

# Southern California Leadership Council

## ALL OPTIONS ON THE TABLE

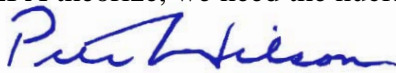
The EPA has just declared global warming gases a threat to public health under the Clean Air Act. The California Climate Action Panel is completing an update on the global warming challenge for California and some scenarios raise their level of concern and urgency, causing them to recommend more “immediate action” to protect against rising sea levels. Meanwhile, in Washington, Energy Secretary Stephen Chu, from California, has ordered a thorough review of clean power technologies, including nuclear, as part of the nation’s strategy to simultaneously reduce dependence on foreign oil and greenhouse gas emissions.

While California holds itself out as a leader in the global warming effort, the option for California to add more modern nuclear power as part of the state’s strategy does not exist today. In 1976, California enacted legislation prohibiting further nuclear power projects until “the federal government has approved and there exists a demonstrated technology for the permanent disposal of spent fuel”. It has been more than 25 years since the last comprehensive California Energy Commission assessment of nuclear power issues. Applications for more than 30 new nuclear power projects are now expected in the United States. France, China, Japan and India are all moving forward on new nuclear power facilities to meet their future energy needs.

When one considers the current facts about nuclear energy, particularly in light of the challenges cited from global warming, California needs all low or no emission power options available, including more nuclear power. Energy efficiency and renewables are the early candidates to help reduce greenhouse emissions here. But renewables will be both expensive and inadequate for our base load energy needs, especially as we cut back on sources of coal and other hydrocarbon generated power in the state. Today, no other emissions-free option can address the scale and grid reliability necessary for California’s clean energy future like nuclear power.

People forget that the United States remains the world’s nuclear energy leader—accounting for 20 % of our nation’s base load power supplies (including almost 13% of California’s power needs). Today’s plants operate at 90% efficiencies, generally taken down only for scheduled fuel reloading. Spent fuel, in a dry state, is stored today at secure onsite facilities. While high in initial capital cost, nuclear power is viewed as cost effective with new natural gas fired power plant options over a full project life. And while currently restricted in the US, many other nations are now reprocessing spent fuel to reduce waste and increase available fuel supplies. France stores all of its reprocessed nuclear waste in one secure building no larger than the Louve.

If California starts today to reconsider the nuclear power option and decides it is needed, it will be 15 years or more before we will see the first new, modern plant on line here. If the consequences of global warming are as dire and as near as the California Climate Action Panel and the EPA theorize, we need the nuclear power option back on the table in California today.



Pete Wilson  
2009 Co Chair



David Fleming  
2009 Co-Chair

## **About Southern California Leadership Council**

Governor Pete Wilson and David Fleming are the Southern California Leadership Council's 2009 Co-Chairs. The Southern California Leadership Council is a business-led-and-sponsored public policy partnership for the Southern California region. The Council provides proactive leadership for a strong economy, a vital business environment and a better quality of life for everyone who lives here. Founded in 2005 as a voice for the region's business community and like-minded individuals to focus and combine their efforts, the Leadership Council's objective is to help enable public sector officials, policy makers and other civic leaders to address and solve public policy issues critical to the region's economic vitality and quality of life. The Council is comprised of business and community leaders from throughout the seven counties of Southern California and four former California governors.

**[Editors note:** For media inquiries contact Lee Harrington, Executive Director for the Southern California Leadership Council at 213-300-1303 or 805-567-1010. For more about SCLC visit: <http://www.laedc.org/sclc/index.html>.]