

Assembly Committee on Jobs, Economic Development, and the Economy

Oversight of the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development

Tuesday March 15, 2016, Sacramento, California 9:00 a. m. to 12:00 p. m.

Witnesses Biographies (alphabetical order)

Panorea Avdis; Director, GO-Biz

Panorea Avdis serves as the Director of the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz), the state's lead entity for economic development and job creation efforts. Prior to her most recent appointment, Director Avdis served as the Chief Deputy Director for GO-Biz, Chief of Staff in the Office of Sacramento County Supervisor Phil Serna, Director of External Affairs at the California Department of Housing and Community Development under Governor Schwarzenegger. She also served in several positions in the Office of Governor Gray Davis including advance staff and special assistant to the Governor. In addition to her public sector work, she spent several years in the private sector as a project manager and advisor to the Chairman of AKT Development; a major land development company based in Northern California.

Director Avdis Chairs the I-Bank Board and the CA Competes Tax Credit Committee and serves on the California Employment Training Panel, Green Collar Jobs Council, California Industrial Development Financing Advisory Commission, Economic Recovery Financing Committee and the CALED Advisory Committee. She also serves on the Board of Director for the California State University, Sacramento Hellenic Outreach Program, the Tsakopoulos Hellenic Foundation, Music on a Mission, Angelic LLC, and serves as the custodian of archives for Governor Gray Davis.

She is a native Sacramento, daughter of Greek immigrants, and a graduate of UC Davis.

Teveia Barnes; Executive Director, IBank

Teveia Barnes was appointed by Governor Brown as Executive Director of the California Infrastructure and Economic Development Bank (IBank) on July 12, 2013. IBank's mission is to finance infrastructure, economic expansion, clean energy and water projects and to promote small business in California through the Small Business Finance Center. IBank's statutory powers include the authority to issue bonds, make loans and provide financing and credit enhancements for a variety of infrastructure, clean energy, water and economic expansion projects to state and local governments, municipalities, universities, schools and hospitals.

Prior to joining IBank, Ms. Barnes was commissioner of the California Department of Financial Institutions, the chief state regulator of depository financial institutions responsible for the licensing, examination and supervision of [banks](#), [credit unions](#), savings associations, [trust companies](#), [foreign banking organizations](#), industrial development companies and [money transmitters](#). Barnes was a partner at the law firm of Foley and Lardner LLP. Barnes worked at the Bank of America NT&SA as associate general counsel and senior vice president.

Ms. Barnes earned a Juris Doctorate from New York University School of Law in 1978 and received her BA degree in economics, political science and German studies from Rice University in 1975, where she was an Arthur B. Cohn Scholar.

Julian Canete; Director of Public Policy, California Asian Pacific Chamber of Commerce

Julian Canete currently serves as the Director of Public Policy and Strategic Partnerships. As Director of Public Policy, he manages the chamber's advocacy efforts and engages legislators, executive branch, and government agencies on issues that impact California's API and small business community. He is currently a member of the

California Utilities Diversity Council (CUDC), serves on the Department of General Services Small Business Advisory Board, and represents CalAsian Chamber on the Californians for Affordable & Reliable Energy (CARE) coalition.

Julian previously served as President and CEO of the California Hispanic Chambers of Commerce from 1999 – 2006 and again from 2009-2012. During his tenures the CHCC was recognized as country's largest statewide ethnic chamber of commerce. Julian has served as the Chairman of the San Joaquin County Private Industry Council, on the Coalition of State Hispanic Chambers of Commerce.

John Grubb; Chief Operating Officer, Bay Area Council

John is responsible for the organization's government relations, public policy, advocacy and China operations. The Bay Area Council is the voice of the San Francisco-Silicon Valley Bay Area's largest companies. Each year, Mr. Grubb is tasked with implementing the annual vision of improvements for the Bay Area developed by the CEOs of these companies. He works with a staff of professionals in five offices in California and China to formulate and execute many of the Council's successful advocacy campaigns that have improved the lives of millions of Bay Area residents. John's previous positions with the Council include Senior Vice President of External Affairs and Vice President of Communications. Before joining the Bay Area Council, John worked at Hill and Knowlton and Porter Novelli, two of the world's largest public relations agencies.

