 percent of the nation’s imports entering through L.A. County, Chamber transportation advocates emphasized the value of the federal government’s investment. “With California’s roads literally driving the nation’s economy, it is imperative that our region gets its fair share of federal transportation dollars,” Inman said.

In another transportation issue, the Chamber recently visited Sacramento to support Villaraigosa’s lobbying efforts to expedite plans for a carpool lane extension on the northbound 405 freeway between the 10 and 101 freeways. Though the legislature adjourned before voting on the measure SB 1026, the Chamber plans to commence its efforts at the start of the next legislative session.

What is design-build?

L.A. City Councilmember Wendy Greuel is working with the Chamber to advocate using the “design-build” concept to speed construction of a carpool lane on the northbound 405 freeway between the 10 and 101 freeways. Essentially, in “design-build,” one entity performs both design and construction under a single contract. Traditionally, the process is “design-bid-build” and in the case of the 405 carpool lane, would require waiting for Caltrans to approve the design and then put the project out for bid. If “design-build” goes forward for the northbound 405, Metro could hire contractors to build the project without first obtaining design approval from Caltrans engineers. The time saved expedites the project and keeps costs down by staving off the inevitable cost increases for labor and materials that waiting on design approval would yield. Time and money are both critical for the 405 carpool lane, as federal matching funds are put at risk if the state fails to use them on time.

Several California lawmakers played key roles, and worked with the Chamber’s team during the D.C. trip, including Senator Diane Feinstein, House Appropriations Committee chair Jerry Lewis and local Congressmembers David Dreier and Lucille Roybal-Allard, among others. Because California’s transportation infrastructure is critical to the nation’s economy, with

Chamber endorses universal preschool initiative

Calling it an important investment in California’s future workforce, the Chamber is supporting a proposal ballot measure for the 2006 ballot to provide free voluntary preschool for all four-year-olds in California. If passed, Preschool for All, written by children’s advocate and director Rob Reiner, will build on the existing network of preschool programs for four-year-olds in California. If passed, Preschool for All is one of the most important fixes.” –Rusty Hammer

“No single fix can reform our state’s public education system, but we are certain that the Preschool for All Act is one of the most important fixes.”

life,” said Chamber President and CEO Rusty Hammer. “No single fix can reform our state’s public education system, but we are certain that the Preschool for All Act is one of the most important fixes.”

Reiner called the Chamber’s support of the initiative a “key ingredient” to its success. “I am extremely pleased to have the L.A. Area Chamber on board with the Preschool for All Act,” he said.

“From the beginning of this effort, our coalition has included business leaders, because we believe that preschool is not only a smart investment in our children, but also will be a boon to the economy.”

At the Accenture Pancakes & Politics program at the Chamber in September, L.A. City Council Transportation Committee Chair Wendy Greuel thanked the Chamber for assisting her efforts to push the “design-build” concept, for the 405 project, which would let Metro hire contractors to build the lane without first obtaining approval from Caltrans engineers.

“Simply put, children who go to preschool grow out rates, and remedial education spending. “No single fix can reform our state’s public education system, but we are certain that the Preschool for All Act is one of the most important fixes.”

10 Ways the Chamber helped L.A. business this quarter

feature: Special Election Voting Guide

Chamber Board Chair Christopher Martin, AC Martin Partners, has joined Accenture in this issue’s feature: Special Election Voting Guide. Read more about what initiatives the Chamber is backing or opposing and how these measures affect California and the Los Angeles region. The Chamber’s Special Election Voting Guide, on pages 4 and 5 of this issue, is a must-read handbook for Chamber members delivering more insight before they set foot in a voting booth.
A Message from Rusty

Each quarter, I write a message for the VOICE with two main points: We at the Chamber are the primary voice making a difference for business in our region, and we’re here to help our members grow. Throughout this newsletter, you find examples of both. From issue briefings and committee meetings to board actions and lobbying activities, we speak out on the issues that impact the future of business in L.A. We also work hard to put together events that unite the business community so that our members may find new contacts within the Chamber.

