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California Capitol Hill Bulletin

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To expand communications between Washington and California, the California Institute provides periodic news bulletins regarding current activity on Capitol Hill that directly impacts the state. Bulletins are published weekly during sessions of Congress, and occasionally during other periods.

HOUSE AGRICULTURE SUBCOMMITTEE MARKS UP FARM BILL'S NUTRITION & FORESTRY TITLES

On June 14, 2007, the House Agriculture Subcommittee on Department Operations, Oversight, Nutrition, and Forestry approved the Nutrition and Forestry titles of H.R. 2419, the 2007 Farm Bill. The Food Stamp program is included in this subcommittee's jurisdiction, which consumes 57% of the overall farm bill budget.

The Forestry title changes national forest conservation priorities, requires states to develop state-wide assessments of forest-resource conditions and strategies, changes the name of the "State Forest Stewardship Coordinating Committee", extends the Healthy Forest Reserve Program and the Office of International Forestry, and establishes a competitive grant program to assist Hispanic-serving institutions. The Subcommittee approved the Forestry title by voice vote.

The Nutrition title draft raises the allowable deductions to expand eligibility for the food stamp program, expands the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program for School Lunch programs to all 50 states and increases program funding, increases funding for the Emergency Assistance Food Program and the Seniors Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, increases penalties for fraud violations, provides USDA additional flexibility to impose punitive fines for food stamp violations, completes the transfer from food stamp coupons to EBT cards nationwide, and reauthorizes the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations. The Committee draft supports working families by eliminating the limit on the deduction for child care expenses used when determining food stamp eligibility. The Nutrition title was passed by voice vote with the following amendments (also approved by voice votes):

- Chairman Baca and Ranking Member Bonner's amendment to rename the Food Stamp Program as the "Secure Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program." (SSNAP)
- Congressman Kagen's amendment to establish a competitive grant program to develop and test solutions to the

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rising rate of obesity in the U.S. and to strengthen efforts to integrate nutrition education into the Food Stamp Program

- Chairman Baca and Congressman Boustany's amendment to direct USDA to support and encourage Food Stamp Nutrition Education and to promote the coordination of State Food Stamp Nutrition Education with other federally funded public health programs

- Chairman Baca's amendment to express the findings of Congress that products purchased for school lunch programs should meet the current requirements for the Federal Buy American guidelines

For more information, please visit: <http://agriculture.house.gov> .

HOUSE HEALTH SUBCOMMITTEE TAKES UP BILLS TO REAUTHORIZE PDUFA AND MDUFA

On June 12, 2007, the House Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee held a hearing to discuss several legislative drafts, including the Prescription Drug User Fee Act Reauthorization (PDUFA), the Medical Device User Fee and Modernization Act Reauthorization (MDUFMA), the Best Pharmaceuticals for Children Act (BPCA) and the Pediatric Research Equity Act (PREA). The Subcommittee heard from a number of witnesses, including: Dr. Randall L. Lutter, Associate Commissioner for Policy and Planning at the Food and Drug Administration; Dr. Richard L. Gorman, Chair of the AAP Section on Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics at the American Academy of Pediatrics; Dr. Caroline Loew, Senior Vice President for Science and Regulatory Affairs at PhRMA; and Mr. James Guest, President and CEO of Consumers Union.

In her remarks, Rep. Anna Eshoo (Menlo Park) urged passage of the Improving Pharmaceuticals for Children Act of 2007 (H.R. 2589), which she has sponsored and which reauthorizes with amendments both BPCA and PREA. Those laws were enacted to promote development of safe and effective drugs for children and to ensure that adequate information is available to determine the proper use of drugs in children. She also cited her concerns with direct-to-consumer advertising and the efficacy of the voluntary review procedure in the PDUFA reauthorization bill. She hoped the Committee could work to further improve that provision.

