

Brown upsets environmentalists with critique of CEQA

By David Siders, Sacramento Bee

If the full extent of Gov. Jerry Brown's frustration with the California Environmental Quality Act was not already clear, it became so last week, when he said, "I've never seen a CEQA exemption that I don't like."

The remark, Brown's plainest yet about the state's landmark environmental protection, reflects his emerging record. Less than two years into office, Brown has signed three bills limiting the ability to challenge projects under the act, and he is openly supportive of at least one more.

Meanwhile, Brown's top political adviser, Steve Glazer, is quietly advising a group of business leaders on other ways to modify the law.

Environmentalists are dismayed: This is the Democratic governor and champion of environmental causes whose election they once cheered.

"We've got a Democratic governor who ran on a platform of being an environmentalist coming in and undermining fundamental environmental laws," said Kathryn Phillips, director of Sierra Club California. "In the past we've had to worry more about Republicans than we have about Democrats, and now we have to worry about the Democratic governor who ran on a pro-environment platform."

Read the whole story