

Prop. 23 is a good idea

Tim Hunt, Bay Area News Group, 7-18-10

ONE OF THE HEATED debates this fall likely will be on Prop. 23, whether to suspend the state's incredibly ambitious effort to reduce carbon emissions to 1990 levels.

A group of businesses and individuals, led by the Howard Jarvis group, have qualified an initiative for the ballot that would suspend implementation of the law until the unemployment rate falls below 5.5 percent for four consecutive quarters.

Given the depth of the economic hit that California has taken as one of the centers of the housing bubble and the resulting job losses, it would likely be an indefinite suspension.

That would be good news because the law, which attempts to address human-caused global warming, was ill-advised from the start. The governor considers it one of his crowning achievements — and that says it all for his term in office.

As written, the law would cost all Californians more for food, power and transportation and could result in a loss of 1.1 million jobs according to one study.

Toss in the incredible power that it gives to the regional air boards and you have an economic train wreck.

Consider the regulations that the Bay Area air board already has adopted to curb greenhouse gases. They reach into local land-use decisions, giving the agencies numerical targets to use in deciding whether a proposed development would have to consider pollution effects in its planning.

Remember, this is the same board that was going to specify dairy cattle feeds to "control" the methane gases that cows emit during their digestion process.

Is this the type of bureaucratic regulator control you would want over the state's economy and your life? Regulators routinely ignore any economic cost and focus entirely on their "goal," which may or may not be backed by sound science.

Also remember the controversy surrounding the so-called science that amounted to cooked data that much of the international "global warming science" is based upon. The selective use of data and silencing of scientific critics with different views received precious little coverage in the U.S. despite the huge economic ramifications.

The jury is way out still as to whether man's activities are causing global warming or the weather is in long-term cycling. To subject California's fragile economy to another insult invites continuation of the dismal job climate.

GETTING AWAY: At Lake Tahoe for a few days of golf and relaxation with my wife before I head to Africa for my annual mission trip this week, we recently golfed at Old Greenwood in Truckee.

As we were waiting on the range, who should drive up but Doug Bell, former parks and rec chief in Livermore and currently pursuing his avocation as a part-timer at Poppy Ridge Golf Course in Livermore. Turns out that

Doug and his wife, Ellen, a retired librarian from Amador Valley High in Pleasanton, are spending the summer as campground hosts at Donner Lake.

Their stay got off to a very chilly start when it snowed the first two days after they arrived May 21. Weather has since improved, and Doug is looking forward to trying a number of the golf courses around Lake Tahoe and Truckee.

Incidentally, the mission trip this year with Heart for Africa will combine two teams in Swaziland for Celebrate Litesmba. ("Litesmba" means "hope" in Siswati, the Swazi language). A team of about 350 people left last week, just after the World Cup final, for Johannesburg and a bus ride to Swaziland.

That team is spending a number of days working with churches throughout Swaziland in preparation for the big event in the national stadium. My group will arrive the day before the celebration and then join the team and 15,000 orphans and vulnerable children from around the tiny country for four hours of celebration and worship.

Each child will leave with a hand-knit beanie cap — more than 20,000 were made by people from several countries as well as across the United States, including a group of Presbyterians from Centerpointe in Livermore, who contributed more than 400.

It promises to be an amazing day. After the celebration, my team, which includes a number of medical professionals, will provide medical clinics at a number of sites around the country.

Between the two teams, nearly 400 people will travel to Swaziland on these trips to help — blessing the most vulnerable children in the most AIDS-infected country in the world.