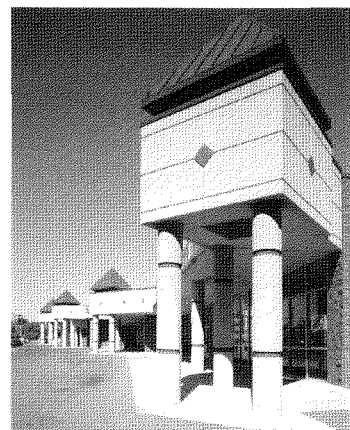


**California Journal** asked some of the major organizations with interests in the Capitol to list their biggest legislative priorities for the 2002-2003 session. Not surprisingly, much of what has lobbyists' attention involves the budget in some way. For instance, SB 17, a bill by Sen. Martha Escutia (D-Whittier) to create a "split-roll" property tax system, has both the attention of the California Chamber of Commerce and the California Manufacturers and Technology Association. Both groups oppose the measure. Here are some of the other priorities:

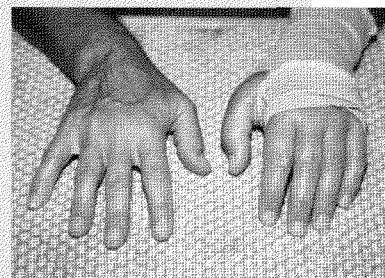


## California Chamber of Commerce

**SB 414 (McClintock) Workers' comp:** Seeks to improve the definition of "injury" under the workers' compensation system. The bill raises the standard of proof for employees who claim that an injury or disease is related to their employment. **Support.**

**SB 1 (Speier) Privacy:** Requires banks and insurers to obtain written consent before selling information about a consumer. Requires banks and insurers to give consumers a way to stop their information from being distributed to affiliated companies. **Oppose unless amended.**

**SB 2 (Speier), SB 921 (Kuehl), AB 1527 (Frommer) Health care:** Three bills that move California toward universal care. Speier's bill requires employers to provide medical benefits or pay taxes to create a benefit system. Kuehl's bill establishes a state-run, single payer health care system. Frommer's bill phases in a universal health care system. (See story page 6) **Oppose.**



## California Manufacturers and Technology Association

**SB 57 (Burton) Minimum wage:** Automatically adjusts the hourly minimum wage on January 1, 2004, and annually thereafter, based on the federal Consumer Price Index. **Oppose.**

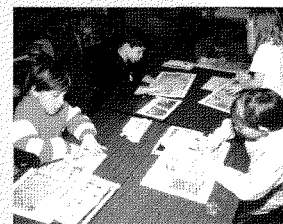


**SB 47 (Ackerman) Manufacturers investment credit extension:** Eliminates the 100,000 manufacturing job creation threshold (in the original statute) and extends the 6-percent tax credit on certain equipment purchases indefinitely. **Support.**

**AB 599 (Dutton) Frivolous lawsuits:** Imposes stiffer requirements regarding unfair competition actions brought by anyone other than the attorney general, a district attorney, a county prosecutor or a city attorney. **Support.**

## California Teachers Association

**AB 42 (Daucher) Class size reduction:** Allows school districts to qualify for the state's Class Size Reduction (CSR) Program if the average class size ratio for CSR classes at each school remains at 20:1, as long as no individual class exceeds 22 pupils per teacher. Removes state mandate that prescribes the grade-level priority in which schools must reduce their class sizes. **Oppose.**



**SB 6 (Alpert) Education overhaul:** Transfers management responsibility for the Department of Education to the governor's office from the Superintendent of Public Instruction, who would remain an elective officer and would monitor school performance. Reconfigures administration of community colleges. **Opposes the portion of the bill that would consolidate power in the governor's office.**

legislation

The California

**ROAST**

**FIRES UP FOR STATE TREASURER**

**PHILLIP ANGELIDES**

**WHEN**

**TUESDAY MAY 27, 2003  
RADISSON HOTEL SACRAMENTO**

6:00 PM - Reception, Jazz Combo

7:30 PM - Dinner

8:30 PM - Program

**ROASTERS** Stay tuned to your mail!

**HOW MUCH**

Sponsor: Reserved Table for Ten: \$1,750

Patron: Reserved Half-Table for Five: \$875

Individual Tickets: Open Seating: \$175



**WHY** Proceeds from the event benefit CAPITOL FOCUS, a non-profit, non-partisan political awareness program serving a cross-section of California youth. Contributions are tax deductible to full extent allowed by the law. (Federal ID #23 718-2049).



