



THE CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE FOR FEDERAL POLICY RESEARCH

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California Capitol Hill Bulletin

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To expand communications between Washington and California, the California Institute provides periodic news bulletins regarding current activity on Capitol Hill that directly impacts the state. Bulletins are published weekly during sessions of Congress, and occasionally during other periods.

RESOURCES: HOUSE RESOURCES ASSESSES CALIFORNIA DROUGHT

The House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Water and Power, led by Rep. Grace F. Napolitano (Norwalk) held an oversight field hearing on the "Federal Response to the California Drought Emergency" in Fresno, CA on Monday, July 21, 2008. The hearing was requested by the members representing the Central Valley region: Reps. Jim Costa (Fresno), Dennis Cardoza (Merced), George Radanovich (Mariposa), Kevin McCarthy (Bakersfield) and Devin Nunes (Tulare).

The Subcommittee heard from numerous witnesses, with opening remarks given by The Honorable Alan Autry, Mayor, City of Fresno. Other witnesses were: The Honorable Phil Larson, Fresno County Supervisor; The Honorable Robert Silva, Mayor, City of Mendota; Mr. Miguel Arias, Drought Relief Strategies Group, Fresno (accompanied by Mr. Carlos Ramirez, Farm Worker); Mr. Stewart Woolf, Farmer, Fresno; Mr. Kole Upton, East Central Valley Resident, Chowchilla; Mr. Dan Nelson, Executive Director, San Luis- Delta Mendota Water Authority, Los Banos; Mr. Tom Birmingham, General Manager, Westlands Water District, Fresno; Mr. Ron Jacobsma, General Manager, Friant Water Authority, Lindsay; Mr. Philip Duffy, PhD, Chemistry, Materials, and Life Sciences Directorate, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Livermore; Mr. Don Glaser, Mid-Pacific Regional Director, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Sacramento; (accompanied by Ms. Claudia C. Faunt, Ph.D., P.E., Hydrologist, U.S. Geological Survey, California Water Science Center); Mr. John Smythe, Farm Services Agency State Executive Director, U.S. Department of Agriculture, California (accompanied by Mr. Jim Otto, Senior Risk Management Specialist, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Davis, California); and Mr. Lester Snow, Director, California Department of Water Resources, Sacramento.

All of the witnesses detailed the severe economic effects of the drought plaguing California. Mr. Larson termed it the "perfect storm:" below normal rainfall in 2007 and 2008, low snowmelt runoff, and federal court actions under the Endangered Species Act to protect listed species. The witnesses agreed this has had a devastating impact on California communities, some of which have unemployment rates exceeding 20 %.

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Mr. Nelson urged the Committee to view the situation not just as a drought but as “a system failure; a system that is overburdened and trying to serve unanticipated supplies for environmental, agriculture and urban needs; a system overloaded with regulation and a system that hasn’t seen any major improvements in decades.” He noted that the water reductions resulting from the 2007 Court Order on the Delta Smelt were projected to fall in the range of an additional 15-30% in supply reductions to south of the delta CVP Ag Service Contractors, and this was on top of the previous regulation’s 30-35% impact on allocations – a total anticipated reduction of 35-55% in allocation for the water year beginning in March, 2008.

State DWR Director Snow testified that statewide crop losses have totaled \$245.3 million dollars this year to date, with rangeland and cotton representing more than half of the total losses. The water levels in California’s two major storage reservoirs, Oroville and Shasta, were at their lowest in 30 years, he said. Snow detailed Governor Schwarzenegger’s June emergency declaration of a drought and outlined the efforts the state is taking to respond, including facilitating water transfers to respond to emergency shortages across the state. However, he warned that 2009 may be an even worse drought year, brought on by the low storage levels, court-ordered cutbacks in water, forecasts of another dry winter, and ever-increasing demand for more water.

The witnesses also detailed the efforts they are taking to increase the quantity of water that can be supplied this summer, but noted that with the record dry conditions, they simply do not have water to meet demands during the peak irrigation season.

To respond to the drought, the witnesses discussed several possible federal actions, including:

- operational flexibility to help reduce or minimize the water rationing;
- water transfer policies that can clearly and quickly accommodate the movement of water when possible to minimize impacts of shortages;
- Bureau of Reclamation guidelines that would enable south-of-Delta irrigation contractors to reschedule into the 2009-10 contract year all of the water that they do not use or are unable to use in the 2008-09 contract year because of Reclamation’s rationing program;
- federal financial assistance through the Department of Agriculture’s programs and more funding for better science.