Rep. Lois Capps (Santa Barbara), during the question and answer period, focused on the diabetes drug Avandia and recent information indicating that it carries a higher risk of heart attack. She was particularly interested in the procedures the FDA is using to select experts to serve on the federal advisory committee established to investigate the drug. Capps wants FDA to ensure that individuals appointed will not have conflicts of interest that may color their objectivity.

Issues raised during the hearing included:

- the impact of direct-to-consumer advertising and the proposed voluntary review process;
- the need for new pediatric medical devices legislation to make more devices available to children;
- the need to increase resources for drug safety activities and the use of modern technology to better identify and assess risks;
- the post-market study authority granted FDA to investigate and respond quickly to newly identified drug risks; and
- the impact of the preemption provisions on state tort law.

The Health Subcommittee was scheduled to mark up these bills, as well as several other measures, on Tuesday, June 19, 2007.

For the testimony of the witnesses, go to: <http://www.energycommerce.house.gov> .

HOUSE ACTION ON HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS STALLED OVER EARMARKING RULES, BUT DEAL SAID TO BE IMMINENT

After more than two days of wrangling over the handling of earmarks on the 13 appropriations bills, the House adjourned subject to the call of the Chair on Thursday while negotiations on resolving the deadlock continued between the House Democratic and Republican leadership. Left pending was the FY2008 Appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security. Also in the pipeline and stalled were the FY2008 Appropriations for Military Construction-VA, and Energy and Water. Finally late Thursday evening, a deal was reached, which included an agreement on the amendments that would be offered to the bill, opening the way to further consideration of the bill and a vote on final passage before the weekend.

The Appropriations Committee bill provides \$36.3 billion for Homeland Security, compared to the President's request of \$34.2 billion. The White House has indicated the President will veto the bill because of the additional funding. As reported by the Committee, some of the funding in the bill of particular interest to California includes:

First Responder and Port Security Grant Programs: \$4.52 billion, \$1.97 billion above the President's request and \$863 million above 2007. The Committee summary states: "These grants were funded at \$4.92 billion in 2004 and have been cut every year since even as homeland security costs have continued to rise." Included within this total are the following:

- State Grants, including law enforcement: \$950 million, \$50 million above 2007 and \$700 million above the President's request for grants used to plan, equip and train local first responders to respond to terrorist attacks and catastrophic incidents.

- Urban Area Grants: \$800 million, \$30 million above 2007 and equal to the President's request to help high risk urban areas improve their ability to prevent, protect, respond to, and recover from acts of terrorism.

- Transit Grants: \$400 million, \$225 million above 2007 and the President's request, to protect critical transit infrastructure, including rail and ferry systems, in high-threat areas.

- Port Security Grants: \$400 million, \$190 million above 2007 and the President's request, for grants to protect critical port facilities and infrastructure, meeting the level authorized in the Safe Ports act.

- Customs and Border Protection: \$8.8 billion, \$50 million above the request and \$797 million above 2007. \$1 billion is provided for border security fencing and tactical infrastructure and 3,000 additional border patrol agents are funded. The Committee mark adds \$27 million for 250 additional Customs and Border Patrol Officers for commercial operations and C-TPAT validation – verifying that "trusted shippers" have in place necessary security measures – as mandated in the SAFE Port Act.

- Fence Requirements: Requires DHS to: 1.) coordinate with the National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Forest Service, BLM, and Bureau of Indian Affairs before starting fencing and tactical infrastructure projects on lands they administer, 2.) minimize impacts on wildlife and natural resources, 3.) consult with affected state and local communities and 4.) publish any waivers in the Federal Register 15 days before exercising them.

- Immigration and Customs Enforcement: \$4.8 billion (including the Federal Protective Service), \$322 million above 2007 and \$15 million above the President's request.

- US-VISIT: \$462 million, \$99 million above 2007 and matching the President's request, for tracking foreign visitors to the U.S. \$230 million is withheld until DHS provides a complete schedule for the exit program or a certification that it cannot be implemented within five years, as well as a detailed accounting of operations and maintenance and contractor costs.