**TO RESERVE SEATS CALL 916-443-2229 OR  
EMAIL MULDAVIN@CALIFORNIACENTER.ORG**



# The new water war:

***Editors note:** Fifteen years ago, as population grew throughout America's desert Southwest, California agreed to stop using more than its share of water from the Colorado River. But last Dec. 31, when the state failed to meet a final deadline, federal authorities stepped in and cut the flow to the state. This story is a comprehensive look at the emotional and complex search for a new water agreement between city officials, farmers, environmentalists, neighboring states, federal authorities and the leadership in Sacramento. At press time, Gov. Gray Davis announced a new proposal to resolve the matter. His plan would provide \$350 million in state funds and loan guarantees to subsidize water purchases and protect sensitive wetlands. It's the latest of many proposals and it faces a long road to agreement, if it's successful. For now, it's the latest battleground in California's history of Water Wars.*

**I**n the West's escalating water wars, U.S. Interior Secretary Gale A. Norton is one of the biggest guns. She controls gigantic spigots along the lower Colorado River, and on January 1, she demonstrated her power by turning off about one-fifth of the water that had been flowing into Southern California.

Now farmers in what's known as the Imperial Irrigation District — which annually yields \$1 billion worth of cash crops, including much of the nation's alfalfa — are fighting back. Last month they asked a federal court to force the Interior Department to restore the water flow to its previous level.

This particular skirmish is the latest twist in an epic water fight between Southern California's farmers and its cities. But the conflict is far from unique. Throughout the nation, the fresh-water wants and needs of city dwellers increasingly collide with those of farmers. And environmental issues often complicate the search for equitable solutions.

The Imperial Irrigation District is one of four Southern California water agencies making claims on water from the Colorado River. By law and tradition, the region's agricultural interests have the right to 80 percent of the water coming into the state from federal water projects along that river. But as the state's coastal urban and suburban populations continue to mushroom, the cities have declared that their 20 percent simply isn't enough.

Meanwhile, the other states along the Colorado River — Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming — are demanding that California stop and make deals with farm communities to ensure sufficient water supplies for their cities

**By  
Margaret  
Kriz**

and suburbs.

With water demands increasing and shortages spreading, Norton insists that federal water-use restrictions must be strictly enforced. "These factors herald a new era of limits on Colorado River water use," she informed the Colorado River Water Users Association in December. "We are at a turning point in the

history of the Colorado River."

Southern California's water problems sharply escalated late last year, when—after nearly a decade of negotiations, a plan to divert more of the Colorado's water to urban areas fell apart shortly before the December 31 deadline. The plan had been for the Imperial Irrigation District to sell some of its water to San Diego. In return, the federal government was to give Southern California another 15 years to lower its consumption of Colorado River water to legal levels.

In addition to the Imperial Irrigation District, the water agencies trying to come to a meeting of the minds included the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, which serves Los Angeles and San Diego; Coachella Valley Water District; and the Palo Verde Irrigation District.

Under a 1929 agreement, California has a legal right to only 4.4 million acre-feet of Colorado River water each year. (An acre-foot is the volume of water that would cover an acre 1 foot deep. It is 325,851 gallons — enough for five people for a year.) In the past, Southern California routinely exceeded its water allotment by 18 percent, withdrawing 5.2 million acre-feet from the Colorado. On January 1, Norton immediately limited Southern California to 4.4 million acre-feet.

Norton, who by law is the "water master" of the lower Colorado, also redistributed the water among the four