



Los Angeles Area
Chamber of Commerce

WEDNESDAY | June 21, 2006

THE BUSINESS PERSPECTIVE:

A Model For Post-Partisan Politics



Coming up at the Chamber

[View all upcoming events on our web calendar.](#)

WED | June 21
International Trade & Investments Committee Meeting
[more info](#)

THU | June 22
Business After Hours Mixer at Kidspace Children's Museum
[more info](#)

TUES | June 27
Referral Network
[more info](#)

WED | June 28
Joint Environmental Quality & Transportation & Goods Movement Committee Meeting
Topic: Climate Change featuring Terry Tamminen
[more info](#)

WED | June 28
The Connection Point-- Creating a Mindset for Successful Networking
[more info](#)

THU | June 29
Technology Industry Council
[more info](#)

THU | July 6
Starting Your Own Business Workshop
Presented by Score
[more info](#)

TUES | July 11
Referral Network
[more info](#)

THU | July 13
Accenture Pancakes & Politics
[more info](#)

FRI | July 14
Health Care Committee Meeting
[more info](#)

The Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce is the voice of business in L.A. County. Founded in 1888, the Chamber promotes a prosperous economy and quality of life in the Los Angeles region. For more information, visit www.lachamber.org

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Visionary, committed, determined – all are adjectives that describe Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa.

Politically naïve? Hardly.

That is why this week's developments in the California gubernatorial race are so refreshing.

While pushing [his reforms for the L.A. Unified School District](#), the mayor was asked whether he supported his party's nominee for governor, Phil Angelides. His response? He did not have an endorsement at this time.

For his part, Angelides was asked whether he supported Villaraigosa's proposal to take over L.A. schools. Angelides said that he was opposed to the plan.

One of Angelides' big supporters is the California Teachers Association, which has come out in opposition. Villaraigosa was once a CTA organizer and is pushing his plan despite the organization's opposition.

The mayor of the state's largest city currently withholding the endorsement of his party's nominee for governor is refreshing. It shows that doing the right thing and pursuing policies you believe in are more important than partisan politics.

All too often we have seen the partisan political divide in our state get in the way of important legislative objectives. We constantly see budget delays. Workers' compensation reform took too long to be enacted. The lowest of wage earners may not receive an increase in the minimum wage. I have written many times about the need to forget about strict party line differences and do what is best for California.

That is why Villaraigosa's position is astounding. His stance would get lower level politicians ostracized from caucuses, banned from the inner circle and bounced off of convention speaking platforms.

But I don't see that happening with Villaraigosa. His passion for doing what is right for L.A. is what will resonate with voters. His sheer courage in being independent is what will enhance his power.

Villaraigosa may eventually decide to endorse Angelides even if the gubernatorial candidate does not back the mayor's LAUSD reform. That remains to be seen.

But for now, congratulations, Mr. Mayor, for showing the courage of your convictions, and for highlighting the position that doing what is right and pursuing your goals are more important than partisan politics.

And that's *The Business Perspective*.

Russell J. Hammer
President & CEO
Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce

The Business Perspective is an award-winning weekly opinion column by Rusty Hammer, President & CEO, L.A. Area Chamber

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