Overall, the witnesses generally agreed that a long-term, comprehensive, water infrastructure, supply and conservation plan is vital to fix the Delta and meet the present and future water supply and environmental needs of the state.

For the testimony, go to: <http://resourcescommittee.house.gov> .

TRANSPORTATION: HOUSE OVERWHELMINGLY PASSES HIGHWAY TRUST FUND RESTORATION ACT

On Wednesday, July 23, 2008, by a vote of 387-37, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 6532 – The Highway Trust Fund Restoration Act. The legislation’s goal is to ensure the solvency of the highway trust fund by infusing it with \$8 billion in general revenue. The President has threatened to veto the bill.

The Highway Trust Fund – which is funded by the national 18.4 cents-per-gallon excise tax on gasoline – was projected to face a \$3 billion shortfall in 2009. Recent reports showed that this shortfall could be exacerbated by consumers' reduction in fuel consumption based on rising fuel prices. If the Trust Fund went unfunded, it could deal a major blow to numerous federally funded transportation infrastructure projects currently in process and planned for the future.

A "Dear Colleague Letter" sent out by the House Transportation Committee Chairman James Oberstar (Minnesota) showed that without the fix California stood to lose \$928 million in project funds and over 32,000 jobs. The loss would be proportional, however, as all states stand to lose transportation dollars..

For more information visit <http://transportation.house.gov>

EDUCATION: HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE EXAMINES BUSINESS-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS IN SCIENCE EDUCATION

On Tuesday, July 22, the House Education and Labor Committee held a hearing to discuss business-school partnerships in science education." The hearing, entitled "Innovation in Education through Business and Education STEM Partnerships", was called by Committee Chairman George Miller (Martinez) to examine how these programs are helping to drive innovation and how the federal government can further support them.

Chairman Miller said that it is unquestioned that students have been falling behind in math and science, and these programs are helping to strengthen education in these areas. He commented: "I am a firm believer that the best thing we can do to help our children succeed in math, science, and every other subject is to invest more in the success of their teachers... Simply put, we cannot expect our teachers to teach what they themselves do not know." He said that the government and business community have a vested interest in giving more teachers and students a solid foundation on math and science. He remarked: "[B]oth the business community and Congress must re-double our efforts to do all we can to make strong math and science education a focal point in our schools."

Dr. Ramona Chang, Director of Curriculum for Torrance Unified School District (TUSD) in Torrance, CA; and, Tom Luce, President, CEO and Director of the National Math and Science Initiative (NMSI), Inc., delivered witness testimony.

Chang spoke about how the TUSD Mickelson ExxonMobil Math and Science Teacher Academy helped to fill gaps in the teaching of math and science. She commented: "Our district face[s] an extraordinary difficult challenge. The curriculum standards for our students have become more rigorous and the accountability for both teachers and schools has increased exponentially. Teachers must provide high caliber learning experiences for our students, however all too often our teachers rely on scripted textbook instructional outlines or uninspiring labs. If our students are to become our future engineers, computer scientists, mathematicians, and environmentalists, we need to change the way we approach the teaching of math and science. A systemic change in teaching requires on-going powerful professional development in math and science."

Mickelson and ExxonMobil teamed up with the National Science Teachers Association and Math Solutions to form "an exemplary professional academy for elementary educators", said Chang. The Academy is a week long program that brings "[TUSD] teachers, together with other teachers from all over the United States, [to] collaboratively work together to focus on math and science curriculum and the resulting successful student outcomes... With the academy week as our starting point, our teachers are able to continue their professional learning at the individual school site level, as they apply their new knowledge into the daily work of their students", she remarked. The program has yielded excellent results for the teachers and students.

Luce spoke about the urgency of improving math and science education in the United States. He said we are in the "Paul Revere" moment and "we must spread the alarm that our country is falling behind in math and science achievement and we must get moving with all possible speed to shore up our system." Luce

argued that America is rapidly losing its dominance in the high tech fields where the 80 percent of the jobs of the future will require some form of math and science skills, according to the National Science Foundation. "American students are increasingly at a global disadvantage because the rest of the world is becoming more educated while we are focusing less and less on critical skills like math and science," he said.

Luce reported the following statistics that offer some perspective on the problem:

- Thirty years ago, a third of the students attending college worldwide were Americans. Today, the U.S. can claim only 14 percent.