Brooks Ohlson; Director, Northern California and Sacramento Regional Center for International Trade Development

Brooks Ohlson is currently the Director of the Northern California/Sacramento Regional Center for International Trade Development (CITD) a program created and funded by the California Community College Chancellors Office. Mr. Ohlson previously served for 8 years as the Executive Director of the Northern California World Trade Center (NCWTC), and its U.S. State Department's International Visitors Program (NCIV). Over the past 18 years, Mr. Ohlson developed and hosted over 500 international conferences, workshops, training programs and trade missions with total participation of over 11,000 persons. One of the most significant was the 1800 attendee USA/PRC Business Conference in San Francisco which he developed and hosted for the Guangdong and Hong Kong governments. He has created over \$11 million in public and private sector contracts and grant funds to operate the CITD, NCWTC, NCIV and the Bulgarian Consulate during this period. He elevated the NCWTC to amongst the top 5 in the U.S.A. as well as earning the NCWTC the prestigious President of the United States E Award for outstanding export service program and organization (2004). In May 2010, and again in 2013 he received the President's E Award again, this time for the Los Rios CITD. In May 2015 he was appointed by California Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. to the California International Trade and Investment Advisory Council.

Mr. Ohlson previously served as the District Director for the U.S. Department of Commerce Commercial Service in Sacramento. Prior to that appointment he served as the Regional Director (SAIC) for the Southwestern Regional office of the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Industry and Security, Office of Export Enforcement, Los Angeles.

Mr. Ohlson served as a U.S. Foreign Service Officer, with the Foreign Commercial Service as the Export Control Attaché responsible for Sweden and Scandinavia. Following that 4 year assignment he made frequent trips to Europe, the Middle East and Asia for the Department's non-proliferation offices in partnership with USDOC, USDOS, DOD, CIA and US Customs.

Prior to his tenure at the Commerce Department, Mr. Ohlson served with distinction as a Senior Special Agent with the U.S. Treasury Department's BATF, and US Secret Service. He is a native Californian and speaks Spanish, Swedish, Danish and Norwegian. He is a graduate of California State University.

In August 2004 he was appointed by the Prime Minister of Bulgaria and the U.S, State Department as the Honorary Consul General of Bulgaria to Northern California.

Diane Richards; Senior Program Manager, City of West Sacramento Economic Development and Housing Department

Diane is a member of the International Economic Development Council and the American Institute of Certified Planners. She holds a B.A. degree in Geography from the University of South Florida and previously worked in commercial real estate and banking. Diane has led the City's business attraction program for nearly 15 years. She has had the honor of assisting numerous companies to locate or expand in West Sacramento, including Bayer CropScience, TOMRA Sorting Systems, Siemens Healthcare, Nippon Shokken and Shinmei Foods, that have created over 6,000 new jobs in West Sacramento. Diane believes the keys to her success are providing value to her clients through superior customer service and integrity. She considers her role to be that of a facilitator of conversations between industry and local, state and regional partners.

Mr. Michael Shaw; Vice President of Government Relations, California Manufacturing and Technology Association

As Vice President of Government Relations for the California Manufacturers & Technology Association, Mr. Shaw oversees the legislative and regulatory agenda for California manufacturers and manages the CMTA advocacy team. The California Manufacturers & Technology Association has advocated for pro-growth laws and regulations before the California legislature and administrative agencies since 1918.

Shaw was most recently Vice President of External Affairs for the California Trucking Association after serving as California Legislative Director for the National Federation of Independent Business, and as a lobbyist for the California Chamber of Commerce. Shaw has extensive experience in the areas of climate change, health care, tort reform, and workers' compensation, and he has worked on a number of statewide political races and initiative campaigns.

