

Successes help employers, jobs and the economy

CAPITOL WATCHDOG

Each year CalChamber tracks more than 3,000 legislative proposals on behalf of member businesses.

GRASSROOTS ACTION

Comments from employers yield results. See hot issues at www.calchambervotes.com.

ABOUT US

CalChamber is the largest, broad-based business advocate, working at the state and federal levels to influence government actions affecting all California business. As a not-for-profit, we leverage our front-line knowledge of laws and regulations to provide affordable and easy-to-use compliance products and services.

2016 Major Victories

Advancing an Agenda for California Prosperity

The California Chamber of Commerce is the voice of California business, expert at promoting pro-job policies and advising employers on the practical impact of state laws and regulations in the workplace. We track more than 3,000 legislative proposals every year, speaking up when a bill will hurt employers and the economy, and working to win support for legislation that will help the jobs climate. Policymakers listen to CalChamber policy advocates, knowing that we represent more than 13,000 member businesses that together employ a fourth of the state's private workforce and reflect the diversity of the California business community.

Adding strength to our message are the thousands of individuals who use our web-based grassroots center, www.calchambervotes.com, to make their views known to their elected representatives. Each year, website visitors use the grassroots center to send some 200,000 letters about state and federal issues affecting business operations.

Read on to learn how CalChamber advocacy in 2016 helped employers. See the **Advocacy Return on Investment** sheet for estimates of employer savings on some of these victories.

Stopping Most Job Killer Bills

The skill of CalChamber policy advocates, joining forces with other business groups and pro-jobs legislators, prevented 20 of 24 job killer bills from becoming law as originally introduced. Below is a sampling of job killers stopped or amended before they passed the Legislature. More information at www.calchamber.com/jobkillers.

- **Increased labor costs:** derailed attempts to permit price-setting by independent contractors (AB 1727); exposing employers to a private right of action related to their Injury and Illness Prevention Program (AB 2895); and eliminating worker and employer flexibility with a mandated scheduling requirement (SB 878).
- **New maternity/paternity leave mandate for small employers with as few as 20 employees** (SB 1166, SB 654).
- **Affordable housing barriers:** stopped several bills eroding housing affordability (AB 2162, AB 2502, SB 1318).
- **Arbitration discrimination:** defeated proposal discriminating against arbitration agreements in consumer contracts (AB 2667) and in employment agreements (AB 2879).
- **Tax increases blocked:** giving local governments new authority to enact special taxes, including parcel taxes, by lowering from two-thirds to 55% the vote required for approving new taxes (ACA 4); a targeted tax on certain beverages (AB 2782); and a split roll property tax (SCA 5).
- **Gas price increases:** stopped or secured amendments to bills jeopardizing the production of California-based fuel (AB 1759, AB 1882, AB 2729).
- **Meritless litigation:** stopped bills leading to increased environmental litigation (AB 2748) and frivolous litigation about alleged gender-based pricing of goods (SB 899).

Fostering Job Creation Activities

The Governor signed all four job creator bills that passed the Legislature:

- an urgency bill that will **limit frivolous litigation related to disability access compliance** (SB 269);
- legislation that will **expedite additions to the housing supply** by streamlining the permitting process for accessory dwelling units (aka in-law quarters, granny flats, etc.) (SB 1069);
- **increased loan access for small business** (SB 936); and
- **support for innovators, entrepreneurs** by funding expanded capacity for the University of California innovation and entrepreneurship centers (AB 2664).

More information at www.calchamber.com/jobcreators.

Protecting Employers' Ability to Manage Workplace

- Led coalition to stop mandate to pay double the regular rate of pay on Thanksgiving (AB 67).
- Secured amendments to legislation that would have threatened employers with civil litigation for seeking an applicant's prior salary and benefit information even though the applicant suffered no harm in compensation from the inquiry (AB 1676).
- Led coalition that defeated legislation adding to time off that employers must provide employees (AB 2405).
- Led coalition preventing passage of proposal to subject employers to random investigations for alleged retaliation against employees even when there are no employee complaints of retaliation (AB 2261).



Defending Employers Against Unwarranted Litigation

- Secured amendments to state-run retirement savings program to limit employer liability (SB 1234).

Moving Toward a Better-Prepared Workforce

- Supported signing of bills increasing access to computer science (AB 2329); and improving relevance of Career Technical Education courses (SB 66).
- Stopped bills that would have jeopardized state workforce goals (SB 959, AB 2183).
- Supported voter-approved \$9 billion general obligation bond to fund new construction and modernizing of K-12 public schools, charter schools, vocational education and California community college facilities (Proposition 51).
- Supported voter-approved measure that will make it easier for schools to offer bilingual programs (Proposition 58).