- During most of the 20th century - when today's high tech innovations were being incubated - Americans were considered the best educated in the world. But foreign countries now have more high school graduates in their workforces - and the U.S. has dropped to 17th.

- Chinese universities have now taken the lead in students earning American PhDs. Tsinghua and Peking Universities now have moved ahead of the University of California at Berkeley as the top sources of students who go on to earn doctorates at American universities. Seoul National University in South Korea was third.

For more information visit <http://www.edlabor.house.gov> .

CLIMATE: SENATE ENVIRONMENT HOLDS HEARING ON GLOBAL WARMING; WITNESS CLAIMS WHITE HOUSE INTERVENED TO FORCE CA'S EPA WAIVER DECISION

On July 22, 2008, the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee held a hearing to hear updates on global warming conditions and the science being undertaken to address it. The hearing, "Global Warming and Its Implications", was called by Committee Chair Barbara Boxer as a part of a continuing effort to educate the Committee on what can be done at the federal level to address global warming. The Chair also sought to examine the actions of the Bush Administration in regards to global warming.

Boxer commented: "The evidence has long been overwhelming that global warming poses a serious threat to the American people and we must act now to prevent devastating consequences. In dozens of hearings and briefings in this Committee, including presentations from Nobel Prize winning scientists of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), we have heard repeatedly that global warming endangers public health and welfare. The IPCC found that global warming is unequivocal, and that most of the recent warming is due to human activities. In North America, the IPCC warned of risks to public health, including increased frequency and duration of heat waves and heat related illness and death, increased water-borne disease from degraded water quality, and increased respiratory disease, including asthma and other lung diseases, from increased smog."

She further criticized the Bush Administration's failure to act and active suppression of others' efforts. She pointed to evidence she says shows that the Administration "censored documents including CDC testimony before this Committee. They have muzzled scientists. And they have ignored unanimous recommendations, from agency experts, to act." She went on to charge that the Administration's actions "threaten the health and welfare of the American people, but benefit a narrow group of special interests."

During the hearing, members questioned witnesses about the actions of the Bush Administration and what can currently be done to stem the threat of global warming. The Committee heard from Jason Burnett, former Associate Deputy Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and now a private citizen; Dr. Kevin E. Trenbeth, Head of the Climate Analysis Section for the National Center for Atmospheric Research Climate and Global Dynamics Division; and Dr. Roy Spencer, Principal Research Scientist, Earth System Science Center at the University of Alabama in Huntsville.

During the hearing, Mr. Burnett alleged that EPA Administrator Stephen L. Johnson initially had decided to grant California's request for a Clean Air Act waiver in order to regulate greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles, but reversed course after consulting with White House officials. Johnson has testified that he made the decision on his own, and the "responsibility for making the decision for California

rests with me and solely with me.” Johnson denied California’s waiver request last December 2007, also effectively stopping the efforts of 17 other states to regulate vehicle emissions.

For more information visit <http://www.epw.senate.gov> .

IMMIGRATION: HOUSE JUDICIARY SUBCOMMITTEE INVESTIGATES TREATMENT OF DETAINEES IN IMMIGRATION RAIDS

On Wednesday, July 23, 2008, the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, Refugees, Border Security, and International Law held a hearing to investigate the treatment of detainees during immigration raids. The hearing, entitled “Immigration Raids: Postville and Beyond,” was called by Chairwoman Zoe Lofgren (San Jose) as a result of reports that Immigrations and Customs Enforcement officers had exhibited a pattern of abuse and disrespect towards detainees, and disregard for legal citizen relatives of detainees affected by their apprehension.

Rep. Lynn Woolsey (Petaluma) testified at the hearing, recapping the circumstances surrounding raids in her district. Woolsey showed special concern for the native born children of immigrants being detained. She commented: “Congress has a necessary role in making sure that Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids are conducted humanely and consistent with protecting the needs of families and children...Unfortunately, ICE’s practices in my District have been neither humane nor protective. Agents arrested parents right in front of their children, creating widespread panic and resulting in 50 to 60 students leaving school for weeks at a time. Despite the fact that nearly two thirds of children with undocumented parents are U.S. citizens, ICE has not developed a consistent and comprehensive policy for dealing with children. In fact, ICE’s increasing reliance on home raids, which are not covered by ICE’s guidelines for humanely conducting workplace raids, means that children are often left unprotected.

