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## California opens new economic development office

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- **Governor creates office by executive order**
- **Joel Ayala named director**

California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has used an executive order to create what he's calling the "Governor's Office of Economic Development" and has named Joel Ayala, former president and chief executive officer of the California Hispanic Chambers of Commerce, as its director.

The office is supposed to help businesses acquire the direction, information and resources they need to invest, succeed and expand in California, the governor's office says.

"California is the best place in the world to do business, and by cutting red tape and streamlining functions, my Office of Economic Development will make the state an even better partner to the economy," says Mr. Schwarzenegger.

Those who want to do business in California must interact with the state in many ways, such as establishing, registering and maintaining their businesses, obtaining permits and licenses, reporting required information and paying taxes. The state also has more than 100 individual economic development programs and services available to businesses.

At the new office, experienced staff will guide businesses through the various state requirements and help them access state resources, the governor's office says.

The office has three defined functions: to promote California as a place to do business; to support businesses interested in starting, growing, financing, expanding or relocating in California; and to help those businesses facing challenges to operating in California.

"The development and growth of businesses is more important now than ever due to the economic hardships so many communities face," says Mr. Ayala. "Improving California's business climate will attract new businesses and allow greater prosperity for businesses that are already here."

The office is being established, staffed and housed using existing state resources, the governor's office says. The Administration is currently in the process of drafting legislation that will make it a permanent entity in state government.

Since 2007, Mr. Ayala has been president and chief executive officer of the California Hispanic Chambers of Commerce. Previously, he served as president and chief executive officer for the Orange County Chamber of Commerce from 2001 to 2007 and school director for adult education and corporate training at the Career Management Institute from 1994 to 2001.

This position does not require Senate confirmation and the compensation is \$138,000.

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