

the ranking 1 1/2 thumbs up. Business follows talent, especially in a knowledge-based economy, which makes San Francisco strong, he said. Plus, the city is a favorite tourist destination. "But we are certainly not the friendliest in terms of cost of doing business," he said, citing payroll taxes, health care mandates, "and a public transit system that leaves a lot to be desired." Overall, No. 10 is about right, Falk said. But "we should be focused on fixing the negatives and strive for a top-three ranking. Why should the city that rates No. 1 with travelers settle for No. 10 in business?"

Well, at least we beat **L.A.** - and **New York**, which dropped off the top 10 list this year. To read the MarketWatch report go to *links.sfgate.com/ZFOP*.

Waste not, want not: Chronicle reader Josh Fox put it well. In a letter to the editor, he protested "appointing former (state) Sen. Carole Migden or any other unqualified individuals to the California Integrated Waste Management Board. It would be much better to leave any vacant board seats empty as a gesture toward fiscal prudence." Actually, Migden hasn't been appointed to the \$132,000-a-year spot yet. But termed-out Santa Cruz Assemblyman John Laird and Santa Monica state Sen. Sheila Kuehl have.

Still, the point is well taken. With all due respect to the Waste Management Board, appointments to such state boards and commissions are often little more than sinecures bestowed by governors or party leaders. In many instances, the fortunate failed or retiring politician does little more than show up for the occasional meeting. As for the Waste Management Board, one of six separate entities within the **California Environmental Protection Agency**, what is its mission? Helping to "promote reducing waste whenever possible, managing all materials to their highest and best use and protecting public health and safety and the environment," according to the board's Web site.

Again, with respect to this particular board, the reference to "reducing waste wherever possible" - especially in light of California's \$11.2 billion budget deficit - goes without further comment. If you missed Fox's letter, go to *links.sfgate.com/ZFOM*.

Tips, feedback: E-mail bottomline@sfchronicle.com

This article appeared on page **D - 1** of the San Francisco Chronicle



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tomsax 12/4/2008 10:03:15 PM

The NYT article is based on a false premise. Tesla Motors isn't asking for help with the Roadster, that work is done. I'm surprised you reprinted that specious connection without checking the facts. Tesla is asking for a part of the incentive program for automakers to develop more energy efficient vehicles. The loans Tesla applied for are for their OEM drivetrain business and for their second vehicle, the Model S. Tesla's goal is to bring the cost down and the production level up on subsequent vehicles to deliver affordable, energy efficient vehicles to the public. This is a perfect match for the federal incentive program.

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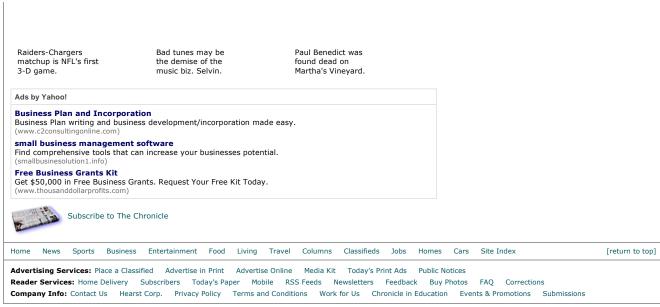
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