A 19th century government for the 21st century

By Pete Solis

Santa Rosa Press Democrat: California's system of government doesn't work, and in its current form, it can't work, the veteran political columnist Dan Walters said this morning.

At a gathering of reform-minded organizations, Walters said the current structure of government was designed for an agrarian, sparsely populated society - not the large, culturally and geographically diverse state that exists today.

As a result, he said, government is is neither effective nor accountable. "To paraphrase Harry Truman," he said, "the buck stops nowhere in California."

Another speaker, Democratic Lt. John Garamendi, argued that state government would be more accountable if California created a unicameral legislature with 120 districts.

More than 300 people are attending the government reform summit at a downtown Sacramento hotel.