

Southern California Leadership Council Says Millions of Jobs and...

PRWeb

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- The Southern California Leadership Council has become a strong proponent of economically sensible solutions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions mandated by Assembly Bill 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006.

'The Act sets a milestone goal of reducing California's greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, with an ultimate goal of an additional 80 percent reduction by 2050,' said Executive Director Lee Harrington, Southern California Leadership Council (SCLC). In his comments to the California Air Resources Board, Harrington said, 'We need to be honest with ourselves that these goals require massive changes in California's energy picture, particularly when one realizes that we will have experienced a 60-70 percent population increase over the period.'

Harrington agrees that the environmental stakes are critical. 'So is California's economic future with more than 2.6 million jobs and \$273 billion in economic output at stake in firms in the state's largest greenhouse gas emitting sectors,' he said.

Harrington also told the board that this ultimate challenge requires that California pursue large scale energy options to achieve California's goals and demonstrate cost effective solutions which emerging economies like China and India will emulate to achieve a necessary global solution. This on top of the Draft Scoping plan's emphasis on conservation and a new 33 percent renewable energy portfolio mandate.

'We must strive for large scale energy options,' explained Harrington. 'Like supplemental natural gas as a transitions fuel which is only available through new imports of liquefied natural gas (LNG), new nuclear power options, and expanded power line projects like the Sunrise Powerlink Project to access large scale, cost effective new wind, solar and geothermal power sources. Otherwise, we will find ourselves trapped within our own self-created Gordian's Knot, unable to achieve our daunting goals.'

Unfortunately, after 35 years, California has yet to site an LNG receiving terminal, even though natural gas and particularly LNG has become a critically needed transition fuel, particularly for the transportation sector. California currently prohibits new nuclear plants even though 20 percent of the nation's electric power supply (and 73 percent of all our non-greenhouse gas power) comes from nuclear energy. And, while the state's utilities must build new power lines in the desert and other remote areas to meet their new wind, solar and geothermal renewable goals, projects like the Sunrise Powerlink being pursued for southern California are being actively opposed.

'If we are to lead the world in greenhouse gas solutions, and convince emerging economies like China and India to follow, we must go after these needed alternatives, while we demonstrate what we can also do with conservation, energy efficiency and renewable energy,' he said.

The AB 32 Draft Plan calls for an 'outreach program to provide businesses and individuals with the widest range of information so they can make informed decisions about reducing their carbon footprint.' This outreach program should also educate the public on the need for a limited mix of necessary, large scale energy and transportation solutions, so they may understand the difficult choices ahead Harrington explained to the board.

About Southern California Leadership Council

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: For interviews with Lee Harrington or for more information about the Southern California Leadership Council's solution for the coexistence of international freight transit and clean air, please contact George McQuade, 818-340-5300 or 818-618-9229, or visit <http://www.laedc.org/scslc/index.html>.

For more about AB 32 visit: http://www.laedc.org/scslc/studies/SCLC_AB32Challenge.pdf

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