

The Move



the Rocky Mountain States
Desert Southwest, more than
ed to burn coal that is plen-
the drawing boards. Much of
s expected, would be destined
nia.
also be among the countrys
of carbon dioxide, the king of
warming. So California has
essage to these energy sup-
duce power with the lowest
ese greenhouse gases, we are
tomer says, I ain't buying.
Harvey, the environment

Foundation, in Menlo Park, Calif. iWhen you have
38 million customers you don't have access to, you
rethink. Selling to Phoenix is nice. Las Vegas is nice.
But they aren't California.
California's decision to impose stringent demands
on suppliers even outside its borders, broadened by
the Legislature on Aug. 31 and awaiting the gov-
ernors signature, is but one example of the state's
wide-ranging effort to remake its energy future.
The Democratic-controlled legislature and the Re-
publican governor also agreed at that time on legis-
lation to reduce industrial carbon dioxide emissions
by 25 percent by 2020, a measure that affects not
only power plants but also other large producers of
carbon dioxide, including oil refineries and cement
plants

and gas. Other states, particularly New York, are
moving in some of the same directions, but no state
is moving as aggressively on as many fronts. No
state has been at it longer. No state is putting more
at risk.
Whether all this is visionary or deluded depends on
ones perspective. This is the state that in the early
1970s jump-started the worldwide adoption of cat-
alytic converters, the devices that neutralize most
smog-forming chemicals emitted by tailpipes. This
is the state whose per capita energy consumption
has been almost flat for 30 years, even as per capita
consumption has risen 50 percent nationally.
Taking on global warming is a tougher challenge.
Though California was second in the nation only to
Texas in emissions of carbon dioxide in 2001, and



12th in the world, it produced just 2.5 percent of the
worlds total. At best, business leaders asked in a leg-
islative hearing, what difference could California's
cuts make? And at what cost?
California, in fact, is making a huge bet: that it can
reduce emissions without wrecking its economy, and
therefore inspire other states and countries to follow
its example on slowing climate change.
Initiatives addressing climate change are every-
where in California, pushed by legislators, by regu-
lators, by cities, by foundations, by businesses and
by investors.
Four years ago, California became the first state to
seek to regulate emissions of carbon dioxide from
automobile tailpipes. Car dealers and carmakers are
challenging the law in federal court



a measure requiring builders
roofs with tiles that convert s
ity. Homeowners in some com
choosing them to reduce their
California, which has for deca
frigerators, air conditioners, v
appliances become more ener
to the list: first, chargers for c
ers; second, set-top boxes and
trolled devices. Those categor
percent of a homes power.
Last fall, California regulator
tor-owned electrical utilities f
contracts to buy energy unless
house-gas emissions meet a s
iWe are dealing with it across
chael R. Peevey, the president
Commission. By contrast, the
has been averse to any legisla
change.
Opponents say California may
dents with its clean-energy m
a lawyer for Bracewell & Giu
electric utilities, summarized
as: iAll electrons are not crea
to discriminate against some
artificial barriers in the mark
ty.i California consumers coul
for their energy and strugglin
Segal said.
Is California dreaming? Can i
proach become a toolkit for o
tors make the state the incub
technologies that will reduce
b buoy its economy? Or will all
into a stagnating economic i