This VOICE focuses on the Nov. 8 special election. Much partisan rhetoric has surrounded the issues—lots of advertising from employee unions and others directing attacks against Gov. Schwarzenegger, many of them unfounded and exaggerated. The real issue is not about personalities, but about issues—and some we feel very strongly about. Please, review our positions. We hope you will join us in voting for those we support and against those we oppose.

On a daily level, we continue to have great success. Our full plate is an indicator that the Los Angeles region is one of the most vibrant places in the world to do business and to live. And each day, the Chamber advocates for change—supporting Preschool For All to give young people a needed boost to improve their chances in the K-12 system, and pushing for a desperately needed carpool lane on the northbound 405.

Meanwhile, we’ve celebrated some truly great news: After the Chamber’s Access D.C. advocacy trip this year, our region received more than $4.5 billion in the federal transportation bill, which we announced with Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa. We were the catalyst in seeing that a settlement was negotiated to pay for Bay Bridge cost-overruns that did not rob Southern California of needed transportation dollars. And, we looked out for the economic future of a major industry—entertainment—to combat runaway film production and keep our area’s best middle-class jobs where they started.

Though the Chamber tackles many issues on a daily basis, we rely on our members to help us make a difference. We love to hear from businesses—big, medium, and small—to see what regional issues affect them the most. We also rely on members to become involved and participate in the process. In the months ahead, we will form new policy committees for 2006. These committees are important in helping us develop our stands on key issues. I urge you to join a committee and become involved in helping us shape our agenda.

Also, please don’t forget to vote on November 8. The voice of businesses needs to be heard at the ballot box!

RUSSELL J. HAMMER
President & CEO
Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce

Policy Committees

The Chamber’s influential policy positions come from dialogue and consensus-building within our communities, organized by policy area. Open to all members, these groups review public policy issues and recommend positions to the Chamber board. Get involved and make your voice heard! Each of the committees meet monthly:

• Economic Development & Land Use
• Environmental Quality
• Education & Workforce Development
• Health Care
• Entertainment Legislative
• Transportation & Goods Movement

To get involved in a committee or council, contact the Public Policy department at 213.580.7565

Industry Councils

Network with your industry peers through the Chamber’s industry council meetings. Members discuss industry-specific concerns and refer policy issues to the relevant monthly committees.

• Construction
• Law & Justice
• Entertainment
• Small Business Advisory
• Government Affairs
• Technology
• International Trade and Investment

September 2005

Page 2
10 Ways the Chamber helped your business

Your investment in the L.A. Area Chamber supports our mission to improve the economy and quality of life in the L.A. region—and so it’s a better place for you to do business. Whether or not you actively attend Chamber events, you can be assured the Chamber is always working on your behalf. Here are just a few ways we’ve boosted L.A. business this quarter:

1. Brought 400 business people to L.A. City Hall
   At the 5th Annual Access L.A. City Hall event, the Chamber put nearly 400 Los Angeles area businessmen in the company of city councilmembers, state senators, deputy mayors, commissioners and key opinion leaders. Offering attendees insights on the topics most important to the region’s quality of life and economic prosperity.
   Bottom line: By showing up in numbers and levying the important questions at our region’s leaders—helps to amplify L.A. businesses’ messages to those lawmakers face to face with L.A. decision makers.

2. Acquired the Southern California Leadership Network
   The Southern California Leadership Network (SCLN) has become a program of the L.A. Area Chamber, bringing together the two principal providers of leadership training in Southern California in order to provide the highest quality of leadership development.
   Bottom line: By joining forces, SCLN and the Chamber are uniting goals and resources, increasing the quality and depth of our leadership training programs and better preparing a new generation of leaders.

