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## **BAY AREA COUNCIL APPLAUDS GOVERNOR'S VETO OF STATE BUDGET REITERATES CALL FOR CALIFORNIA CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION**

**SAN FRANCISCO, September 16, 2008** — Today the Bay Area Council put out the following statement attributable to Jim Wunderman, President & CEO of the Bay Area Council, regarding the Governor's veto of the California state budget:

"The Bay Area Council applauds Governor Schwarzenegger's veto of the state budget, especially because it does not include a real 'rainy-day' fund. We needed a new state budget, but this budget was far from what was needed. Indeed, as previously stated, the defining feature of this budget is that it only makes next year's budget worse, and 'next year' is only nine months away."

"The Bay Area Council firmly believes that a 'rainy-day' fund is not the only structural reform needed, not by a long way, and that the best – and perhaps only – way to secure the needed reforms is through a constitutional convention. Therefore, we reiterate our call for a constitutional convention, either authorized by the legislature, or if, the legislature does not act, the Bay Area Council and our partners are preparing language to use the initiative process.

"We feel it is our duty to declare that our California government is not only broken, it has become destructive to our future. We think we have a duty to try to fix our government.

"We want to make clear that we do not believe California's problem is with the inherent quality of our elected officials. The problem is the very system and rules of governance enshrined in our current Constitution.

"We are currently considering and researching the following agenda items for a constitutional convention:

- Adopt a two-year budget cycle.
- Implement an open primary system and/or make state offices nonpartisan.
- Change the redistricting process.
- Create a system, similar to that in Texas, where every state agency is up for review and automatically abolished unless legislation is enacted to continue, merge or transfer their responsibilities.
- Reform California's system of taxation and spending, and ties to local government spending.
- Address the initiative process, raise the minimum number of signatures required.
- Remove the 2/3rds requirement on passing a budget (either if the increase is below 5%, or altogether).
- Guarantee steady funding for infrastructure.
- Enable greater funding for education in exchange for important reforms.

“California’s constitution was always meant to be a living document that could adjust to the times. The time has come to make serious adjustments.”

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### **About the Bay Area Council**

The Bay Area Council is a business-sponsored, public-policy advocacy organization for the nine-county Bay Area. The Council proactively advocates for a strong economy, a vital business environment, and a better quality of life for everyone who lives here. Founded in 1945, as a way for the region’s business community and like-minded individuals to concentrate and coordinate their efforts, the Bay Area Council is widely respected by elected officials, policy makers and other civic leaders as the voice of Bay Area business. Today, more than 275 of the largest employers in the region support the Bay Area Council and offer their CEO or top executive as a member. Our members employ more than 500,000 workers, or 1 of every six private sector employees in the Bay Area.