



Paul Stein, CSAC President

A grand finale

Serving as president of CSAC this past year has been the highlight of my career in politics. Because I have chosen not to run for re-election, this year has been my finale as a county supervisor.

Throughout my tenure, I have endeavored to leave my district and my county better than when I arrived. I've used this same measurement to gauge my term as an officer in CSAC. While this year has been one of tumultuous change, I believe the organization will strengthen from having endured these difficult changes.

This year's crowning achievement was undeniably the historic budget agreement reached between local government and the state... representing the most significant reform in state-local finance in the last 25 years. This agreement, along with our constitutional amendment, completes the first step in reforming the state-local fiscal relationship, while setting the stage for more comprehensive fiscal reform to follow.

It was my privilege to be directly involved in these budget negotiations, along with other CSAC leadership. In my mind, Governor Schwarzenegger crafted a fantastic deal that will guide California

through tough economic times and will permanently protect local government revenue for critical local services. With his leadership, California is once again becoming the Golden State.

I offer my deepest appreciation to my fellow officers: First Vice President Greg Cox, Second Vice President Connie Conway, Past President Tim Smith and Treasure Valerie Brown. Each did a tremendous job this year, spending an inordinate amount of time away from their districts to benefit CSAC. I will miss the close association that has been forged within this team.

CSAC Executive Director Steve Szalay has chosen to retire at the end of this year, culminating his ten-year career at CSAC. Our organization is regarded as a pragmatic, reasonable, dynamic partner with the Governor and his staff, largely because of the extraordinary work Steve has done. While I take great satisfaction in helping to open this door to the administration through serving as one of Governor Schwarzenegger's campaign members, it was largely Steve's political acumen that helped create the deal we

ultimately struck with the Governor and our local government partners. I offer him my personal congratulations on the work accomplished over the past ten years and wish him well in whatever the future may next bring him.

CSAC had other accomplishments this year, including significant progress in the areas of Indian gaming and workers' compensation. Major discussion began regarding Medi-Cal reform. Counties broke new ground with the use of electronic voting systems, and had strong participation in the Governor's recently released California Performance Review. To everyone that assisted in the progress of these issues, I offer my sincere appreciation.

It has been a high honor and my pleasure to serve as CSAC's president during this historic year for counties. I am confident I leave the organization in good hands and I'm optimistic that our future will continue moving forward in a positive direction. Good luck and I bid you all farewell. ■

Paul Stein is CSAC president and Calaveras County supervisor.