3. Lobbyed Congress to pass CAFTA
   On its April Access D.C. trip, the Chamber advocated for a multi-trillion dollar trade deal, which seeks to strengthen the local entertainment industry by providing tax credits for certain types of films, television programs and commercials based in California. AB 777 was considered crucial to thwart runaway production, which has led to more films being shot overseas, in Canada and in other states.
   Bottom line: Hollywood—and the film industry surrounding it—isn’t just for big money players. Our entertainment industry has become a healthy middle-class and, by keeping it here, hundreds of thousands of good jobs stay in L.A. as well.

4. Fought Runaway Production
   As part of an in-house studio executives, entertainment guilds and Mayor Villaraigosa, the Chamber lobbied in Sacramento in support of AB 777, which seeks to strengthen the local entertainment industry by providing tax credits for certain types of films, television programs and commercials based in California. AB 777 was considered crucial to thwart runaway production, which has led to more films being shot overseas, in Canada and in other states.
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5. Pushed for convening center hotel
   Los Angeles continues to lose convention business each year to other cities, including San Diego and Anaheim. The Chamber urged councilmembers to support subsidies for a new hotel to be built next to the L.A. Convention Center, an area with few hotel rooms. This hotel—part of the 400-acre Exposition Park—has an expected to create 3,000 construction jobs and provide permanent

6. Created Work-Ready Certificate program, opened up access to jobs for youth
   Research shows that positive work experiences increase young adults’ chances of career success, enhancing and supporting their long-term productive capacity. The Chamber’s Education and Workforce Development Division devised the new Work-Ready Certificate, a portable credential to improve youth access to jobs. Taking a step closer to finding jobs, the division also hosted L.A.’s Youth at Work event—meeting nearly 400 students with summer employment— and an August job fair that helped give more than 150 students leads for construction industry work.
   Bottom line: The Chamber’s education and workforce development programs supply youth with job credentials and job leads—not only aiding the area’s economy in the present, but helping to develop a skilled workforce for the future.

7. Protected local transportation dollars in Bay Bridge compromise
   In July, Chamber and metro lobbyists pushed for a compromise on the contentious debate on whether state funds should be transferred to San Francisco to pay for $3.5 billion in cost overruns associated with the Bay Bridge seismic retrofit. By working closely with Metro and local legislators, the Chamber helped ensure that transportation funds transferred from L.A. County would be minimal, with most of the funding generated by toll increases on Bay Area bridges.
   Bottom line: While still seeing it that San Francisco’s Bay Bridge received needed safety enhancements, the Chamber harassed support from L.A.’s legislative delegation to hold Metro, keeping critical transportation funds for our region.

8. Opened doors to trade relationships with Brazil, Israel
   The Chamber’s International Trade Division held two sessions to help members connect with exporters and importers in Brazil and Israel. In June, the Chamber hosted a delegation of 20 Brazilian businesses and facilitated more than 50 one-on-one business matches between U.S. and Brazilian importers and exporters. The Israeli event, held with the Israel Counsel General, underscored the importance of bilateral trade between California and Israel.

9. Empowered L.A.’s small- to mid-sized firms through Power Hour lunches
   Start-up firms and mom-and-pop shops that grow with each generation are the ideal of L.A.’s economy. But smaller firms lack the professional development resources that Fortune 500 companies can offer. The Chamber’s Power Hour Lunch series, more than 140 businesses benefited from sessions on leadership management, marketing and sales.
   Bottom line: The Chamber recognizes that the region’s vitality relies on the strength of its collection of small businesses and—by giving these companies access to the tools and quality, professionally facilitated development opportunities—works to enhance L.A.’s economic growth.

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Feature: Special Election & fall voting guide

Good for business

As Californians begin to focus on the Nov. 8 special election, the Chamber’s role in many of the initiatives is in high gear as Board Chair Christopher Martin recently spoke at a press conference with Gov. Schwarzenegger on Prop. 76 and Chamber President & CEO Rusty Hammer signed ballot arguments in favor of Prop. 78 and Measure Y.

“Voters in L.A. might still be weary of elections after the recent mayoral races, but there are a lot of important issues at stake,” said Hammer. “In some respects, this election is a referendum on California’s economic future.”