- Pre-Disaster Mitigation: \$120 million, \$20 million above the President's request and 2007, for projects that reduce the risks associated with disasters.

For more information, go to: <http://www.appropriations.house.gov> .

HOUSE SCIENCE PANEL REVIEWS BIOFUELS PROMOTION

On Thursday, June 14, 2007, the House Science and Technology Subcommittee on Energy and Environment held a hearing entitled "A path toward the broader use of Biofuels: Enhancing the federal commitment to research and development to meet the growing need."

Subcommittee Chairman Nick Lampson (TX) noted that despite sharp increases in corn-based ethanol and soy-based biodiesel, ethanol still represents only 5% of the total gasoline sold, and biodiesel is an even smaller portion of the diesel market. Subcommittee Ranking Republican Member Bob Inglis (SC) commented that while a key advantage of biofuels is the diversity of feedstocks, it will cause challenges for infrastructure, production and distribution.

The panel heard from five witnesses, including Robert Dinneen, President of the Renewable Fuels Association (an ethanol industry trade association); Thomas Foust, Biofuels Research Director at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (based in Colorado); John Berger, Chairman and CEO of Standard Renewable Energy and CEO of BioSelect; David Waskow of Friends of the Earth; and Michael McAdams of Hart Energy, who is also Executive Director of the Advanced Biofuels Coalition (a group of users and producers of renewables).

In his testimony, Mr. Foust said biomass bioethanol holds potentially greater promise than corn ethanol or gasoline, but that the technology has a way to go before it will be in any way commercially viable. He also underscored the importance of greater investment in biofuel distribution infrastructure.

John Berger of BioSelect pressed for a federal biodiesel fuel standard to stimulate demand for soybean and other oils and to encourage automakers to develop vehicles capable of using the source. Mr. Dinneen stressed that there is a need not only for biofuels technical research, but also for efforts to encourage and promote a market for biofuels and ethanol. He added that federal efforts would help to "move beyond grain" in the production of ethanol.

Urging federal engagement on several technologies, Mr. McAdams of Hart Energy and the Advanced Biofuels Coalition quoted one elected official's recent comment that efforts to develop biofuels requires "silver buckshot rather than a silver bullet." He urged sufficient regulatory flexibility to allow development of BOTH a low-carbon fuel supply *AND* an efficient energy source -- and not have the two goals competing against one another.

Mr. Waskow of Friends of the Earth said it is important to focus on lifecycle emissions, rather than focusing solely on narrow slices of the processing of fuels. In particular, he noted that land conversion can have great impact, as for example converting forest land to grassland for fuel production negates many of the advantages of its use.

In addition to reviewing federal and private R&D efforts related to the production of biofuels, refineries, and demonstrations, the hearing also examined legislative proposals to restructure and enhance the biofuels research and development at the Departments of Energy and Agriculture.

The hearing was timed to coincide with Subcommittee Chairman Lampson's release of a "discussion draft" of his "Biofuels Research and Development Enhancement Act." According to the Science Committee, the legislation would add components of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 that would focus on biofuels infrastructure and on energy efficiency in biorefinery facilities to reduce energy consumption in the development of biofuels. It would increase authorization levels for the bioenergy program for FY08 to \$377 million, for FY09 to \$398 million, and for FY10 to \$419 million. It would also create a grant program for states with low levels of biofuels production to work toward higher levels of production.

During Q&A Rep. Lynn Woolsey (Petaluma) asked whether carbon-*neutral* was enough, and suggested, "Shouldn't we be doing better than that?" She expressed concern about subsidizing corn to grow ethanol, which she said is making corn too expensive for dairy farmers in her district. In reply, Waskow agreed that "we have to do much better than carbon-neutrality" and that California's LCFS goes a long way toward doing so. Regarding land use, he said that encouraging corn and soybean production in Brazil will likely yield to considerable rainforest destruction, but that other crops -- such as perennial grasses and algae -- show promise of being more sustainable.

