

WHAT AILS CALIFORNIA?



13th Annual Travers Conference on Ethics and Accountability

Friday, October 23, 2009, 8:30 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Cosponsored by the
Travers Program on Ethics and Accountability of the
Charles and Louise Travers Department of Political Science,
and by the Institute of Governmental Studies, University of California, Berkeley

Most people agree that California politics are broken. Demands for fundamental reform are growing louder and many are now calling for a constitutional convention. But what exactly ails California? Gridlock in the legislature? The legacy of Prop 13? A vicious cycle of distrust in government? Partisan polarization? Before we fix California's government, we need a clear understanding of the fundamental problems. Otherwise, institutional reforms may address the symptoms rather than the causes. The Travers Program on Ethics and Accountability in Government and the Institute of Governmental Studies are hosting this one-day conference to explore what ails California.

Morning: Diagnosing the Problem

8:30AM **Continental Breakfast**

9:00-9:15: **Opening Remarks**

CHANCELLOR ROBERT J. BIRGENEAU, University of California, Berkeley

9:15-10:00: **Research Presentation: California in the People's Court**

PROFESSOR JACK CITRIN, Director, Institute of Governmental Studies, University of California, Berkeley

Using polling data and other indices of voter satisfaction with government, this paper examines the history of Californians' views about the performance of state government. How has the level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction changed through the years? Does it relate closely to other events, such as the passage of crucial ballot measures? What does it tell us about the underlying causes of the dysfunction in the California political system?

10:00-10:15: **Coffee Break**

10:15-11:45: Panel 1: What Ails California?

JOEL FOX, former president of the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Assoc. & editor of Fox and Hounds Daily

JAMES P. MAYER, Executive Director, California Forward

MARK PAUL, Senior Scholar, New America Foundation, and author of California 2.0: How the Golden State Got Broken and How We Can Fix It

PETER SCHRAG, author, Paradise Lost: California's Experience, America's Future

Moderator: STEVE WEINER, Co-Founder, Common Sense California, and Chairman of the Board, Endowment for California Leadership

11:45-Noon: Break (Box Lunches available to those who pre-register by 10/19/09)

12: 00-1:30: Lunch Keynote Address:

In conversation with SUSAN RASKY, Senior Lecturer, UC Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism:

The Honorable JIM BRULTE, former Senate and Assembly Republican leader

The Honorable FABIAN NUNEZ, former Assembly Speaker

Afternoon: How Should California Move Forward?

1:30-3:00: Panel 2: From Diagnosis to Cure

WILLIAM T. BAGLEY, former Member of the Assembly and author of the forthcoming California's Golden Years: When Government Worked and Why

SHERRY BEBITCH JEFFE, Senior Scholar, School of Policy, Planning and Development, University of Southern California

LONI HANCOCK, Member, California Senate, and Chair of the Senate Elections, Reapportionment, and Constitutional Amendments Committee

THAD KOUSSER, Professor of Political Science, University of California-San Diego and co-editor of The New Political Geography of California

STEVE MERKSAMER, former Chief of Staff to Gov. George Deukmejian

Moderator: JACK CITRIN, Director, Institute of Governmental Studies

3:00-3:15: Coffee Break

3:15-4:45: Panel 3: Will a Constitutional Convention Solve California's Problems?

ANTONIO GONZALEZ, President, William C. Velasquez Institute

TIMOTHY A. HODSON, Director, Center for California Studies, California State University, Sacramento

ROGER NOLL, Senior Fellow, Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research, and co-editor of Constitutional Reform in California: Making State Government More Effective and Responsive

JOHN GRUBB, Senior Vice President for External Affairs, Bay Area Council

Moderator: CHRIS ANSELL, Professor of Political Science, University of California, Berkeley

4:45-6:00: Conference Reception (all guests are invited to attend)