Shaw is a third-generation Californian and he graduated from California State University, Sacramento with a B.A. in Government

Louis Stewart; Deputy Director for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, GO-Biz

Louis Stewart currently serves as the Deputy Director of Innovation and Entrepreneurship in the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz), where he oversees the coordination and promotion of innovative programs, activities, and emerging technologies throughout the state of California. At GO-Biz, Mr. Stewart manages a robust statewide innovation-based economic development support network of regional innovation clusters called the California Innovation Hubs (iHubs). The 16 iHubs were designed to stimulate local, regional, and statewide job creation as well as enhance the awareness, visibility, and opportunities for commercialization of the technologies emerging from GO-Biz' iHub partners.

Mr. Stewart's role includes a priority to develop an ecosystem that endorses entrepreneurship as well as promotes approaches that will augment strategic business development opportunities. High profile business opportunities are coordinated and managed in order to retain and expand business investment, assist in job creation, and enhance economic opportunities through collaboration and innovation.

Mr. Stewart comes from the private sector where he has 17 years of experience in Sales, Marketing, and Information Technologies. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Santa Clara University.

Aubry Stone; President and CEO, California Black Chamber of Commerce

Mr. Stone is currently the President/CEO of the California Black Chamber of Commerce (CBCC) and Director of the California Black Chamber Foundation. Appointed by the Governor, he currently serves as a California Commissioner for Economic Development. He aggressively led the California Black Chamber in such public policy issues as: Prop 187, co-authored the 9th circuit injunction against implementation of Prop 209, publicly advocated against Brown-fields, the urban environment, insurance redlining the inner city impact of bank acquisitions and mergers and leads the charge of new and emerging markets.

Andrew Sturmfels; Deputy Director of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs, GO-Biz

Andrew Sturmfels was appointed by Governor Brown in September of 2014 to serve as Deputy Director for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs at the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz). Previously, Andrew served as Senior Permit Assistance Specialist at GO-Biz where he assisted businesses in California with understanding and navigating permitting, licensing, and regulatory processes. Prior to joining GO-Biz, Andrew worked for the Department of Toxic Substances Control and Cal-EPA as a manager for organizational planning and performance and as a legislative analyst. Before entering public service, Andrew spent 7 years in hospitality management, serving in senior leadership positions with the San Francisco Marriott Marquis and Larkspur Hotels and Restaurants.

Andrew holds a bachelor's degree in Political Science from Roanoke College in Virginia and a Masters of Public Policy and Public Administration from Sacramento State University. Andrew resides with his family in West Sacramento, where he also serves on the city's Planning Commission and as a board member for the Sacramento Valley Section of the American Planning Association.

Susanne Thorsen Stirling; Vice President of International Affairs, California Chamber of Commerce

Susanne Thorsen Stirling is Vice President of International Affairs for the California Chamber of Commerce. The organization, established in 1890, is the largest and most broadly based employer representative in the state capitol. Its members include over 14,000 firms of all kinds and sizes, as well as 450 affiliated local chambers of commerce and 200 trade associations. Through its grassroots action program, the California Chamber reaches out to a statewide network of over 430,000 small business owners. The California Chamber also offers a variety of services to help businesses comply with complex laws and regulations, as well as, compete in the international marketplace.

The California Chamber supports expansion of international trade and investment, fair and equitable market access for California products abroad, and elimination of disincentives that impede the international competitiveness of California business.

Mrs. Stirling is responsible for the activities of the California Chamber Council for International Trade, including the CIT's involvement with state and federal legislative and regulatory issues, together with international issues on the bilateral and multilateral levels. In addition to trade policy, she also coordinates trade development and promotion on behalf of the CalChamber. The Council maintains an active website at www.calchamber.com/international and also produces a weekly e-trade newsletter.

