Opinion: Keep state a leader in clean energy, no on Prop. 23

By Richard Branson

Four years ago in Long Beach, I, along with 15 business leaders, met with Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and British Prime Minister Tony Blair to discuss how to deploy clean energy around the world. Our message was clear: Adopt policies that put a price on carbon emissions, and investment in clean energy will follow.

Two months after the meeting, on Sept. 27, 2006, Schwarzenegger signed the Global Warming Solutions Act (AB32) into law, unleashing a wave of private-sector investment in clean energy. Last year, California's clean-tech sector received $2.1 billion in investment, accounting for 60 percent of all clean-tech investment in North America. The clean-tech sector is now one of the fastest growing sectors in the state, creating jobs at a rate 10 times faster than the statewide average and employing more than 500,000 Californians.

As a result, California is home to seven of the top 10 clean-tech businesses in the country, earning it a reputation globally as a pre-eminent leader on climate change and a favorite to provide the technologies for the clean-energy revolution taking shape around the world.

Read the whole story

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