Good morning. I'm so pleased to join you all for this wonderful event.

We have gathered here today to explore new opportunities for clean energy business trade between Australia and California, and to discuss how greenhouse gas regulation—one of the foremost public policy concerns of our entire planet—can be addressed in a manner that drives new investment opportunities that will create jobs and prosperity for the people of California, Australia and our other partners across the globe.

But more importantly that what we’re going to talk about today is the spirit in which we discuss these topics.

California is proud of our leadership role on the world stage, partnering with nations like Australia and Britain, as well as other states in the Union and provinces of Canada to address the single most compelling public policy issues facing leaders across the world.

Our state has implemented the first statewide carbon cap and trade program, and success in California will create a model for the rest of the nation to follow.

And while we certainly know that no state or nation can address this issue on its own, that fact does not relieve us of our obligation to try—in fact, it strengthens that obligation.

In our federal system in the United States, we often cite that every Legislature across America is a laboratory for democracy. And in this respect, I am very
proud of California’s pioneering efforts that are being closely watched by other states.

We know addressing global climate change, and implementing the kinds of policies that make real change possible, will take the concerted action of policy leaders at the national, state and local level—as well as leaders of the business community.

We must all engage in a thoughtful and comprehensive effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and set the stage for creating a healthier, more prosperous, and more sustainable economy for our people.

And we are certainly aware that this is an issue of great complexity, with many nuances that must be addressed in a thoughtful manner.

That fact is borne out by simply recognizing that we have a long history of implementing policies that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, even in efforts that weren’t intended to do so.

Our laws related to building standards, appliance design, water and vehicle efficiency and renewable energy have saved Californians billions of dollars, reduced our fossil fuel dependence, cleaned our air and avoided significant amounts of GHG emissions.

But what has been perhaps most interesting about this is that we have been implementing these laws while building the 8th largest economy in the global community.

These laws have spurred technological innovation and business growth in the Golden State to the point that we are considered an epicenter for the clean energy sector.

Those efforts create a foundation for us to fight for progress. And as we learn more and more every single day, we see clearly how we need to build upon that foundation, both in California, and globally.

I am particularly proud that our efforts are being matched by our partners around the world, especially Australia.
California and Australia have both seen devastating reminders of the risk inherent in doing nothing.

I want to express, on behalf of my colleagues, our thoughts and prayers for the citizens of Australia who are struggling with ravaging wildfires in recent days.

California is no stranger to these kinds of climate-related events, and many of our citizens have themselves faced the long and difficult road that comes with rebuilding lives, businesses and homes after a disaster.

These events are a vivid reminder of why it is imperative that we address global climate change, and reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.

Fortunately, that is something that we recognize in California and Australia.

Two years ago, the people of California had the opportunity to weigh in directly on the question of climate change.

Folks opposed to our efforts to curb greenhouse gases through AB 32 tried to repeal that measure through the referenda process.

They brought out the tired trope that progress for the environment comes at the cost of jobs...that curbing our greenhouse gas emissions would destroy our then-nascent economic recovery.

I’ve heard that argument so many times throughout my life. And I have rejected them every single time I’ve heard them.

Prior to my service to the people of California, I was a member of the labor movement. I’ve represented workers in the building trades.

I know how painful it can be for a young parent to lose the job that allows them to provide for their family.

When you look into the eyes of a worker who’s been let go, they’re looking for a way forward—not someone to blame.

And yet too often in debates over how to ensure clean air, clean water, and a healthy environment, those in opposition will prey on people’s fears about their jobs unjustly, and create dissonance where none exists.
That’s why one of the most important things I did as a member of the Labor Movement was to work with environmental groups, including my time serving on the Board of the California League of Conservation Voters.

Building the capacity for change is never easy work. When Mary Nichols and I began working together nearly 15 years ago, the idea that California would have a carbon cap and trade program in place would have been met by us with astonishment.

And yet we have made genuine progress. We have created the conditions whereby a critical mass of the majority of Californians hold protecting the environment as one of our most important values.

Serving on those boards, creating the links between the labor movement and the environmental movement was essential to cut through the fog of fear that prevented progress on crucial environmental challenges—to remind every Californian that creating a healthier and more sustainable economy can unfold, and strengthen our efforts to do the same work for the environment.

That is why some of the most vocal supporters of High Speed Rail and other projects that aim to reduce our greenhouse gases are the working people who, in earlier years, might have been staunch opponents.

And it’s because of efforts like these that the people of California understand that the 21st century industries of green manufacturing and clean energy will create enormous activity in our economy, and millions of jobs to secure a prosperous future.

All of these efforts, over so many years and decades, led up to a momentous decision on election day, 2010, when the people of California declared in an overwhelming vote that we would continue to press forward.

That abandoning progress, even in the midst of the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, was not an option...

...That, in fact, efforts like AB 32 are an essential component to a prosperous and sustainable future, rather than an impediment.
And when all the votes were counted, our campaign to defend AB 32 received more votes than any other candidate or ballot issue in the entire country.

That is a powerful validation of our commitment to building a healthier, more prosperous, and more sustainable economy for our state—a powerful expression of the values of the people of California.

Over the course of the past year, we have taken a major step forward in implementing carbon cap and trade.

This allows us to begin to send a clear market signal to companies and consumers for the need to begin to produce and consume less-carbon intensive products and services.

I was pleased to author legislation that protects and furthers the aim of AB 32 by ensuring that funds generated by the auction of carbon credits will go towards projects that will further reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.

Addressing climate change is a challenge of public policy, but it will require partnership and cooperation with the business community to ensure that companies and organizations are making the investments in technology and best practices that will help us realize the goal of reducing our greenhouse gas emissions.

Neither California nor Australia can do this work alone. But our combined efforts, the grand race to sustainability between Australia, California, and our other partners around the globe will one day be remembered as a crucial turning point in history.

We know what we’re up against. But just as important, we know what we’re capable of.

When California insisted on higher fuel efficiency standards for automobiles, there were predictions of economic catastrophe. And yet catastrophe did not come.

Rather, the market forces generated by a state with 30 million consumers created the conditions where the manufacturers could increase their efficiency standards without placing themselves at a disadvantage towards their
competitors, and the results have been a consistent trend towards fuel efficiency in automobiles—a trend that echoes the work of the 1970s to reduce smog-creating emissions that have dramatically improved air quality in California and around the United States.

That is why I am so pleased to welcome you to this event, so that we can exchange our insights and our experiences to better strengthen our efforts.

Ultimately, our greatest asset is our ability to work together and create the leverage necessary for change.

Our obligation is to use that leverage, and give life to words that rang true in antiquity, and are certainly true today, when Archimedes said “give me a lever large enough, and I will move the world.”

And if we are dedicated and focused, these years will be remembered by Californians and Australians alike as the years that put us on course for our Clean Energy Future.

Thank you.