

# Opinion: Lack of trust poisons Sacramento politics

By Jon Coupal

The biggest challenge for California Republicans this year will be trusting Democrats.

There's a lot of loose talk making its way around the halls of the state Capitol these days about Republican irrelevance. Gov. Jerry Brown has made it clear that he is going to bypass the Legislature, where some Republican votes would be needed to increase taxes, and instead push for more taxes via ballot measure.

This strategy follows on the heels of Senate President Pro Tem Darrel Steinberg's declaration last summer that Democrats will be working without Republicans to increase job growth in California. This is a particularly risky course for Democrats. California's Democrats have three vulnerabilities:

- Erosion of the quality of public schools;
- Mismanagement of government finances; and
- Inability to foster private sector job creation.

By declaring Republican legislators to be irrelevant, they are assuming full responsibility for fixing the state government's fiscal health and California's high unemployment rate, itself the result of the accumulation of decades of Democratic-dominated regulatory and fiscal policies. We will all have to see how well that works out. There's an old adage that says be careful what you wish for. Cooler heads among Democratic leaders might question whether it's such a good idea to take on full accountability for California's economic future.

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