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Jerome E. Horton Named Chairman of the State Board of Equalization *Michelle Steel to serve as Vice Chair*

The California State Board of Equalization (BOE) today unanimously voted to name Jerome E. Horton as Chairman of the publicly elected tax board. The BOE also selected Michelle Steel as Vice Chair.

"I look forward to collaboratively leading the Board during these economically challenging times," Horton said. "Given my 21 years as a veteran of the BOE, and my more than a decade of experience as an elected official, I have seen firsthand the issues that personally affect taxpayers. That is why it is so important for us to make it easier for California Taxpayers to comply with the law, to level the playing field and assure fair treatment of our constituents."

Chairman Horton represents the Fourth Equalization District and its 73 cities within Los Angeles County. Mr. Horton served as Vice Chairman of the Board from January 2010 to January 2011.

Vice Chair Steel represents the Third Equalization District with more than eight million people in the counties of Imperial, Orange, Riverside, San Diego, and portions of Los Angeles and San Bernardino. Elected to the Board of Equalization in 2006, Michelle Steel serves as the country's highest ranking Korean-American officeholder and California's highest ranking Republican woman

Horton is the only member of the Board with over twenty-one years of previous experience with the agency. As a staff member of the Board, Horton served as legislative deputy specializing in business tax law, supervisor, district reviewer and tax auditor from 1979 to 2000. Horton also served on the California Medical Assistance Commission and in the State Assembly representing the 51st Assembly District from 2000 to 2006. While in the Assembly, Horton chaired the Governmental Organization committee, Community College Board and served on the California State Workforce Investment Board and the Cultural Endowment Board. Prior to joining the Assembly, Horton served on the Inglewood City Council from 1996 to 2000 and as a member of the Redevelopment Agency. Horton is also the first African American to be elected to the Board of Equalization since its inception in 1879.

While in the Assembly, Horton authored the California Cigarette and Tobacco Products Licensing Act of 2003 (AB 71) and the state law requiring both the BOE and the Franchise Tax Board to post online a list of the largest 250 tax delinquencies of more than \$100,000 in tax.

The Chairman and Vice Chair positions were decided today at the first 2011 meeting of the California State Board of Equalization. The five-member Board includes Chairman Jerome E. Horton (Fourth District), Vice Chair Michelle Steel (Third District), Board Member Betty T. Yee (First District), Board Member Senator George Runner (ret.) (Second District), and California State Controller John Chiang.

The California State Board of Equalization is a publicly elected tax board. The BOE collects more than \$48 billion annually in taxes and fees supporting state and local government services. It hears business tax appeals, acts as the appellate body for franchise and personal income tax appeals, and serves a significant role in the assessment and administration of property taxes. It has offices in New York, Texas, Chicago, and is based in California with over 4,400 employees. Horton encourages young people to consider careers with the Board of Equalization and other state agencies in the field of law, accounting, real estate and a variety of other fields of public service.

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