

February 10, 2008
To: ETAAC
From: Muriel Strand, P.E.
Re: ETAAC Report Final Draft

Reviewing the report overall (though not I fear in the depth it deserves) I see clearly much thoughtful and thorough work by committee members and staff. This information and guidance will be very useful in the near term (for the 2012 and perhaps the 2020 goals) to those on the front lines of technological evolution.

I hope the committee intends to include the Climate-Friendly Product Labeling Recommendation in the Financial Sector section, as this section generally refers to all the sectors that follow, and consumers use products from all those sectors. Implementation of such labeling programs is another source of cleantech jobs, and also offer an opportunity to directly harness popular support for change. And Proposition 65's widespread public notices are another example of effective public education.

At the same time, I see that the report reflects assumptions which were more or less built in from the beginning by the exact mandate given to the committee. These assumptions naturally affect the committee's conclusions. And I fear these assumptions all reduce the long-term usefulness of the committee's results.

One assumption is that only new and fancy innovations—rather than ordinary, traditional, or recycled technology—are our best bet for new ways to keep on driving and increase inter/national trade. While it's true that simple technologies might not be best to keep on driving and distributing, all this driving and distributing isn't all that good for us anyway. And this assumption deprives simple, local, inexpensive and effective methods of the capital investment which is essential for pilot projects of all kinds. Why do things in a complicated way when a simple way is available? Why invent any more wheels when there are so many sitting on the shelf? Let's invest in those technologies which best provide creature comforts in ways that offer relocalized security.

Another assumption is that economic development is best measured by monetary metrics. Again, the provision of creature comforts for our optimum population is the real economy that lies behind the classical "veil of money." When life is calm, monetary metrics such as 'economic growth' are an efficient stand-in for deeper examination. But when the link between money and creature comforts is uncertain and erratic, superficial and conventional estimates promise economic crises. Consumers and businesses alike will be best served by 'dual' prices, in terms of both money and energy. According to basic economic theory, prices are relative, and based on individuals' assessments of utility and value. Thus, estimates of value and prices can only be as good as the information people have.

As a pensioner of, and captive investor in CalPERS, who intends to remain in California, I believe that wise investments in California's economic development have a multiplier effect on my economic welfare. In addition to a standard monetary ROI, a healthy and balanced economy where I live will make my life easier and more pleasant in a hundred small ways that don't show

up on the bottom line. Please include CalPERS (assuming they agree to it) as one of the Responsible Parties for appropriate items (such as C - job creation) in the Finance section of the Mapping on page 1-17, so my investment will yield this kind of multiplied return.

Another major assumption is that we will keep driving, that we need mobility as an end in itself, rather than strictly as a means to access our basic creature comforts. On page 3-9, the report currently reads “*Improve mobility. Access to affordable, safe, and convenient travel is critical for economic development.*” Instead, I suggest “*Improve access to basic necessities. Ability to obtain affordable and safe survival needs is critical for economic development.*”

On page 3-4 I suggest adding the following to the list of new opportunities:

“Ecovillage plans by local governments to create local livelihood opportunities that maximize local production of simple and daily needs while focusing import and export on local specialties and products with high value-density.”

Lastly, the challenges of implementing new and unfamiliar technologies should not be underestimated. We see common and persistent problems with existing technologies, such as urban buses in the East Bay and Sacramento, where typically fares go up and service goes down. Similarly, eager customers for NiMH car-size batteries are reportedly deprived of their economic demands by a dog-in-the-manger corporation. Absence of worthy products due to profit-taking schemes or special interests is a market failure that is rarely reversed.

No amount of technological prowess and innovative elegance will prevail over lack of good faith.