Under the Energy Policy Act, there are three bioenergy research centers, and 11 more are envisioned. Ranking Member Inglis asked so many of them might be duplicative. Witnesses agreed, though they did note that different feedstocks from different regions with different markets could yield a need for several, but that 14 centers may be unnecessarily many.

For more information, visit <http://science.house.gov>.

SENATE FINANCE HOLDS TRADE HEARINGS

The Senate Finance Committee held two hearings, one on June 6, and the other on June 12, 2007, to address the impact of globalization on U.S. workers and U.S. trade enforcement policies. Witnesses at the *Trade and Globalization: Adjustment for a 21st Century Workforce* hearing on June 6th included: Lael Brainard, Vice President and Director of the Brookings Institute's Global Economy and Development Program; Jane McDonald-Pines, Workforce Policy Specialist with the AFL-CIO; and Howard Rosen, Executive Director of the Trade Adjustment Assistance Coalition.

In his opening remarks, Chairman Max Baucus (MT) stressed that it is time to ask whether the U.S. Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program is still relevant in to the 21st Century global economy and, if not, how it should be improved to continue to provide assistance to U.S. workers and farmers displaced by globalization. Ranking Member Charles Grassley (IA) echoed this view and noted that the challenge is to reauthorize TAA and other programs with fiscally responsible improvements to ensure they meet the goal of providing appropriate services to help trade-affected workers return to the workforce.

Issues raised at the hearing included:

- increasing TAA funding and improving the distribution of funds so that all affected workers can receive assistance;
- expanding the program to include service, public sector, and secondary workers; and
- providing income support, health and wage insurance, as well as retraining opportunities for displaced workers.

At the June 12th hearing, Committee witnesses included: Dan Glickman, Chairman and CEO, Motion Picture Association of America; and Jennifer Hillman, Distinguished Fellow, Institute of International Economic Law, Georgetown University Law Center. Chairman Baucus expressed concern that the Administration spends more time negotiating trade agreements than enforcing them. "The U.S. Trade Representative recently issued its report on foreign trade barriers in 2006," he said. "In it, USTR documented 650 pages worth of trade barriers. But in 2006, USTR filed only three WTO cases against those barriers. This year, it has filed only four. With 650 pages worth of barriers, it is hard to believe that only a handful merit action." Ranking Member Grassley, however, believes that the Administration "has done a pretty good job" of enforcing U.S. trade rights at the World Trade Organization and that the claim that the USTR is not pursuing good cases is "unfounded."

Mr. Glickman laid out several measures that he urged the Committee to support in improving trade enforcement, including ensuring adequate resources not only for U.S. agencies to enforce U.S. trade agreements, but also to educate foreign officials on enforcing their commitments under those agreements. He also argued that those education programs should be tied to the countries identified on the USTR 301 priority list as failing to prevent piracy and that they should be required to develop action plans to deal with piracy.

Ms. Hillman, formerly with the USTR's office and the U.S. International Trade Commission, believes that those who are entitled to remedies under U.S. trade law can obtain that relief "in a timely and effective manner and at a reasonable cost," at the present time. However, she testified that there are a number of issues in the administration of trade remedy laws that must be addressed. For instance, she noted that some WTO and U.S. Court decisions are creating uncertainty both in the trade agencies and among the trade bar on how to make appropriate changes to respond to them.

For the testimony of all the witnesses from both hearings, go to: <http://www.finance.senate.gov>.

HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD, ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION DISCUSSES STATE FLEXIBILITY AND NCLB

On June 7, 2007, the House Committee on Education and Labor Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education held a hearing entitled “Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act: Current and Prospective Flexibility Under No Child Left Behind.” The hearing featured testimony from witnesses representing the Center on Education Policy (CEP), South Dakota Department of Education, Michigan State Board of Education, Memphis City School Districts and the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation. The witnesses discussed study results, successful programs, challenges to those programs, and the unique challenge facing States to comply with NCLB while continuing to cater to their unique student body.