While much of the attention is on the statewide initiatives, the Chamber is also behind Measure Y, a $3.95 billion school facilities bond for voters who live within the boundaries of the Los Angeles Unified School District.

“This is the last in a series of school bonds that has reversed the trend of neglecting our education system,” said the Chamber’s Education & Workforce Development Committee chair Maureen Kindel, GCG Rose & Kindel. “This bond will finish the job of repairing existing schools, keeping our students safe, and improving their learning environment.”

The Chamber has signed ballot arguments in support of Measure Y and Prop. 78, which is one of two competing initiatives on the topic of discounted prescription drugs. Prop. 78, is a voluntary program modeled after a successful program in Ohio, while Prop. 79 would mandate that the costs to consumers of prescription drugs be reduced—and would expose drug manufacturers to frivolous lawsuits.

“The Chamber was very proactive last year in the effort to pass Prop. 64, which has significantly reduced the number of lawsuits in California,” said Hammer. “Prop. 79 would undo many of those protections.”

Enacting Gov. Schwarzenegger’s reform agenda, however, is the Chamber’s top priority on the statewide ballot. The Chamber was among the first business organizations in the state to endorse Prop. 74, which makes it easier for school districts to dismiss bad teachers; Prop. 76, which allows the governor to balance the budget with mid-year spending cuts if necessary; and, Prop. 77, which removes the authority of state lawmakers to draw their own legislative boundaries and places it in the hands of a panel of retired judges.

In a press conference with Gov. Schwarzenegger, Chamber Board Chair Christopher Martin, AC Martin Partners said “Prop. 76 will allow the governor to do what any CEO or family would do when expenditures begin to exceed revenues—we make cuts to balance our checkbooks.”

Prop. 77, which addresses the issue of reapportionment “might be the most important proposition on the ballot,” said Hammer. “California has become a state where politicians choose their voters instead of the other way around. We want to see more competitive districts.”

A reference to the fact that not a single legislative seat changed parties last year out of 153 races.

The Chamber is opposing Prop. 80, which seeks to re-regulate the electricity industry. “The last thing California needs right now is anything that would create more instability with its power supply,” said Martin. “Prop. 80 may very well do just that and drive up electric bills in the process.”

Prop. 75, if passed, would require members of public employee unions to provide written consent for their union dues to be used for political purposes. Similar measures have recently passed in Colorado and Washington, and the Chamber has endorsed this proposition.

“Prop. 76 will allow the governor to do what any CEO or family would do when expenditures begin to exceed revenues—we make cuts to balance our checkbooks.”

