

Letters to the Editor  
Press Democrat  
Published: Monday, January 19, 2009

## **Nonprofits suffering**

EDITOR: Steven Chatham's Wednesday Close to Home ("Capitol crisis threatens economy, local business") on the state's stop-work order on bond-funded contracts was on the money, but there is more to the story. In the nonprofit sector, organizations under contract to perform social services, habitat restoration and other state priorities are shutting their doors, laying off key personnel and losing years of organizational development.

For example, the Coastal Conservancy's recent grant to the Laguna Learning Center is threatened -- \$700,000 that would have come into our local economy. And that's just one isolated example; there are many more.

It is wrong for the Legislature and the governor to ignore the pain caused by this problem, or to coldly view it as political leverage in the budget standoff. While we may assume that the bonds eventually will be sold, it makes no sense to dismantle the state's nonprofit partners in the interim. It's costing us jobs now, but more than that, it's costing us the future work on water quality, habitat restoration, climate change and developing the "green economy" that these nonprofit organizations would play a key role in implementing . . . if they're still around.

Some kind of mechanism for keeping projects going, perhaps in partnership with private foundations and/or financial institutions, must be found.

DAN SCHURMAN  
Executive Director, Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation