Local business groups have launched a campaign to reform one of the state's major environmental laws because they believe it stifles development and slows job creation.

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The business groups – including the Los Angeles, Long Beach and Hollywood chambers of commerce, the Valley Industry and Commerce Association and the Central City Association – say the law has resulted in a ‘bad environment for development?’

Supplement Maker Joins the Clubs

With its beachside locale, Santa Monica has long attracted businesses. But now, the city has become a virtual hot spot for today’s generation of Internet ventures, especially those involved with social networking websites. Fast-growing companies are lured to the abundant creative office space with high ceilings and exposed brick. They like to install playful amenities – such as the 1948 Cadillac Fleetwood, above, that doubles as a couch at automotive website Edmunds.com. In this Real Estate Quarterly, the Business Journal explains how these tech companies have revved up Santa Monica’s real estate market and earned the city a new moniker: Silicon Beach.

Creative Drive

Writer: Richard Clough

By RICHARD CLOUGH Staff Reporter

It’s known as the Amazon tax, but the new California law that requires online retailers to collect sales taxes is affecting more companies than just the Internet sales giant.

West L.A.-based Savings.com has lost more than 50 affiliated online retailers and Santa Monica-based SurfMyAds.com has lost 150. Gone are Amazon.com, Zappos.com and Overstock.com, among others, as many major online retailers have cut ties to California-based marketing companies since the law took effect July 1.

“Losing 50 big guys hurts a lot,” said Loren Bendle, chief executive of Savings.com. “We work with thousands of online merchants … but the top 150

Bad Environment For Development?

By HOWARD FINE Staff Reporter

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Missing Links Stunt L.A. Sites

INTERNET: Local marketers lose affiliates to sales tax law.

By JAMES RUFUS KOREN Staff Reporter

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Bottoms Up: Patrons at North Hills Herbalife club.
The EDMUNDS INC. office sets a high standard for work space in Santa Monica’s growing tech cluster. The company, which operates consumer auto websites, moved into the spacious 1620 26th St. office in October 2006. Its intent was to build a colorful and playful environment that would encourage creativity.

1. A red bench in the lobby imprinted with the date of the company’s founding.
2. Rows of hanging monitors one of the work spaces keep employees connected.

6. Company-wide meetings are held in the “Great Room,” which has comfy couches and a 60-foot coffee bar.
7. A 1948 Cadillac Fleetwood doubles as a couch, adding a touch of whimsy to the work area.
8. A game room on the top floor – with ping pong tables and traditional arcade games – lets employees blow off steam.
9. Color and murals add warmth to what otherwise would be plain walls.

Photos by RINGO H.W. CHIU

Space Race
3. An open floor plan gives employees opportunity for communication and interaction.

4. A central staircase adorned with colorful geometric patterns connects the office's three floors.

5. The elevator bank keeps the mood playful with the outline of a car painted along the wall.