

## **Final Remarks Business for Local Energy Symposium**

In April of this year, Carbon dioxide levels throughout the northern hemisphere hit 400 parts per million (ppm) for the first time in human history. Secretary-General Michel Jarraud of the World Meteorological Organization responsible for monitoring these levels said, "Time is running out." Indeed. We face a crisis with climate change that is really historically unprecedented.

It is not someone else's problem solve. It is your problem. It is my problem. It is all of humanity's problem. We must rise to the challenge of addressing it with the best that we have together. We must do this for our children, our grandchildren and for ourselves.

It will require a revolution in the way we do business and do government to bring it about. But if it is to get to the scale where it can have real impact – we must prove that it is profitable to business, local communities and the national economy. That is the purpose of this symposium. In 2012, U.S, Department of Energy tells us that Californians spent \$35 billion on electricity. The same year all Americans spent \$363 billion. There is an enormous market to tap into and plenty of room for innovation. There is an opportunity to rebuild our aging energy infrastructure, make it more efficient, resilient and to offer customers new services –transforming their relationship to energy and energy providers. It is not news to say that there is money to be made in this market.

But that is not enough. As Jigar Shah (our keynote) has reminded us today, it is public policy unleashing private innovation and investment that will bring change at scale. We must find more effective ways to work together. Of course, we need a price on carbon, but given the way the political winds are blowing in Washington that will not happen for years. So what we do on the local and state level demonstrating that people can work across party lines to solve common problems and build something of future value for our society can change the national conversation – much the way local and state action has changed the national conversation on gay marriage.

Complex social and environmental problems require a sustained and a multi prolonged response sufficient to bring about system scale change. Think of the civil rights movement, landing a man on the moon, addressing the hole in the ozone layer and then add orders of magnitude. It will require a sustained movement. We in this room are part of such a movement – the local clean power movement.

I am not saying that distributed generation or community choice is the solution. There is no one solution to this complex problem, but it is a part of the solution that has the right mix of good policy, proven technology and business opportunity that can scale and have real impact in California and beyond. It is a major tributary of a river of climate action that we must engender to irrigate the parched politics and desolate lack of a vision that characterizes our social, economic landscape right now.

Let me end by clearly stating what I think will be required for us to rise to the challenge before us and live sustainably. With over 7.2 billion of us, and counting, on the planet and our behavior impacting the very life support system of the earth, we must change the way we relate to our home from one of unconscious exploitation to stewardship. I am talking about a change in consciousness – changing the way we think and act. We need an ethos of stewardship. If Community Choice and developing local renewable energy can be one way of learning how to do this and demonstrating that we can live with our means and be reasonably prosperous – this might be the biggest gift of all.

I think I noticed the engineers and scientists in the crowd shift uncomfortably in their chairs when I mentioned “changing consciousness,” so maybe I better buttress that point with a quote from Albert Einstein. Al said:

**“A human being is a part of the whole called by us universe, a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feeling as something separated from the rest, a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty.”**

So I invite you to be part of this movement for clean power and local stewardship through contributing your ideas, your investment, your time, and your willingness to partner with others outside your immediate sphere to help accelerate change. Let’s work together and get this done!