

THE SACRAMENTO BEE

California companies have a gold mine in Asia

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SPECIAL TO THE BEE

October 18, 2017

A recent conference in Los Angeles asked the question: “Should California have its own trade policy?”

The question is not new, but enlightened elected leaders such as Gov. Jerry Brown who are partnering on agreements to reduce carbon emissions are paving the way. In 2015, he helped create the Under2Coalition that now includes 170 jurisdictions on six continents, 16 percent of the world’s population and 39 percent of its GDP.

Here’s the connection to trade: Businesses, including in California, are developing the new technology and innovations that will cut carbon. California will take a larger role, particularly in our area of interest – the Pacific Rim

We believe this is a special moment for California businesses and our brand, seen especially by Asian consumers as one of quality, trust and open-mindedness. A rising Asian middle class is driving consumer trends and economic activity. California is well positioned socially, geographically and historically to benefit from the economic power shifting to the Asia-Pacific, whose share of global GDP is expected to rise to almost 70 percent by 2050.

The Sacramento-based California Asian-Pacific Chamber of Commerce is creating new trade connections by helping minority-owned and small businesses grow their networks overseas. Asian businesses have been studying the American marketplace for years. To increase their chances of success, California companies large and small must do the same and become better versed in the cultural and business practices of Pacific Rim economies.

With the Trump administration withdrawing from the 2015 Paris climate accord and the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal, overseas commerce developed by the Cal-Asian chamber in partnership with California businesses takes on an historic meaning. Trade has brought nations together, fostering peace and prosperity. We believe that it still true today.

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—Reprinted from The Sacramento Bee



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