Making Legislature More Open to Observers

CalChamber President and CEO Allan Zaremborg joined good government advocates in signing the ballot arguments for a voter-approved initiative requiring legislation to be available on the internet for 72 hours before a vote, and legislative proceedings to be recorded and posted on the internet (Proposition 54).

Protecting Vital Public Works Projects

Opposed an initiative rejected by voters that would have delayed or stopped vitally needed infrastructure projects all over the state—including water reliability projects, road safety and bridge repairs, university and college buildings—as well as impeded the state's ability to make emergency repairs after a natural disaster (Proposition 53).

Ensuring Continued Access to Important Mineral Resources

Led reform effort to modernize the state's surface mining and reclamation law, thereby ensuring California manufacturers and contractors continue to have access to construction aggregates (like sand, gravel and crushed stone) and industrial minerals used in products ranging from wine bottles to paint, cleaning supplies and alternative power technologies (AB 1142, SB 209).

Promoting Availability and Security of California Water Supplies

Supported landmark federal legislation containing much-needed funding for water projects and allowing water regulators to make the best use of water to benefit all parts of the state (S. 612).

Improving Housing Options

- Won enactment of proposals improving the housing climate by supporting mixed-use projects (AB 1934) and expediting housing construction (AB 2180).
- Secured amendments to proposals that would have delayed or discouraged new housing with ambiguous water requirements or conflicting requirements in the coastal zone (SB 1263, AB 2616).

Keeping Lid on Health Care Costs

- Stopped health care mandates that threatened the long-term affordability of health care premiums (AB 2209, AB 3400, SB 1034, AB 1763, AB 2004, AB 2764).
- Supported enactment of special session measure to preserve a crucial state-federal funding mechanism for the Medi-Cal program (SBX2 2).
- Opposed initiative defeated by voters that would have increased health care premiums and out-of-pocket costs by shifting the cost of prescription drugs from government purchasers to private payers (Proposition 61).

Keeping Important Projects Moving

Signed into law were CalChamber-backed bills to expedite the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process for certain projects (SB 734, SB 1008).

Safeguarding Confidential Product Information

Led coalition that stopped a bill that would have stifled innovation and imposed unnecessary burdens on businesses by requiring manufacturers of specific consumer products to disclose ingredients on product labels and the internet without protecting confidential business information (AB 708).

Maintaining Companies' Ability to Deal Effectively with Hazardous Waste

Prevented passage of proposals that would have discouraged investment in upgrading and improving facilities that treat hazardous waste.

Reducing Burden on Taxpayers

Signed into law with CalChamber support were bills to reduce burdens on disaster victims, maintain fairness in computing interest, ensure timely parcel tax notices, and conform state filing dates for tax returns with federal dates (AB 1559, AB 2201, AB 2476, AB 1775).

Keeping Transportation Options Open

- Backed legislation signed into law that will increase transportation network companies' use of electric vehicles (AB 2763).
- Stopped proposals that would have created unnecessary and burdensome mandates on vehicle sales and stifled the ridesharing economy (AB 1108, SB 1035).

Protecting the Balance Between Consumer Demands for Privacy and Innovation

- Secured amendments to remove problematic aspects of two bills (AB 83, AB 2623) and prevented passage of bills creating overly prescriptive mandates (AB 2688), interfering with businesses' ability to interact with consumers (AB 2867), and potentially exposing proprietary information (SB 949).
- Stopped proposals that would have stifled drone innovation and use (SB 868, AB 2724).

Limiting Workers' Compensation Cost Increases

- Won amendments removing the most onerous provisions of bills that would have interfered with the ability of businesses to control workers' compensation costs before those proposals were signed into law (SB 1160, AB 2230).
- Backed Governor's veto of a bill that would have expanded the scope of workers' compensation beyond work-related injuries (AB 1643).
- Supported Governor's signing of a bill discouraging workers' compensation fraud (AB 1244).

Making It Easier for Businesses to Find/Share Information About Trade/Investment Opportunities

- Sponsored publication of print and web-based *California Export Guide* (available in English and Spanish).
- Hosted luncheons and other gatherings promoting two-way information exchanges on trade with Europe, Pacific Rim economies, the Middle East and Latin America; provided web-based portals pulling together statistics and other resources about major California trade/investment partners; distributed weekly *Trade Update* e-newsletter digest of the latest news and information about trade policy.