



green TECHNOLOGY

strategy and leadership for clean and sustainable communities



CURBING GLOBAL WARMING BY UNLEASHING STUDENT ENERGY

by Timothy A. Simon
Commissioner, California Public Utilities Commission

The possibility that human activities could change Earth's climate, with disastrous social and economic consequences, has emerged as the greatest challenge of this new century.

Under the leadership of Governor Schwarzenegger, California is setting the pace for our nation's response to this challenge.

Unlike those who suggest that serious attempts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions will hurt the economy, the Governor sees a new "Gold Rush" for the state – an unprec-

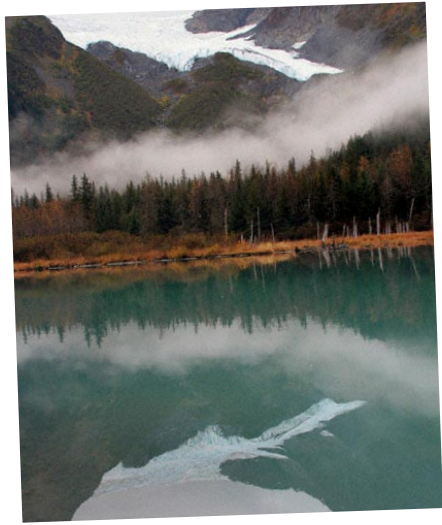
edented opportunity to build a vital new economy based on products and services that can meet the needs of society without endangering its future.

Our investment community agrees, and its visionaries have declared that "green technology" – from clean, renewable energy to new approaches to the design of our homes, offices and communities – will power the 21st century economy.

It is likely that the majority of those whose help we need to accomplish this transfor-

mation are unaware of the events unfolding around them – or their tremendous potential to make a difference in the lives of millions. These individuals are the students in California's schools, the essential building blocks of our new "green workforce."

Rarely in our history has it been more important for our schools to operate, and to educate, with real awareness of society's needs. We are in a transitional period that will end with an economy, a workplace and a culture that are very different from what has come before.



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If we manage the transition well, the differences will be positive. Cleaner air, healthier more productive workplaces, improved transportation systems, and communities that satisfy basic human needs as much as they do the needs of commerce.

A haphazard, half-hearted approach could lead to a much different kind of future, one in which the flaws and injustices of our current culture are magnified and increasing numbers of men and women find themselves without access to essential resources.

It is our responsibility to ensure that this transition is productive and creative. That it provides increasing numbers of Californians with work that is financially and environmentally rewarding. This is the scenario the Governor proposes, and I strongly support his vision.

The range of needs is great, and it is important that the diversity of opportunity is shared among California's diverse community of students. Social equity is one of the cornerstones of sustainability. Lifting up larger and larger numbers of students who are currently at risk, and preparing them for careers that allow them to greatly

improve their own quality of life – while improving conditions for society at large – is profoundly sustainable.

As an important step in this direction, on January 14th, 2008, I will be spearheading a conference in conjunction with the Willie L. Brown Jr. Institute on Politics and Public Service titled "Advancing the New Energy Economy in California."

This conference will bring together investors, political leaders, educators, industry experts, and labor leaders to advance long-term investment, financial growth, and job creation within the green technology sector. Key figures will articulate the challenges and solution strategies for diversified, continuous expansion of green business and technology in California.

This conference is not intended to be a one-day event, but rather the beginning of a dialogue to bridge the gap between the investor community and the green economy workforce to ensure that all communities can benefit from these new economic development opportunities.

This dialogue must also include those in the educational community, from students and teachers to administrators. The talent and experience that exists in this sector is essential to a successful evolution of our economy.

We have the power to create an educational surge that can match the United States' response to Sputnik. I urge you to become involved in this work, and I look forward to working with Green Technology to engage educators in it. We have the means to ensure that our state – and our planet – can remain productive and welcoming for future generations.