The following are a few key points from the hearing:

- In most states with three or more years of comparable test data, student achievement in reading and math has gone up since 2002, the year NCLB was enacted.
- There is more evidence of achievement gaps between groups of students narrowing since 2002 than of gaps widening. Still, the magnitude of the gaps is often substantial.
- In 9 of the 13 states with sufficient data to determine pre- and post-NCLB trends, average yearly gains in test scores were greater after NCLB took effect than before.
- Although NCLB emphasizes public reporting of state test data, the data necessary to reach definitive conclusions about achievement were sometimes hard to find or unavailable, or had holes or discrepancies. More attention should be given to issues of the quality and transparency of state test data
- The government should provide adaptation in state assessment requirements, particularly for testing of special needs students such as students with disabilities and Limited English Proficient (LEP) students and permit the use of growth model measures in all states
- Whenever possible, the federal government should be tight about results and loose about process
- The federal government should encourage states, districts, and schools to “earn” even more autonomy on the basis of strong performance

For more information, please visit: www.edlabor.house.gov

NATIONAL PARKS SUBCOMMITTEE EVALUATES RIM OF THE VALLEY CORRIDOR BILL

On June 14, 2007, the House Natural Resources Committee Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands held a hearing to evaluate several National Parks Bills including HR 1835, the Rim of the Valley Corridor Study Act. The bill (HR 1835) was introduced in the House on March 29, 2007 by Reps. Adam Schiff (Burbank) and Brad Sherman (Sherman Oaks). The Act would provide for a resource study of the area known as the Rim of the Valley Corridor in the State of California to evaluate alternatives for protecting resources of the corridor, and for other purposes. There are 645,268 total acres contained within the Rim of the Valley Corridor. This includes 153,750 acres in the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area and 190,112 acres in the Angeles National Forest. Representative Sherman testified on behalf of the bill and the important conservation efforts it represents. Joseph T. Edmiston, Executive Director of the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and Carl Olson, resident of Woodland Hills, also testified in support of the bill.

For more information, please visit: <http://resourcescommittee.house.gov> .

SCIENCE COMMITTEE EXAMINES GLOBALIZATION OF R&D AND INNOVATION

On June 12, 2007, the House Science Committee held a hearing on *The Globalization of R&D and Innovation* to consider “the implications of innovation offshoring for U.S. workers and the economy.” The witnesses were: Dr. Alan S. Blinder, Professor of Economics, Princeton University; Dr. Ralph E. Gomory, President, Alfred P. Sloan Foundation; Dr. Martin N. Baily, Senior Fellow, Peterson Institute for International Economics and Senior Adviser to McKinsey Global Institute; and Dr. Thomas J. Duesterberg, President and CEO, Manufacturers Alliance/MAPI.

Dr. Baily testified that the “United States benefits from globalization because it results in lower prices for US consumers, provides greater access to new technologies and business practices from around the world, allows US companies to take advantage of economies of scale, and because it forces companies to improve their own performance.” Nevertheless, he said, there is reason for concern over the impact of globalization on the skilled workforce and on the science and technology base of the US economy. Dr. Blinder detailed the growing offshoring of service jobs, and not just low-paying call centers, but more and more highly-skilled jobs such as computer programmers, scientists and engineers, accountants, security analysts, and some aspects of legal work. He differentiated between *personal* service jobs which require face-to-face contact (e.g., cab drivers and brain surgeons) and *impersonal* service jobs (investment analysts and customer service reps) where face-to-face contact is not needed. In his opinion, “market pressures emanating from trade and globalization (especially international differences in labor costs) will force more and more Americans to leave impersonal service and manufacturing jobs and seek employment in personal service jobs instead.”

For the testimony of all the witnesses, go to: <http://www.democrats.science.house.gov> .