—Chris Martin
CEO, AC Martin Partners & L.A. Area Chamber Board Chair

STATE LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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<tr>
<th>Bill</th>
<th>What It Does</th>
<th>Chamber Position</th>
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<tr>
<td>SB 48 (Lieber) VETOED</td>
<td>Increase minimum wage to $7.25 per hour in 2006 and $7.75 per hour in 2007. In 2008 the minimum wage would be annually adjusted by calculating previous year’s rate of inflation.</td>
<td>OPPOSE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACA 11 (Dropez) (2-year bill)</td>
<td>Though earmarked to be spent only on specified transportation purposes, excise motor vehicle fuel taxes and certain vehicle fees currently are available for transfer to the state’s General Fund under certain circumstances. Oropesa’s measure would require interest to be paid on transfers of these revenues if the loan goes unpaid in the same fiscal year in which it was made.</td>
<td>SUPPORT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 177 (Poochigian) (DEAD/INACTIVE)</td>
<td>Though earmarked to be spent only on specified transportation purposes, excise motor vehicle fuel taxes and certain vehicle fees currently are available for transfer to the state’s General Fund under certain circumstances. Oropesa’s measure would require interest to be paid on transfers of these revenues if the loan goes unpaid in the same fiscal year in which it was made.</td>
<td>SUPPORT</td>
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<tr>
<td>SB 178 (Poochigian) (DEAD/INACTIVE)</td>
<td>The bill would create the Self-Insured Groups’ Security Fund for specified purposes related to the payment of workers’ compensation obligations of private self-insured groups.</td>
<td>SUPPORT</td>
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<tr>
<td>SB 764 (Lowenthal) 2-year bill</td>
<td>This bill would require the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach to each develop a baseline for air quality based on emissions from projected sources. It would provide a greater economic incentive for the state to reduce emissions in the South Coast Air Basin and elsewhere in the state.</td>
<td>OPPOSE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 833 (Bowen) SIGNED</td>
<td>The bill would make it unlawful for a person or entity, if located in California or if the recipient is located in California, to use any device to send, or cause any other person or entity to use a device to send, an unsolicited advertisement to a telephone facsimile machine, except as specified.</td>
<td>SUPPORT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 840 (Kuehl) 2-year bill</td>
<td>This bill would establish a single payer system of health insurance to be administered by the state, which would negotiate for or set fees for health care services provided through the system and pay claims for those services.</td>
<td>OPPOSE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AJR 8 (Canciamilla) ENACTED</td>
<td>This measure would urge the Congress of the United States to ratify treaty provisions known as Annex VI of MARPOL 73/78, and the United States Environmental Protection Agency to pursue the creation of a North America Steel Emission Control Area.</td>
<td>SUPPORT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 57 (Alarcon) VETOED</td>
<td>This bill would provide that until January 1, 2008, a county board of supervisors may elect to levy an additional tax of $2 for every $10, upon interests, penalties, and forfeitures collected for criminal offenses; 15 percent of collected funds would go toward pediatric trauma centers.</td>
<td>SUPPORT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 1100 (Perata) SIGNED</td>
<td>This bill would establish the Medi-Cal Hospital/Uninsured Care Demonstration Project Act, allowing hospital reimbursement methods to maximize the use of federal funds consistent with federal Medicaid law and utilize the funding distribution for hospitals that provide care to Medi-Cal beneficiaries and uninsured patients, retroactive to services rendered on and after July 1, 2005.</td>
<td>SUPPORT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MEASURE Y
$3.985 Billion LAUSD School Bond

**SUPPORT**

What It Would Do:
Creates 20,000 new seats for LAUSD schools, complementing the district's construction and repair program.

The Business Perspective:

Prop. 74 helps ensure that high-quality, qualified educators are teaching our students. Currently, California is one of only 10 states that employs a maze of complex rules and requirements to protect even poor-performing teachers from dismissal. In effect, regardless of their performance, California public school teachers need only complete two years on the job, to be virtually guaranteed a job for life. Prop. 74 requires new teachers to work successfully for five years before they get tenure. The L.A. Area Chamber believes it is one more way to meet the educational needs of our children and to give Los Angeles the well-equipped workforce it needs.

PROP 74
Put Our Children First Act
(Teacher Tenure)

**SUPPORT**

PROP 75
Paycheck Protection Act

**SUPPORT**

What It Would Do:
Requires public union members to give consent before their union dues are used for political contributions.

The Business Perspective:

Public employee unions' current political contribution system is a source of fundamental unfairness for thousands of Californians who are forced to contribute their hard-earned money to political candidates or issues they may oppose. Currently, union leaders--make unilateral decisions to use public employee union dues to fund political campaigns--with no requirement to get employees' consent. The money is automatically deducted from their paychecks. In our “opt-in” society, it's only fair having members get a say before their money is spent for them.

PROP 75
Paycheck Protection Act

**SUPPORT**

PROP 76
Live Within Our Means Act

**SUPPORT**

What It Would Do:
Prevents state from over-spending in good times and racking up deficits in bad times.

