

2018 BizFed Leadership Roundtable Series Assemblymember Chris Holden (AD41)

PASADENA - October 3, 2018

"Wildfires placed regionalization of the electric grid and other issues on the back seat this summer", stated Assemblymember Chris Holden, Chair of the Assembly's Utilities and Energy and Co-Chair of the Wildfire Preparedness and Response Legislative Conference Committee. Hosted by Optimum Seismic at their Pasadena offices, Holden was the featured policy maker of the 15th Roundtable of the 2018



BizFed Leadership Roundtable Series.



As it is evident now, the fire season in California is now year round, 24/7, and fire safety personnel throughout the state fighting these fires have to be prepared to respond to this new reality. The Conference Committee tackled many difficult issues relating to the wildfires. The Committee consisted of the chairs of the Natural Resources, Insurance, and Budget Subcommittee of the Legislature

and convened several hearings over a 45 day period that included testimony from Investor Owned Utilities (IOU), municipal utilities, stakeholder groups, California Independent System Operator (ISO) and others. Key issues in the discussions were inverse condemnation, stabilizing the utility companies, rate payers, reducing what fuels fires, etc. SB901 Dodd was the legislative vehicle that will help prepare the state on the consequences of climate change, the extreme weather and the natural disasters. Holden remarked that there were many challenging solutions and SB901 Dodd was clearly a compromise that spelled out funding for the State agencies tasked with firefighting and also gave direction for IOUs to invest resources in resiliency, to reduce the fuel source of fires (thinning forests).



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What's ahead in the 2019 Legislative Session for the Assembly's Utilities and Energy Committee? Revisiting wireless communications facilities, such as small cell technology (5G). On October 15, 2017, Governor Brown vetoed SB649 (Hueso) that addressed this issue. Continued discussions of a regionalized western electric grid as AB813 (Holden) passed the Assembly but was held at Senate Rules on 8/2/4/18. The future of natural gas, storage of hydro and solar energy, Cap and Trade allocations as Southern California doesn't receive its fair share of funds are some that quickly came to mind.



As Chair of the Assembly Select Committee on Regional Transportation Solutions, Holden will host on October 11th, a local informational hearing, "Securing Transportation Growth Opportunities" that discusses and addresses timely transportation issues for the region and state. When asked by Tracy Hernandez was he was most proud of in his work as the Chair of the California Legislative Black Caucus (CLBC Agenda 2020), Holden talked about their continued work on scholarship programs as part of their education initiative to improve outcomes, increase graduation rates, increase rates of admissions to community colleges, the CSU and the UC. The Black Enterprise Initiative has objectives to reduce African American unemployment rates, the challenges in the small business community, protect and preserve home ownership and increase contractors doing business with the State.



Roundtable participants:
Mark Alexander, Zanku Armenian, Alex Davis, Anthony Duarte, Robert Duarte, Christine Frey, Ted Green, Mark Guillen, Kevin Harbour, Tracy Hernandez, Lara Larramendi, Ali Sahabi, Lupita Sanchez Cornejo.