HOUSE EDUCATION AND LABOR APPROVES THE COLLEGE COST REDUCTION ACT

The House Education and Labor Committee approved H.R. 2669, the College Cost Reduction Act of 2007 on Thursday, June 14, 2007. The Committee voted 30 to 16 to approve the legislation that, according to the Committee, would make the single largest investment in college financial aid since the 1944 GI Bill. The legislation reduces excessive federal subsidies paid to lenders in the college loan industry by \$19 billion and also includes \$750 million in federal budget deficit reduction. Under this bill, the maximum value of the Pell Grant scholarship would increase by \$500 over the next five years, making the maximum Pell Grant reach \$4,900 by 2008 and \$5,200 by 2011. This increase is intended to restore the Pell Grant’s purchasing power, which affects approximately 6 million students. H.R. 2669 also cuts interest rates in half on need-based student loans from 6.8 percent to 3.4 percent over the next five years. The legislation guarantees that borrowers will not have to spend more than 15 percent of their yearly discretionary income on loan repayments and allows borrowers in economic hardship to have their loans forgiven after 20 years. The College Cost Reduction Act includes a number of other provisions that would ease the financial burden imposed on students and families by the cost of college, including:

- Tuition assistance for excellent undergraduate students who agree to teach in the nation's public schools;
- Loan forgiveness for college graduates that go into public service professions;
- Increased federal loan limits so that students won’t have to rely as heavily on costlier private loans; and
- New tuition cost containment strategies.

Further information on the bill can be obtained from the Committee’s website at: <http://edlabor.house.gov>

HOUSE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE MARKS UP ENERGY BILL

On June 13, 2007, the House Natural Resources Committee approved H.R. 2337, the Energy Policy Reform and Revitalization Act of 2007. The Energy Policy Reform and Revitalization Act of 2007 is aimed at providing a framework to reinstate public accountability and integrity in the Interior Department’s energy programs, advance alternative fuels and efficient energy strategies, promote carbon sequestration, and tackle the impacts of climate change on invaluable fish and wildlife resources. The legislation was approved by a vote of 26-22.

Key provisions included in the Committee-passed legislation will:

- Give the federal government enforcement authority to challenge those companies who do not pay federal oil and gas royalties as they should according to law
- Authorize a combination of voluntary guidelines and enforcement mandates for the wind energy industry to help ensure that the industry is able to develop and grow
- Initiate a framework for sequestering carbon dioxide under the ground to insure the future use of fuels, such as coal, in an environmentally responsible fashion
- Add a \$1,700 fee for the processing of an application for a permit to drill on federal land

- Extend the timeline for processing permits to drill on public lands from 30 to 90 days, giving the Bureau of Land Management more flexibility in issuing permits
 - Eliminate the deadlines of the western energy corridor process and provide for a study on congestion sites and inappropriate sites for pipelines and transmission wires
 - Encourage the development of renewable resources through the establishment of an innovative program to more effectively use woody biomass derived from brush, hazardous fuel reduction, and ecological restoration on federal forest lands
 - Establish a national ocean observation system to detect daily changes in the ocean and gather information important to national defense, marine commerce, and scientific research
 - Direct the Secretary of the Interior to develop a national strategy to assist wildlife populations and their habitats in adapting to the impacts of climate change
- For more information, please visit: <http://resourcescommittee.house.gov> .

HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE MARKS UP WATER AND POWER BILLS

On June 12, 2007, the House Natural Resources Committee Subcommittee on Water and Power approved several bills relating to California.

