



PRESS RELEASE

01/31/2007 GAAS:73:07 FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Governor Schwarzenegger Announces Appointments to California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger today announced the appointment of Connie Conway as chair, Secretary Michael Chrisman and Greenlaw Grupe, Jr. as deputy chairs and Alan Autry, Frank Bigelow, Marcelyn Buford, Kathleen Crookham, Coke Hallowell, Farrell Jackson, Luisa Medina, Sunne Wright McPeak, Michael Navarro, Alfred "Leroy" Ornellas, Gary Podesto, Frederick Ruiz, Lorraine Salazar, Stanley Simpson, Carol Tomlinson-Keasey, Eugene Voiland and Raymond Watson as members of the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley.

Conway, 56, of Tulare, was first appointed to the Partnership in 2005 and currently serves as vice-chair of the Tulare County Board of Supervisors. Prior to her election, she was employed as the district manager of CorVel Corporation, a nationally certified health care organization specializing in workers compensation disability management. Conway is past-president of the California State Association of Counties, a member of the board of trustees for the Tulare Hospital Foundation and a founding member of the Leadership Tulare Core Committee. Conway is a Republican.

Chrisman, 62, of Visalia, has served as the secretary for the Resources Agency since he was appointed in 2003. He previously served as the region manager for Southern California Edison from 1996 to 2003. Prior to joining Southern California Edison, Chrisman served as the undersecretary for the California Department of Food and Agriculture and as deputy secretary for operations/legislation for the California Resources Agency. He was appointed president of the California Fish and Game Commission by Governor Pete Wilson and currently serves as chair of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy and the California Ocean Protection Council and on the board of the Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Parks Foundation. Chrisman is a Republican.

Grupe, Jr., 69, of Lodi, was first appointed to the Partnership in 2005 and has served as the chairman and founder of The Grupe Company, a land development firm, since 1966. He also currently serves on the advisory board of the Center for Real Estate and Urban Economics at the University of California, Berkeley. Previously, Grupe served as founding chair on the University of California, Merced Foundation Board of Trustees. He is a past-president and current member of the Urban Land Institute. Grupe is a Republican.

Autry, 54, of Fresno, was first appointed to the Partnership in 2005 and has served as Mayor of Fresno since 2001. Since he has been in office, Mayor Autry enacted the "No Neighborhood Left Behind" infrastructure plan, participated in the formation of Operation Clean Air and in the formation of the Regional Jobs Initiative. Autry is the chief executive officer of Autry Entertainment Group, a film and television production and management company. Autry is a Republican.

Bigelow, 52, of O Neals, has worked for the Ponderosa Telephone Company since 1973, where he currently serves as vice president. He also serves on the Madera County Board of Supervisors since he was first elected in 1999. Bigelow is a volunteer firefighter for the Madera County Fire Department and is a member of the Madera County Farm Bureau and American Shorthorn Association. He also currently serves as president of the California State Association of Counties. Bigelow is a Republican.

Buford, 78, of Hanford, was first appointed to the Partnership in 2005 and has served as a city council member for the City of Hanford since 1988. In addition, she is past-president of the Kings Economic Development Corporation. Previously, Buford was president of the South San Joaquin Valley Division of the League of California Cities. She is a member of the Kings Waste and Recycling Board and the Hanford Community Hospital Foundation. Buford is a Republican.

Crookham, 72, of Merced, has served on the Merced County Board of Supervisors since she was first elected in 1996. Previously, she was a teacher, school administrator and substitute teacher from 1958 to 1993, working for the Merced City School District, San Luis Obispo School District and San Francisco Unified School District. Crookham is a member of the Merced County Workforce Investment Board, Merced County Association of Governments and the Merced County Farm Bureau. Crookham is a Republican.

Hallowell, 71, of Friant, was first appointed to the Partnership in 2005 and is currently the president and a founding member of the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation, a trust founded over 18 years ago. Previously, she served as a teacher for the Sanger Unified School District from 1978 to 1988. Hallowell also served on the State Center Community College District Board of Trustees for two terms. She is a member of the Planning and Conservation League and is a founding member of the California Council of Land Trusts. Hallowell is a Democrat.

Jackson, 55, of Oakdale, currently serves as the Mayor of Oakdale and has served on the Oakdale City Council since 1998. Additionally, he has owned Jackson Rental Properties since 1994. Previously, he served as manager of the maintenance department for the paper manufacturing business, Procter & Gamble, from 1972 to 1992. Jackson is a member of the Stanislaus Council of Governments and the Stanislaus County Workforce Alliance. Jackson is a Republican.

Medina, 53, of Fresno, has served as development director for Central California Legal Services since 1999. From 1995 to 1998, she was the chief operating officer for the Fresno Private Industry Council. Prior to that, Medina was a public policy advocate for Central California Legal Services from 1993 to 1995 and executive director of Centro La Familia de Fresno from 1978 to 1993. She is a member of the League of Women Voters and past member of the Fresno Unified School Board, serving as president from 2005 to 2006. Medina is a Democrat.

