

Going to Bat For Aerospace

LOS ANGELES

AS the owner of a small military subcontractor scrambling to win new business at a time of declining Pentagon spending, **Ronald L. Cedillos** is angry about how California's elected officials are responding to the challenges facing the state's huge aerospace industry. Last week, Mr. Cedillos, who runs the Cedillos Testing Company of Long Beach, took a big step in organizing what he thinks could be a blistering political response.

Mr. Cedillos, a major contributor to the Republican Party, helped set up a meeting between Gov. Pete Wilson, a Republican, and the heads of most of the state's major contractors, including Kent Kresa of Northrop and Daniel M. Tellep of Lockheed.

The executives told Mr. Wilson how environmental and other regulations are driving up the cost of doing business in California to the point that many are moving operations elsewhere, and urged the state to be more responsive to their needs. But the most significant outcome of the meeting may have been a new resolve



Ronald L. Cedillos

within the industry, prompted by Mr. Cedillos and backed by Mr. Wilson, to win more support from the influential but fractious California Congressional delegation for bringing Pentagon business to the state.

The willingness of Mr. Cedillos to work his Republican connections and plunge into hardball politics sets him apart from top executives at the major contractors, most of whom profess to hold themselves above the fray. And in a business dominated by engineers, Mr. Cedillos, 40, brings a background that stands out even in California. Before acquiring his company in a leveraged buyout in 1980, he was a professional karate expert and an actor in martial arts films.

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