H.R. 31, The Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District Wastewater and Recycled Water Facilities Act of 2007, authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to participate in the Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District, Wildomar Service Area Recycled Water Distribution Facilities, and Alberhill Wastewater Treatment and Reclamation Facility projects. H.R. 31 was sponsored by Rep. Darrell Issa (Vista) and was approved by unanimous consent. H.R. 716, The Santa Rosa Water Reuse Plan Act, authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to participate in the Santa Rosa Urban Water Reuse Plan and was amended by unanimous consent by Rep. Grace Napolitano (Norwalk), Chair of the Subcommittee, before being reported to the full committee. H.R. 1562, authored by Rep. George Miller, authorizes the Bay Area Regional Water Recycling Program. H.R. 1562 was reported to the full committee with two amendments by Chair Napolitano. H.R. 1725 authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to participate in the Rancho California Water District Southern Riverside County Recycling/Non-potable Distribution Facilities and Demineralization/Desalination Recycled Water Treatment and Reclamation Facility Project. H.R. 1725 was sponsored by Rep. Mary Bono (Palm Springs) and forwarded favorably to the full committee without amendment.

For more information, please visit: <http://resourcescommittee.house.gov>

CHI RELEASES PATENT REFORM REPORT

The California Healthcare Institute (CHI) issued a white paper entitled "Impact of Patent Law Changes on Biomedical Investment and Innovation," on May 31, 2007. The paper analyzes several recent developments related to patent law that could have serious implications for the biomedical industry in California and nationwide. These include: (1) recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions that weaken patents; (2) patent reform legislation being considered by Congress; and (3) the approach taken by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) toward making and promulgating new patent rules.

For a copy of the report, go to: <http://www.chi.org> .

RAND HOSTS POLICY CONFERENCE ON NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACCOUNTABILITY

On June 12, 2007, RAND held a policy conference entitled "Assessing Accountability Under the No Child Left Behind Act" in Washington. For the last several years, the American Institutes for Research (AIR), the Center on Education Policy (CEP), and the RAND Corporation, have been conducting studies on the implementation of NCLB. The conference served as a forum for the organizations to present their findings on NCLB and to provide the most current information to education, business, and other organizations as they prepare for the reauthorization of NCLB in the next Congress.

Dr. Kerstin Le Floch of AIR presented "State Accountability and Support Systems under NCLB" which discussed how states differ in terms of accountability systems, school identification and support provided. Brian

Stecher of RAND presented “School Improvement Efforts.” He discussed what schools are doing to foster improvement, how government can assist them, and what help they currently receive.

Representing the CEP, Jack Jennings presented the “Schools Identified for Improvement” portion evaluating how schools are responding to being identified for improvement and student achievement changes in general since the enactment of NCLB. Laura Hamilton of RAND presented her report in the “Changes in the Classroom” portion, focusing on math and science teachers. Her report showed that most superintendents considered three improvement strategies most important: using data for decisionmaking, aligning curriculum with state standards, and focusing on low-performing students. Teachers changed their instruction in both desirable and undesirable ways due to NCLB.

For more information, please visit: www.rand.org

CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE BREAKFAST HOSTS REP. KEVIN MCCARTHY

On June 14, 2007, the California Institute held another in its 2007 series of Advisory Board Member breakfasts, with special guest speaker Rep. Kevin McCarthy. These bipartisan delegation breakfasts are a forum for the California Institute Advisory Board to hear directly from members of the California delegation.

Congressman Kevin McCarthy, a fourth-generation Kern County resident, was elected in November 2006 to represent the 22nd District of California, which includes agricultural lands in the Central Valley and the Central Coast, energy resources, military facilities, and rapidly growing communities. Previously, McCarthy served as a staffer to former Rep. Bill Thomas, and was a top leader in the State Legislature. Rep. McCarthy serves on the House Committee on Agriculture and the House Administration Committee. He was also selected to serve as an Assistant Whip on the House Republican Whip Team and was named to the House Republican Steering Committee, which controls the committee assignments of House Republican members.

Rep. McCarthy commented on the value of increased bipartisanship efforts in the Delegation, and he discussed his work with California Democrats as well as Republicans on the Agriculture Committee. He also emphasized the importance of maintaining strong relationships with State government, discussed redistricting efforts and options, and suggested various campaign finance reforms that he would like to see established to better the political process.

For more information about Congressman McCarthy, please visit his website at: <http://www.house.gov/mccarthy> .

CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE HOSTS BRIEFING ON THE ENERGY BIOSCIENCES INSTITUTE

On Thursday, June 14, 2007, the California Institute hosted a Congressional briefing on a comprehensive research initiative to develop new, clean and sustainable biofuel alternatives for transportation. In February, BP announced that it was awarding \$500 million over a 10 year period to establish the Energy Biosciences Institute (EBI) to a team led by the University of California Berkeley in partnership with the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and the University of Illinois. The briefing featured Chris Somerville, incoming director of the new Energy Biosciences Institute (EBI), Graham Fleming, the Deputy Director of the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, Dan Kammen, professor of Nuclear Engineering at UC Berkeley, and Paul Willems, BP’s technology VP for Energy Biosciences.

BP’s Paul Willems discussed the future “beyond petroleum” naming energy security, increasing demand for energy, and climate change among the top priorities for the future of energy. Currently, 80% of all energy is used for electricity, industrial, and infrastructure purposes and only 20% used for transportation. However, the transportation sector is uniquely carbon dependent at this point. The Energy Biosciences Institute seeks to use “mission-oriented” basic science in advanced energy research to find answers in an interdisciplinary manner to the many energy challenges today.

For more information about EBI, visit: <http://www.ebiweb.org/> . To download or view streaming video of the June 14 briefing, or to listen to or download an mp3 audio file, visit the California Institute’s video/audio page at <http://www.calinst.org/video.htm> .

2007 CALIFORNIA STATE SOCIETY ANNUAL PICNIC: SATURDAY, JUNE 16

This Saturday, June 16, 2007, the California State Society holds its Annual Picnic, which will be held in West Potomac Park, at Ohio Dr. & Independence Ave, SW, near the Lincoln and FDR Memorials across from the shores of the Potomac River.

The event attracts hundreds of California transplants from throughout the DC area. The \$20 cost of attendance also buys an annual CSS membership, which affords admission to many other CSS events through the year. To attend, one must be a current CSS member to attend, so you can sign up to be a member before the picnic on our website, or simply pay at the door. RSVP to rsvpforcsssevents@yahoo.com or call 202-543-9559.

In addition, kids under 16 attend free as well. (Wrist bands are distributed at the entrance, so to drink it is a good idea to bring ID.)

The picnic will feature live music, ample food and refreshments (including the always-popular "Taste of California"), a volleyball tournament, kid and young adult games, a moonbounce, face painting & body art, live music, and a charity raffle with many great prizes.

SCHEDULE: The picnic begins at 11:00 am with the opening of registration and the "Taste of California" table. At 11:30 am, the moonbounce starts, and the volleyball tournament gets underway. From noon through 3:00 pm there will be live music at the main stage and face painting at the kids area. From 12:30 to 2:30, barbecue lunch will be served. And then at 3:00 pm, the charity raffle begins.

LOCATION: "West Potomac Park" -- Ohio Dr. & Independence Ave., SW. The site is near the Lincoln and FDR Memorials and the shores of the Potomac River, just west of the polo grounds across Independence Avenue to the south of the Lincoln Memorial. Enter the site from Ohio Drive, across from the river.

METRO #1: Smithsonian (walk west along Independence Ave towards the Washington Monument and go past it until you hit the river. It is approximately 1 mile total to the picnic site.)

METRO #2: Arlington Cemetery (walk east across Memorial Bridge and turn right. It is approximately 1 mile to the picnic site.)

PARKING: There is (very) limited three-hour street parking along Ohio Drive. Parking lots are located beneath the 14th Street Bridge adjacent to the Potomac (a 15-20 minute / 0.7 mile walk to the picnic grounds).

VOLLEYBALL: For the Volleyball Tournament, leave a message for Shervin Bolorian: 202-905-9672 or email calinstitute@gmail.com . (Volleyball players are admitted for a discounted rate -- \$15 instead of \$20.)

For still more about CSS and the picnic, visit <http://www.californiastatesociety.org> .