Mrs. Stirling was appointed by the Governor to the California International Trade and Investment Advisory Council, and serves on the Northern California District Export Council (appointed by the US Secretary of Commerce), as well as, the National Export Council Steering Committee. Mrs. Stirling is a member of the US Chamber of Commerce International Committee and the Chile-California Council, in addition to serving as an alternate Board member to the California International Relations Foundation. In previous years, Mrs. Stirling served on the Board of Directors of the International Diplomacy Council, the World Affairs Council of Northern California (Sacramento), and the Danish-American Chamber of Commerce.

Through the efforts of Mrs. Stirling, the California Chamber of Commerce is a recipient of the US President's "Excellence for Export Service Award," the nation's highest award to honor US exporters. Mrs. Stirling also has received the prestigious Presidential Citation from the government of the Republic of Korea for promoting US-Korea commercial relations.

Prior to her affiliation with the California Chamber of Commerce, Mrs. Stirling was employed in Copenhagen by Burmeister and Wain A/S, a Danish ship-building company, in their public relations and finance/legal departments.

Mrs. Stirling received her Master of Arts in International Relations from the University of Southern California in 1976. Her undergraduate work was completed at the University of Copenhagen and the University of the Pacific in Stockton, where she received her Bachelor of Arts in International Relations in 1975, and currently serves as a Regent.

Mrs. Stirling and her husband, former California state Assembly Member, Superior Court Judge and Chief Deputy Attorney General, Dave Stirling, and their daughter reside in the California Delta.

Jesse Torres; Deputy Director and State Small Business Advocate, GO-Biz

Jesse Torres was appointed deputy director, small business advocate in the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development in April 2015. Previously, Jesse had served as regional director of the Los Angeles Small Business Development Center Network at Long Beach City College from 2011 to 2015. He was director of alumni relations at Pepperdine University from 2009 to 2011, where he was also director of alumni and corporate relations from 2005 to 2009. Additionally he served as regional director at Orange County and Inland Empire Small Business Development Center Network in 2009 and associate director of development, grants and communications at Geffen Playhouse from 2002 to 2005. Torres earned a Master of Business Administration degree from Pepperdine University and Bachelor's degree in Psychology from UCLA.

Biography for Claudia Viek; Chief Operating Officer, California Association for Micro Enterprise Opportunity (CAMEO)

Claudia Viek has over 25 years of experience in business incubation, entrepreneurial training and microfinance that has earned her a position as a thought leader.

Claudia is the CEO of CAMEO (California Association for Micro Enterprise Opportunity) a statewide network of 170 organizations and individuals committed to promoting economic opportunity and community well-being through entrepreneurial training programs and microloans. CAMEO's members serve 18,000 businesses annually that support 35,000 jobs.

In recognition of her work, Claudia has recently been awarded: 2013 Top 100 Small Business Influence Champion, Women Impacting Public Policy's Policy Award, and Women in Business Champion of the Year Award from the Los Angeles Small Business Administration and the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce.

Claudia serves on the board of the Association for Enterprise Opportunity (AEO) and is the former chair of the national State Micro Enterprise Association (SMA) network. As a pioneer in both the Micro Enterprise and business incubation movement in California, she founded the Renaissance Entrepreneurship Center in San Francisco in 1987 and the Pacific Incubation Network in 1995.

Sid Voorakkara; Senior Business Development Specialist, GO-Biz

Mr. Voorakkara was appointed by Governor Brown in May 2013 as the Senior Business Development Specialist for San Diego and Imperial Counties. In this capacity, he works directly with companies to receive credits and incentives from the state for job growth, attraction, expansion and retention. He also partners with our elected delegation and other public and private economic development stakeholders to develop long-term initiatives to grow and expand the region's economic outputs.

Mr. Voorakkara spent nearly a decade prior to this service as a Program Manager with The California Endowment, the state's largest private foundation. In this capacity, Mr. Voorakkara was The Endowment's statewide strategic officer on building pathways into high-wage, high-growth jobs. Additionally, Mr. Voorakkara spent ten years as a communication and media specialist in public and private positions. He currently serves on the San Diego City Ethics Commission, is the Vice Chair of the San Diego City College Foundation Board of Directors and is a member of the San Diego Community College Trustees Advisory Council.