“There are more effective and humane ways to enforce our immigration laws than through raids that terrify communities. We can no longer wait to address the impact these raids are having on families and children, many of whom are in the U.S. legally and many of whom are U.S. citizens. It’s unacceptable that home raids, where children are most likely to be impacted, do not have strong protections for children.”

Deborah Rhodes, Senior Associate Deputy Attorney General for Federal CURE at the Department of Justice, and Marcy Forman, Director of Investigations for U.S. ICE delivered testimony on behalf of the Administration.

Rhodes contended that ICE routinely complies with humanitarian guidelines when conducting raids, and recognizes all constitutional protections when dealing with detainees. Rhodes remarked: “I can assure you that the Department and our U.S. Attorneys in the field are fully committed to ensuring that the process employed comports with constitutional protections.”She spoke about a particular workplace raid on an Aggriprocessors plant in Iowa and outlined how the conditions affected the conduct of officers, and what guideline were being followed to ensure fair treatment of detainees.

Forman commented: “[ICE] agents and officers perform this mission lawfully, professionally, and compassionately. We take extraordinary steps to identify, document, and appropriately address humanitarian concerns of all those we encounter during law enforcement operations ...In planning enforcement operations, ICE agents specifically plan for the possibility that individuals who are encountered and arrested may be a sole care-giver, or one whose family would bear an undue hardship if he or she were detained.

“ICE has worked with Members of Congress and their staffs to develop worksite enforcement guidelines that field offices use when developing their operation plans. These guidelines were developed to ensure that parents who have been arrested and who have unattended minors or family members with disabilities or health concerns are identified at the earliest point possible. ICE takes this responsibility very seriously, and humanitarian factors are carefully taken into account when ICE makes custody decisions. Within the law enforcement community, the consideration ICE gives to identifying and resolving personal family issues is unparalleled and unique in law enforcement.”

For more information visit http://judiciary.house.gov/hearings/hear_072408.html

NATURAL RESOURCES: HOUSE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE PASSES CALIFORNIA LAND BILL

On Wednesday, July 23, 2008, the House Natural Resources Committee held a full committee mark-up that included HR 6159 -The Deafy Glade Land Exchange Act.

HR 6159, introduced by Rep. George Miller (Martinez), would provide for a land exchange involving certain National Forest System lands in the Mendocino National Forest in the State of California. During the hearing, an amendment in the nature of a substitute offered by Mr. Miller was agreed to by voice vote. The bill was favorably reported to the House, as amended, by voice vote. For more information visit <http://www.resourcescommittee.house.gov> .

HOUSING: HOUSE PASSES AMERICAN HOUSING RESCUE AND FORECLOSURE PREVENTION ACT OF 2008

On July 23, 2008, by a vote of 272 to 152, the House of Representatives passed HR 3221 - The American Housing Rescue and Foreclosure Prevention Act of 2008.

On its passage, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (San Francisco) commented the bill's proponents, including Rep. Maxine Waters (Los Angeles) have brought us a comprehensive package on housing policy reforms that will help lift families facing foreclosure and stem the continuing drop in home values around the country. The bill...represent[s] the most far-reaching reform of our nation's federal housing finance system in a generation...."

Following are some major provisions of the Act:

- provides a temporary increase in the low-income housing tax credit and simplification of the credit;
- allows for the issuance of an additional \$11 billion of tax-exempt bonds to refinance sub-prime loans, provide loans to first-time homebuyers and to finance the construction of low-income rental housing;
- provides an additional standard deduction for real property taxes;
- offers tax breaks to first-time home buyers;
- increases the stock of affordable housing by preserving affordable rental housing for seniors and other populations in communities across America, provides tax incentives for the production of rental housing for low-income populations
- provides \$3.9 billion in grants to state and local governments to purchase abandoned and foreclosed homes and residential property
- permanently raises FHA loan limits to the lesser of 115 percent of the local area median home price or \$625,500 (up from \$362,790)
- raises the limit on the size of reverse mortgages that FHA can insure to \$417,000 from \$275,000
- makes significant regulatory changes regarding Government-Sponsored Enterprises (GSE), and establishes a new independent agency, the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA), to regulate Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac and the Federal Home Loan Bank System, to be funded through assessments on those GSEs.

For more information visit <http://www.waysandmeans.house.gov>

POVERTY: HOUSE AGRICULTURE HEARING EXAMINES IMPACTS OF HUNGER IN US

On Wednesday, June 23, 2008, the House Agriculture held a hearing to address hunger in the United States. The hearing, entitled "The Short- and Long-Term Costs of Hunger," heard from industry experts and advocates about the effects of the food crisis on hunger in the U.S. and the economic and public health impacts that can be expected over time.