The Business Perspective:

Don't spend more than you bring in. Establish rainy day, or emergency, funds. Set spending priorities that make sense. These are the rules that California families live by and the rules that Chamber businesses live by. When businesses overspend, they have to answer to their shareholders and investors. When the state overspends, it needs similar accountability. Last year, state revenues increased $8 billion, but autopilot spending formulas required the state to increase spending by $18 billion. Since 2000, state revenues have increased by $12.5 billion, but spending increased by twice that. Between 1998 and 2004, the Legislature increased overall spending by 4 percent--from $75 billion to $100 billion, even though the state backed funds to do so. It's not common sense, but Prop. 76 is.

PROP 76
Live Within Our Means Act

**SUPPORT**

PROP 77
Empowerment Act
(Reapportionment)

**SUPPORT**

What It Would Do:
Places a non-partisan three-member panel of retired judges in charge of drawing state legislative boundaries.

The Business Perspective:

Consider this: Last November, 153 congressional, state senate and assembly seats were up for grabs and not one changed party hands. That's not real democracy. But how? After the 2000 census, a backroom deal was cut between both Democrats and Republicans to keep the status quo. In an electoral race, the parties determined it easiest to divvy up the state into Democrat and Republican seats for the next 10 years. Prop. 77 will fix the conflict of interest inherent in the current system. For far too long, the politicians in Sacramento have had it easy, remaining accountable only to themselves and the special interests that fund their campaigns. It's time to give them a wake-up call. The L.A. Area Chamber believes Prop. 77 is that wake-up call.

PROP 77
Empowerment Act
(Reapportionment)

**SUPPORT**

PROP 78
Cal Rx Discount Prescription Drug Program (Industry supported)

**SUPPORT**

What It Would Do:
Establishes prescription drug discount program with proven good results in other states.

The Business Perspective:

Prop. 78 creates a drug discount program that helps those who need it most: seniors and uninsured low- and middle-income Californians. Under Prop. 78, the state enters into binding contracts with pharmaceutical companies, who agree to provide drugs at the lowest commercial price. California's Department of Health Services estimates those discounts would be 40 percent off retail prices. Participants can easily enroll at the lowest commercial price. California's Department of Health Services estimates those discounts would be 40 percent off retail prices. Participants can easily enroll at

PROP 78
Cal Rx Discount Prescription Drug Program (Industry supported)

**SUPPORT**

PROP 79
Cheaper Prescription Drug for California Act
(Consumer supported)

**OPPOSE**

What It Would Do:
Establishes deeply flawed prescription drug discount program.

The Business Perspective:

Several important differences exist between Proposition 78 and 79, but none more important than the "Medi-Cal Hammer." Prop. 79 forces drug companies to participate by threatening to bar them from the Medi-Cal formulary. Low-income and disabled people who rely on Medi-Cal for their health care could lose access to the drugs they need. Equally important, Prop. 79 would require federal approval before it could deliver a single discount. The federal government has never approved a drug discount program restricting access to drugs for poor people. In addition, Prop. 79 gives discounts to millions of people who already have prescription drug coverage through their health insurance. Fatal flaws all, and all reason the Chamber supports Prop. 78 and urges a "NO" vote on Prop. 79.

PROP 79
Cheaper Prescription Drug for California Act
(Consumer supported)

**OPPOSE**

PROP 80
Electric Consumer Protection Act
(Industry Reregulation)

**OPPOSE**

What It Would Do:
Allows the California Public Utilities Commission create anti-consumer, anti-environment energy regulation policy.

The Business Perspective:

Simply put, this measure is a clear threat to energy stability and reliability. Prop. 80's passage could very well lead California to another crippling energy crisis. Not only is Prop. 80 anti-consumer, it is also anti-environment and high risk. Deeply flawed, this measure would undermine current efforts to prevent blackouts and increase energy supplies, deny customers an option for lower cost and greener electricity and limit state goals for more environmentally-friendly wind, solar and geothermal generation. Environmental groups oppose Prop. 80's controversial two-thirds vote requirement on future state green energy goals. Further, the initiative's ban on retail customer choice keeps environmentally-minded residential and small business customers from buying 100 percent green, renewable energy.
How do you network?

