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Preface

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Preface

Just a year ago, the UCLA Anderson Forecast in these pages profiled a California that could look forward to solid economic growth despite a sag in the high technology sector. One of the contributors to *California Policy Options*, however, did predict: “. . .the effort to deregulate the electric industry is the 800 lb. gorilla that has potential to wreak havoc in state politics in the coming year.”

What a difference a year makes. This year’s opening Anderson Forecast article is titled: “The California Economic Outlook: An Improved Power Situation Has Not Offset Weaker Fundamentals and the Uncertainty of Terrorism.” It is a complex title reflecting a newly-complex time in public policy. And the closing article is on “Understanding the Causes of the California Power crisis,” which we only alluded to a year ago.

In these fast-moving times, the purpose of the *California Policy Options* report of the UCLA School of Public Policy and Social Research, built on the UCLA Anderson Forecast, is to provide thoughtful research and analysis of policy issues affecting the state of California. The Forecast provides expert appraisal of how the California economy can be expected to perform over the next year. *Policy Options* articles offer academic research and analyses of a wide range of issues affecting the state.

Articles in this 2002 edition explore areas as diverse as the state budget process, business improvement districts, regulating pollution in the dry cleaning industry, recognizing the needs of “contingent” workers (simply defined as workers who move from one temporary job to the next), problems with public school accountability systems, and, as mentioned, energy deregulation. This broad scope reflects not only California’s complexity, but also the interdisciplinary mission and expertise of the UCLA School of Public Policy and Social Research. Founded in 1994, the School is a leader in convening academic and policy leaders to solve policy problems across boundaries. In this light, we are pleased to present the 2002 edition of *California Policy Options*.

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