

## California Going Broke to go Green

On January 21<sup>st</sup> of this year; Mac Taylor, Legislative Analyst and Ana J. Matosantos, Director of Finance proposed a job initiative that would “suspend implementation” of Assembly Bill 32. The plan for Assembly Bill 32 was released in December of 2008 to reduce California’s Green House Gas emissions by 2020 to the level of emissions present in 1990. Suspension of Assembly Bill 32 would continue for several years until California’s unemployment rate drops to 5.5% or less and remains as such for “four consecutive calendar quarters”.

The initiative goes on to state that “During the suspension period, state agencies would be prohibited from proposing or adopting new regulations, or enforcing previously adopted regulations, implementing AB 32”. According to Taylor and Matosantos, the suspension would benefit the economy by allowing businesses to avoid spending money they would otherwise need to spend in order to comply with Green House Gas emissions regulations. Also as proposed in the initiative, suspension of a proposed cap-and-trade system is hoped to “lower energy prices for consumers, including state and local government agencies that are large consumers of energy”. As for the state legislators, California’s current desperate financial state takes precedent over green programs.

Manuel Govea a 23 years-old San Jose State Kinesiology major has been working at his family restaurant his whole life. The young man stated that his family’s efforts to go green only extend as far as “the oil used, lighting fixtures, air and heat, utensils and wax paper.” The Govea family Mexican restaurant has been in business for 22 years. Manuel’s two older sisters also help out with their parent’s investment. The young football enthusiast also stated that the summer months were “hard because the price of produce usually goes up.” According to Manuel laws requiring restaurants to go green have little effect on his family’s business. “I know in San Francisco small restaurants are prohibited from using Styrofoam. San Jose is not affected by this. We were required to pay for our power 3 months in advance to allow the power company time to recover in case our restaurant goes under. It’s taking awhile for green laws to impact San Jose...but we have been able to survive.”