

# News Release



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## Southern California Leadership Council Formed

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*A group of key business and community leaders and the four former California Governors create unique single public policy voice for regional solutions.*

Los Angeles, CA —What could cause four former California Governors, two republicans and two democrats, to join together in common public policy endeavors? “Business and community leaders throughout Southland can now speak with one voice as they solve critical public policy issues confronting Southern California,” said former Governor Pete Wilson. Wilson, who led the formation effort with the help and support of the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) and the *LAEDC’s Center of Economic Development*, also expressed his excitement about being joined by former Governors Jerry Brown, George Deukmejian and Gray Davis and a select group of business and community leaders from all seven Counties in Southern California as Charter Members of the Council.

At a formation meeting in September, business leader President Ray Holdsworth, AECOM, a global engineering services firm based in Los Angeles and Chairman Robert Wolf, Germania Corporation, a regional industrial and office developer in California, were elected as Co-Chairs of the Council. “We can now focus our efforts in finding regional solutions to enhance the economic vitality, environment and quality of life in Southern California,” explained Holdsworth.

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“Our objective is to engage business leadership and help them enable public sector officials, policy makers and other civic leaders to address and solve a select set of public policy issues critical to the region,” said Wolf.

“This effort is unprecedented,” said Rod Banks, a charter member of the Leadership Council, and chair of the LAEDC and Regional Market president for Bank of America.

“It will include leadership from all parts of Southern California with the active involvement of four former Governors and it will be supported by a dedicated staff of the LAEDC’s Center of Economic Development and the best fellows and consultants we can find to help the public sector solve the serious challenges we must solve going forward.”

The first policy issue selected by the Leadership Council is a “Green Freight Initiative.” “The objective is to support the development and implementation of a near-term plan to rally business and public sector leaders around the ideas of reducing diesel pollution, modernizing our goods movement and trade infrastructure, and increasing the management, security, safety and velocity of our freight corridor system. There are a million new good paying jobs related to the initiative,” Wolf, former chairman of the California Transportation Commission, said. The tax revenue generated by these new jobs over the next 25-30 years will help us pay for the community and environmental improvements we need now and fund critical health, public safety and education services in the future.

“There are smart ways to reduce truck traffic impact on our highways, freeing up more room for cars and reducing air emission impacts while building community friendly infrastructure,” added Holdsworth, former Chair of the California Chamber.

More information about the Southern California Leadership Council and the Center of Economic Development can be found at [www.laedc.org/data/center/shtml](http://www.laedc.org/data/center/shtml).

**About LAEDC:** The LAEDC, the region's premiere business leadership organization, is a private, non-profit 501 (C) (3) organization established in 1981. Its mission is to attract, retain, and grow business and jobs in Los Angeles County. Since 1995, the LAEDC has helped retain or create more than 100,000 jobs, providing \$3.5 billion in annual economic impact from salaries and \$65 million in annual tax revenue benefit to Los Angeles County. For more information, please visit [www.laedc.org](http://www.laedc.org).

**Editors: For media interviews and images, please contact George McQuade, MAYO Communications ([www.MayoCommunications.com](http://www.MayoCommunications.com)), 818-340-5300.**



Left to right: LAEDC senior vice president Economic and Public Policy Consulting Wally Baker; LAEDC president & CEO Lee Harrington; former California governors Jerry Brown, George Deukmejian, Pete Wilson, and Gray Davis; and LAEDC chairman Rod Banks. Photo courtesy of Howard Pasamanick.

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