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California Focus: State government needs RAW deal

GOP should push to push Sacramento toward pay-as- you-go plan.

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Although White House chief of staff Rahm Emanuel has been criticized for saying "you never want a good crisis too go to waste," he's right.

The Democrats are exploiting the economic crisis to expand the size and scope of the federal government. In California, Republicans should exploit the budget crisis to shrink the size and scope of state government.

The two-thirds requirement to pass a state budget gives a united GOP caucus leverage

to demand real reforms. Voters Tuesday overwhelmingly rejected the same old tax-borrow-and-spend approach, and they are more likely than they have been in recent years to give Republican ideas a fair hearing.

We should start with the obvious – California's government is too big, and its economy is too weak – and let our proposals flow from that reality.

The state payroll needs dramatic downsizing. California can't afford 345,000 state employees – about 50,000 of whom have been added in the past few years to no discernible benefit. The governor's plan to lay off 5,000 of them, primarily law enforcement and firefighters, is a scare tactic.

Millions of Californians have already been making painful cutbacks in their budgets and lifestyles. They can't afford to do everything they'd like, so they budget for what they need. They expect their state government to do the same.

Republicans must juxtapose themselves against the Democrats by offering pro-growth policies to spur job creation: for example, reducing and flattening tax rates and imposing a moratorium on future business regulations. Common sense dictates a growing economy will generate more budget revenue.

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