Mr. George Manalo-LeClair, Senior Director of Legislation for California Food Policy Advocates in Oakland, CA, delivered testimony. He commented: "The University of California has conducted a large

scale, statewide study, called the California Health Interview Survey (CHIS), to assess a broad range of health conditions, including food insecurity... and found the problem of food insecurity is enormous in scope and impact... Though California has been number one in food and agriculture production in the U.S. for more than fifty years, we have millions of people struggling to put food on the table.

"According to the most recent CHIS release in 2007, approximately 2.5 million low income adults in California struggle to put food on the table. But this figure... measures food insecurity only among adults. [D]espite their best efforts, parents aren't always able to shield their kids from the consequences of hunger and food insecurity.

"The wealth of data provided by the CHIS survey presents a surprising snapshot of who is hungry in the state:

- In California, hard work is no guarantee against hunger; the majority of households experiencing food insecurity are employed. Low wages and high rents mean many working families don't always have enough resources for food.

- In California, hunger does not discriminate. Food insecurity affects people of many races, though Latinos and African Americans experience it at higher rates. Immigrants are among the hardest hit.

- Food insecurity in California also knows no boundaries as it is prevalent in all 58 counties. But some communities are hit much harder than others. It is ironic that the counties with the greatest agricultural production also have the greatest percentage of their population struggling with food. Families with children are much more likely than families without children to struggle to put food on the table in California.

"Those adults with food insecurity who experience health problems, such as diabetes and other obesity related conditions, have significantly more complications, more hospitalizations and more trips to the emergency room because of their food insecurity," he said.

He went on to discuss the causes of food insecurity, the main focus being the rising cost of food and a lack of adequate income among many California residents. He also discussed the food stamp programs and what can be done to improve them. He cited evidence that food stamps not only help the individual family, but also increase sales of taxable items. And finally, he commended Speaker Pelosi for including food stamps in the economic recovery package, and requested that Congress continue to increase finding for all nutrition programs.

For more information visit <http://www.agriculture.house.gov> .

RESOURCES: WATER DROUGHT IN WEST EXPLORED

On Wednesday, July 23, 2008, the Population Resource Center and the California Institute held a briefing and roundtable discussion for congressional staff entitled "2030: Population and Water Scarcity in the West."

Former California Congressman Anthony Beilenson, a member of the Population Resource Center's Board of Directors, gave welcoming remarks, and Robert J. Walker, President of the Population Resource Center, acted as moderator.

Panelists were: Jeff Jacobs, a scholar with the Water Science and Technology Board at the National Research Council and study director of a report released last year entitled "Colorado River Basin Water Management: Evaluating and Adjusting to Hydroclimatic Variability"; Paul Townsley, President of the Western Region of American Water; David L. Reynolds, Director of Federal Relations for the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA); and Betsy Cody, Specialist in Natural Resources Policy at the Congressional Research Service (CRS).

Mr. Jacobs focused on the findings of a recent National Academies report that found with rapid population growth in Western states and "significant" climate warming, water managers will have to prepare for possible reductions in water supply across the West. Mr. Townsley noted that with population growth and the current drought in California and the West, the competition for water has, and will continue to, cross state boundaries as well as regions within states (e.g., rural versus urban). Ms. Cody discussed the regulatory

and legal challenges facing the West in dealing with water issues, as well as operational and institutional challenges.

Mr. Reynolds of ACWA provided a brief history of the creation of California's water system, noting that it was developed to deliver water, and has been able to do that successfully. However, he stressed it was not designed, from its inception in 1910, to respond to the increasingly important environmental and conservation issues facing the state. He said the challenge now is to develop a new water system strategy that can manage the growing impacts from climate change, an increasing population, and more and more importantly, environmental laws such as the Endangered Species Act. To do that, he said, the "elephants in the room" – the peripheral canal and surface storage facilities – will have to be confronted, discussed, and resolved.

Although not available as this publication goes to press, the California Institute will in the near future post video of the briefing and other related materials on the video page of its website:

<http://www.calinst.org/video.htm> .

TECHNOLOGY: CALIFORNIA RESEARCH BUREAU RELEASES REPORT ON USE OF RFID'S IN GOVERNMENT

The California Research Bureau (CRB) in July 2008 released its latest report, "Security and Privacy Recommendations for Government-Issued Identity Documents Using Radio Frequency Identification Tags or Other Technologies." The report was produced in response to a request from State Senator S. Joseph Simitian (Santa Clara) to provide policy recommendations regarding the use of technology-enhanced, government-issued identification documents.