At the L.A. Area Chamber, our members represent the diversity of the Los Angeles region. But diversity goes beyond ethnicity or background. Everyone has a unique networking style and therefore, different networking needs. The Chamber offers a variety of networking events to suit every personality, helping our members make critical contacts for their business success. Of course, the best way to reap the benefits of Chamber membership is to get involved, so read on to learn what’s worked for others.

New Member & Orientation Reception—Held quarterly, the Chamber’s new member orientation and reception will be held Dec. 1. Like Mahon, Jason Nickels, a financial advisor with Merrill Lynch, was an L.A. new comer when he began attending Business After Hours Mixers. “I go to as many as I can find the time for,” he said. “I try to go solo so I can meet as many people as possible.” Nickels says he’s gained referrals through his new contacts and has built a number of relationships. Not only that, but he acquired some essentials: “I met my dentist at a mixer and that got me referred to a doctor.” Nickels encouraged every Chamber member to attend at least one of these functions: “It is always much easier to not go, since they are after work hours, but once you’re there you’re glad you did,” he said. “The Chamber is like anything else, you’re going to get what you put into it.”

Chamber Ambassadors—Nickels is right: Chamber members reap more benefits as they grow more involved. Chamber Ambassadors are able to maximize their involvement. Ambassadors attend as many events as they can, serving as greeters and connecting with other Chamber members. “Being an Ambassador has allowed me continuous involvement and the opportunity to meet many events,” said Melanie Barr, premium seating account executive for the L.A. Dodgers. “It also assisted me in building long-lasting business relationships and in connecting people who are like and business-minded to help them build long-lasting relationships.”

MEMBER BENEFIT:
Talk to L.A.’s business leaders

Did you know chamber members get exclusive rights to advertise in the Chamber’s email and print publications? Our low-cost advertising programs put your business in the spotlight. Generate new clients for your products and services, build awareness for your company or organization or highlight upcoming events. Companies big and small can gain exposure to thousands of readers via ads in the Chamber’s weekly e-newsletter and the Chamber VOICE, printed each quarter. The Chamber is constantly developing new opportunities for this economic and effective means of advertising; so ask us for details. For information, contact Communications Coordinator Iva-Marie Palmer, 213.580.7516 or impalmer@lachamber.org.

We’re proud to give back to the community we call home.

At Bank of America, we’re committed to giving back to the neighborhoods where we live and work. Bank of America is proud to support the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce. Visit us at www.bankofamerica.com.

MEMBER BENEFIT:
Printed each quarter. The Chamber is exclusive rights to advertise in the Chamber’s email and print publications. Companies big and small can gain exposure to thousands of readers via ads in the Chamber’s weekly e-newsletter and the Chamber VOICE, printed each quarter. The Chamber is constantly developing new opportunities for this economic and effective means of advertising; so ask us for details. For information, contact Communications Coordinator Iva-Marie Palmer, 213.580.7516 or impalmer@lachamber.org.

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Congratulations to our renewing members! We greatly appreciate your continued support and involvement. *Circle Level members are in bold*

**MEMBER ANNIVERSARIES**

- **90 years** Automobile Club of Southern California
- **50 years** Miyuki & Company (U.S.A.), Inc.
- **45 years** The Seider Companies, Incorporated
- **35 years** The Westin Bonaventure
- **15 years** Knoll, Incorporated
- **10 years** Barger & Wollen
- **5 years** ABS Clothing Collection (A Warnaco Company)

**FACES OF THE CHAMBER**

*Members talk about why they invest in the L.A. Area Chamber*

**Silver Grove**

- **When I called for help dealing with City Hall, the L.A. Area Chamber delivered.**
  - **Kenny Yee** Pacific Design Center

- **You really get to meet the policy-makers. I get to be in front of people I wouldn’t normally have access to.**
  - **Chris Middleton** Account Executive, Cumbre Insurance

- **You don’t just join the Chamber to network, you join to become part of everything that impacts your life personally and professionally.**
  - **Nancy Walsh** Senior Account Executive, Oakwood Worldwide

**Standard Circle**

- **What attracted me to the Chamber is that the real work of public policy gets done without getting mired in fights.**
  - **Edward Munoz** Director of Government Relations, Corporate West Raytheon

- **The Chamber is best described with two words: perpetual motion. There’s always something happening and it’s all so mesmerizing you just can’t help but get involved.**
  - **Guaraí Bajai** Vice President of Operations, Price Hammer Inc.