McPeak, 58, of Pleasanton, was first appointed to the Partnership in 2005 and currently holds the position of president and chief executive officer of the California Emerging Technology Fund. From 2003 to 2006, she served as secretary of the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency. McPeak formerly was president and chief executive officer of the Bay Area Council, where she established and led major regional initiatives. Prior to her time at the Council, she served three years as president and chief executive officer of the Bay Area Economic Forum. McPeak is a Democrat.

Navarro, 51, of Modesto, has served as the principal architect of the architecture firm, Lionakis Beaumont Design Group, since 2005. Previously, he was the principal architect for Pratt Navarro Architecture from 1986 to 2004. Navarro currently serves as chair of the Modesto Redevelopment Agency Advisory Commission and Design Committee and is a member of the Stanislaus County Planning Commission and Hospital Building Safety Board. Navarro is a Democrat.

Ornellas, 62, of Tracy, has owned a dairy farm in Tracy since 1970. Additionally, he has served on the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors since he was first elected in 2001, where he serves as chair of the Agricultural Advisory Board. Ornellas was a founding member of the San Joaquin County Citizens Land Alliance and serves on the Board of Directors for the Sutter/Tracy Community Hospital and the Tracy Chamber of Commerce. Ornellas is a Republican.

Podesto, 65, of Stockton, is former Mayor of Stockton serving from 1997 to 2004. He previously served on the San Joaquin County Council of Governments, Regional Rail Commission, Auburn Dam Coalition, City of Stockton/Stockton Unified School District Joint Committee and the University of the Pacific Board of Regents. Prior to being elected Mayor, Podesto owned and operated three retail grocery businesses in the Stockton area. Podesto is a Republican.

Ruiz, 63, of Visalia, was first appointed to the Partnership in 2005 and has over 40 years experience in the food processing industry. He and his father founded Ruiz Foods in 1964. He has served as a member of the University of California, Board of Regents since 2004. In addition, Ruiz is currently on the board of directors for the California Chamber of Commerce, a trustee on the University of Merced Foundation, a member of the President's Advisory Board of California State University Fresno and a member of Valley CAN "Clean Air Now." Ruiz is a Republican.

Salazar, 46, of Fresno, was first appointed to the Partnership in 2005 and currently is co-owner of Sal's Mexican Restaurants, an independent family owned business that has been in operation since 1942. She is a member of the board of directors of the California Restaurant Association and served on the Board of Directors for the Greater Fresno Area Chamber of Commerce. Salazar is a Republican.

Simpson, 66, of Visalia, joined Buckman-Mitchell Insurance in 1964, where he currently serves as chair emeritus of Buckman-Mitchell Incorporated and Buckman-Mitchell Financial & Insurance Services. He also is past-president of Insurance Brokers & Agents of the West and the National Board of Visitors for California State University, Fresno. Simpson previously served as chair of the Visalia Economic Development Corporation. Simpson is a Republican.

Tomilinson-Keasey, 64, of Merced, currently serves as a professor of psychology at the University of California, Merced. Previously, she was a chancellor for UC Merced from 1999 to 2006 and was vice provost of academic initiatives for the University of California, Office of the President from 1997 to 1999. She is a past-member of the Great Valley Center Board of Trustees. Tomilinson-Keasey is a Democrat.

Voiland, 59, of Bakersfield, has served as president and chief executive officer of Aera Energy since 1997. From 1995 to 1997, he was president and chief executive officer for CalResources. Voiland previously served in various engineering and management positions for Shell Oil Company from 1969 to 1994. He serves on the Board of Directors for the California Chamber of Commerce and the Washington State University Foundation Governing Board. Voiland is a Republican.

Watson, 70, of Bakersfield, has served on the Kern County Board of Supervisors since 2002. He previously worked in the television industry for 36 years, finishing his career as president of the Ackerley Group/AK Media Group, serving a group of Central California television stations. Watson is past chair of the Future Bakersfield Foundation and the Kern Transportation Foundation. He currently serves on the Kern County Air Pollution District Board, San Joaquin Valley Rail Committee, Southern California Water Committee, San Joaquin Valley Water Coalition and Kern County LAFCO. Watson is a Republican.

These positions do not require Senate confirmation and there is no salary.

The California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley, originally launched in June 2005, brings state agency secretaries and Central Valley representatives together to make recommendations to the Governor regarding changes that would improve the economic well-being and quality of life for San Joaquin Valley residents. Specifically, the partnership improves the economic vitality of the Central Valley, creates new jobs, provides educational guidance and advancements, endorses the development of healthcare programs, enhances the transportation system that plays a critical role in interstate commerce and improves environmental quality.