

## GLOBAL WARMING

# One fearless act for California's top actor

**F**orgive me. I have become a huge fan of "The Terminator." Not the movie. I have never seen an Arnold Schwarzenegger movie and probably would hate it if I did.

I mean that Arnold himself is my latest hero. Bodybuilder, movie star, groper of women, celebrity groom of Maria Shriver and California's Republican governor.

I was born and raised in California. I know, that marks me as part of Oregon's problem, and since settling here in 1999 I don't often volunteer information about where I was born.

But I still love California. So it was thrilling to me when the politicians of my native state performed the most valiant political act in recent times. In August the state Legislature and Schwarzenegger agreed on the first state law in the nation to require mandatory limits on greenhouse gas emissions to combat global warming. It was a plucky move, even for the Democratic lawmakers who wrote the law.

But for Schwarzenegger, signing a global warming bill demonstrated true heroism. By doing so, he went against his own party, his president, major automakers and energy companies, and many corporate contributors to the Republican Party.

The new law mandates a 25 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020, rolling them back to 1990 levels. A companion law, also sporting Schwarzenegger's signature, requires California to set standards for the purchase of energy from the cleanest sources available, potentially influencing planned construction of coal plants throughout the western United States.

Essentially all independent experts agree that meeting these targets is possible with current technology. Debate swirls

around the economic costs and benefits, with optimists predicting large economic benefits and others predicting economic disaster. Schwarzenegger is in the optimists' camp, and that's one more reason I admire him.

So, why wasn't Oregon the first state to act?

Global warming has quickly gone from theory to reality. Scientists are measuring rising temperatures and melting ice caps and recognizing more intense hurricanes,

increased wildfires, melting permafrost and many other indicators that global warming is here. Climate change may devastate California (along with Oregon and the rest of the nation) if current emissions trends continue. James Hansen, NASA's top climate scientist, recently warned that we have only 10

years to reverse course or the climate will pass a tipping point beyond which disastrously large global warming will be essentially irreversible. Federal action seems a distant fantasy with this administration, so perhaps Schwarzenegger simply decided to do the only reasonable thing.

Some suggest my hero is just pandering to anti-Bush sentiment in an election year. I don't agree. Requiring California, the 12th-largest emitter of greenhouse gases in the world, to become the leader in reversing our self-destructive energy path is a fearless act. It's a huge gamble and, paradoxically, the only sane choice.

So, Arnold, I'm with you. If I lived in California, I'd vote for you. If Oregon can produce a governor of *any party* who will sign a similar law, I pledge my support.



**CARLA WISE**

IN MY OPINION

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