**Bronze Circle**

- **We’re not a big Fortune 500 town.**
  - **Chris Blatt** President, Food Service of Southern California

- **When I called for help dealing with City Hall, the L.A. Area Chamber was involved. We greatly appreciate your continued support and involvement.**
  - **Guaraí Bajai** Vice President of Operations, Price Hammer Inc.

**Sherry Jason**

- **Two years ago, my partner and I looked out our window and saw hundreds of people attending an event (at L.A. Center Studios) so we went down and found out about the L.A. Area Chamber was involved. We thought, if they can bring together all these people for a networking event like this, what else are they doing?**
  - **Naomi Bajai** President, Food Service of Southern California

- **You really get to meet the policy-makers. I get to be in front of people I wouldn’t normally have access to.**
  - **Chris Middleton** Account Executive, Cumbre Insurance

- **You don’t just join the Chamber to network, you join to become part of everything that impacts your life personally and professionally.**
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- **What attracted me to the Chamber is that the real work of public policy gets done without getting mired in fights.**
  - **Edward Munoz** Director of Government Relations, Corporate West Raytheon

- **“The perception of a chamber is that it’s all about networking. What can I supply or procure through membership? But with the L.A. Area Chamber, you’re networking on a higher level. It’s not just about what can I give you and you me but what can I do within the community. Business is more than just going to your office or warehouse.”**
  - **Guaraí Bajai** Vice President of Operations, Price Hammer Inc.

**Main Member**

- **3 years** Los Angeles Aftershock, Inc.

- **2 years** Edelman Public Relations

- **1 year** California National Bank

- **1 year** Charles Drew University of Medicine & Science

- **1 year** CRE - Computer & AV Solutions

- **1 year** MedCare Apartments

- **1 year** Vermont Stouss Economic Development Corporation

- **1 year** Seven-Eleven, Inc.

- **1 year** Athens Services

- **1 year** AV Audio Visual

- **1 year** Belmont Group, Inc.

- **1 year** California Receivables, Inc.

- **1 year** Carmage Capital

- **1 year** David French and Associates, LLC
Our Mission
By being the voice of business, helping its members grow and promoting collaboration, the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce seeks full prosperity for the Los Angeles region.

Diamond Club
The Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce gratefully acknowledges the support of the Diamond Club members:

- Bank of America
- Chevron Corporation
- Kaiser Permanente
- Los Angeles Times
- SBC
- Southern California Edison
- The Gas Company, a Sempra Energy utility
- Wells Fargo

The views contained in the LA Area Chamber Voice reflect positions taken by the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce and do not necessarily reflect the views of our Diamond Club members.

Save these dates! Register at www.lachamber.org

November 2
Featuring keynote speaker
Rich Karlgaard
Publisher, Forbes

November 3
Featuring keynote speaker
Rob Reiner
Actor, director and children’s advocate

November 14
Featuring keynote speaker
Leon Panetta
Former Chief of Staff to President Clinton

Looking for the right energy management tools?
Managing your business’s energy needs can help you increase your bottom line, meet the competition, and stay poised for growth. Southern California Edison provides you with a powerful package of energy management tools.

With SCE’s EnergyManager® Suite of Products, qualifying Edison business customers can choose among a range of free and fee-based online tools and programs — with benefits like the ability to track your energy use, produce trending reports, and estimate future power consumption.

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IN THIS ISSUE:

10 ways the Chamber helped L.A. Business this quarter

Feature: Special Election Voting Guide

How do you network?