After examining the technical and personal security issues and concerns of these next-generation documents and their accompanying electronic infrastructure, assembling an expert advisory panel, and holding a series of public meetings to obtain input, CRB developed the report's recommendations for the selection and use of these technologies by state and local government agencies.

For more information visit <http://www.library.ca.gov/crb/CRBSearch.aspx> .

UPCOMING EVENT: SPECIAL CARB WORKSHOP ON TUESDAY REGARDING A.B. 32

On Tuesday, July 29, at 2:00 pm, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) will host a workshop for California Congressional delegation staff on the recently released draft "Scoping Plan" for AB 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006. The workshop will be held in Rayburn 2247. (It will be followed at 3 pm by the briefing: "The California Global Warming Solutions Act: What Can Congress Learn from the California Experience?" that is noted below.)

AB 32 charged the California Air Resources Board with implementing policies to reduce the State's emissions of greenhouse gases to 1990 levels by 2020, and the Scoping Plan describes the strategy that the ARB will pursue to achieve this goal. The Scoping Plan's vision, ARB propounds, is grounded in a market-based cap-and-trade system – to be undertaken in partnership with the regional Western Climate Initiative – bolstered by a variety of complementary policies to dramatically increase the energy efficiency of California and accelerate deployment of advanced low-carbon technologies.

At this workshop, CARB Science and Technology Advisor Anthony Eggert and Assistant Executive Officer for Federal Climate Policy Brian Turner will present details regarding the 16 categories of action explored in the Scoping Plan. Paper copies of the Scoping Plan will be available, and there will be an opportunity for questions and discussion with staff regarding these policies and their implications for California constituents.

Following the workshop, the World Resources Institute, Business Council for Sustainable Energy, and California Institute will co-host at 3 pm, also in Rayburn 2247, a briefing entitled, "The California Global Warming Solutions Act: What Can Congress Learn from the California Experience?" at which CARB

Chairwoman Mary Nichols and energy and environmental representatives will speak on the federal implications of California's climate policy experience.

To RSVP or for questions regarding the workshop, please contact: Brian T. Turner, Assistant Executive Officer for Federal Climate Policy, California Air Resources Board (202) 624-5273 or brian.turner@wdc.ca.gov .

UPCOMING EVENT: BCSE AND CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE TO HOST BRIEFING TUESDAY (JULY 29) ON CALIFORNIA'S GLOBAL WARMING LEGISLATION

On Tuesday, July 29, 2008, from 3:00 pm – 4:30 pm in 2247 Rayburn House Office Building, The Business Council for Sustainable Energy, The World Resources Institute and The California Institute will host a briefing entitled “The California Global Warming Solutions Act: What Can Congress Learn from the California Experience?”

The State of California has taken a number of important policy steps to address the challenge of climate change. In 2006, the California legislature passed, and Governor Schwarzenegger signed, the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, commonly known as “A.B.32.” The California Air Resources Board (CARB) is charged with implementing the Act, which requires a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. It recently released its draft Scoping Plan for implementing a cap-and-trade emission reduction program bolstered by multiple complementary policies. A copy of the California AB32 Scoping Plan can be found at: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/scopingplan/scopingplan.htm> .

California will pursue its multi-sector cap-and-trade system in a regional partnership with the Western Climate Initiative, a group of seven Western states and four Canadian provinces. The business and environmental communities of California have been very engaged as CARB has plotted its course.

The panel briefing will feature the Chair of the California Air Resources Board, Mary Nichols, who will outline California's comprehensive approach to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and indicate those areas that Congress may find helpful to its federal deliberations. A senior economist from the Union of Concerned Scientists, Christopher Busch, will describe the economic implications of California's approach. Finally, a senior representative of Sempra Energy, Michael Murray, will outline the key features of the California approach that he considers most relevant to the federal discussions. The Moderator will be Ms. Debbie Boger, Director, U.S. Climate Policy, World Resources Institute.

Before the briefing, at 2 PM, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) will host a workshop for California Congressional delegation staff on the "Scoping Plan." The workshop will also be held in Rayburn 2247.

Please RSVP your attendance for the briefing to Laura Tierney at the Business Council for Sustainable Energy, Tel: 202-785-0507, E-mail: ltierney@bcse.org .