

From the Desk of the CEO



Dear CALED Members and Friends,

In September, the CALED Board of Directors and Board Advisors met with over fifty economic development partners and stakeholders to discuss trends in economic development. The goal of this facilitated meeting was to

identify the pressing issues facing economic development and how CALED could make a difference.

Top Statewide Economic Development Issues

1. Improving California's business climate
2. Increasing investment in marketing California
3. Promoting the definition and value of economic development

The CALED Board and staff met immediately following the stakeholder meeting to identify how we could make a difference in these areas, while noting we were already addressing these in our current work program. I am pleased to share our action items with you and hope that if you have ideas not represented here, that you share them with any of the CALED Board of Directors, Board Advisors, or me.

Improving California's Business Climate

With so many different groups focused on this issue, we believe CALED can be most effective by having a proactive policy agenda and by coalition building and collaboration with partners. Our Legislative Action Committee (LAC) is currently reviewing potential legislation we can introduce in the areas identified as priorities by our members. See the letter from our LAC Co-Chairs for more details.

Increasing Investment in Marketing California

We are fortunate to have partners like the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development and TeamCA promoting California as a good place for businesses to thrive so other states are not defining California. CALED can play a supportive role in

this effort by telling California's positive economic development story. Recently, we partnered with Site Selection Magazine, GO-BIZ, and TeamCA on the California Investment Guide—a custom publication that highlights policies, programs, and communities that help businesses thrive. We continue to look for these opportunities and would love to hear your successes so that we can promote them.

Promoting the Definition of Economic Development

CALED's primary goal is to educate leaders and stakeholders on the definition of economic development and its value. We do this through tools like our economic development brochure and our website. However, we find we make the most impact when meeting with elected officials, leaders, and stakeholders in person, whether it is a one-on-one meeting, regional trainings, or part of a presentation.

Another issue discussed at length was the need to find tools and resources to build local capacity – especially in rural communities. This is a challenge on which the LAC and our leadership are keenly focused. Specifically, we are looking to protect and improve the new Enhanced Infrastructure Finance District legislation. We are also asking members to share their ideas on building capacity.

If there is a specific action you think CALED can take to address any of these important issues, please contact us. In the meantime, we will continue to work diligently to make a difference in these priority areas.

Thank you,

Gurbax Sahota