

New Election Cycle to Emphasize Races for State Constitutional Offices; Growing Moderate Ranks in Senate Also a Priority

Enjoy the hiatus from the political ads while it lasts as a new election cycle has started and California candidates have already begun the positioning exercises in their aim to gain a foothold on the ladder to the next higher office. In 2018 the grand prize in California will be the Governor's office, as Edmund G. Brown Jr. will be termed out of office. While Brown's re-election in 2014 was a relatively quiet affair, expect more fireworks in 2018 with a number of top-tier candidates eyeing the office.

The major question among California political observers is: will the November 2018 contest for the state's top office pit two Democrats against each other, or will this be a more conventional battle between candidates from the two major parties? This will be the second statewide election since California voted in the top-two or jungle primary.

The California Chamber of Commerce and its business allies have excelled in electing business-friendly candidates to the Legislature over the last three cycles and will look to continue this positive trend in both contests for legislative and constitutional offices.

The CalChamber's bipartisan political approach is being noticed. As widely read *Sacramento Bee* columnist Dan Walters commented in a November 2016 opinion piece: "...the (moderate) coalition's ranks were bolstered by several victories in Democrat vs. Democrat clashes." Walters continued by noting that the Senate "may be developing a mod squad of its own with wins by business-backed Democrats such as Bill Dodd of Napa and Steven Bradford of Gardena."

Election Landscape

In 2018 there will be six open seats in the California Senate and the CalChamber will focus most of its efforts in the upper house in an effort to continue to grow the moderate caucus referenced above, as well as protect the GOP seats where members are terming out. Opportunities for the Assembly are still being assessed, but there will be less activity as there is only one incumbent office holder terming out of office. Still, vacancies are expected to open up, as there will be a small number of members who will seek another office.

In addition to the Governor's race, there are a number of races for open constitutional offices that the CalChamber will monitor. Vacant offices that will have a fiscal impact on California business include the Attorney General, Treasurer and three of four Board of Equalization seats.

Track Record

The CalChamber will continue to recruit and elect business-friendly candidates to maintain our superb track record of beating job-killing legislative proposals by staying on the task of engaging our political action network. Our focus will remain dedicated to finding and electing candidates from both political parties who possess the courage to stand up to the liberal special interests and reject their philosophy of tax, spend and regulate.

If we are successful with our election strategy, then our opportunities will far outdistance our challenges.

Candidate Recruitment

Although not a political action committee, the Candidate Recruitment and Development Program provides the resources necessary to build a bench of electable, pro-jobs candidates for state legislative and local office. The CalChamber partners with our local chamber network, as well as state and local member businesses, to ensure the recruitment efforts are bipartisan and locally driven.

The primary component of this program is to identify potential candidates and put them on the path to elective office. The secondary component is training and developing candidates for their positions. The program has successfully recruited numerous local candidates who have won election to state legislative seats.

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Political Action Committees (PACs)

The CalChamber's Political Action Network includes three political entities:

- ChamberPAC is a bipartisan political action committee that makes direct contributions to incumbent office holders and select candidates who promote and vote for an agenda of private sector job creation. Contributions to this committee are limited to \$7,300 per year, person, organization or political action committee.
- JobsPAC is an independent expenditure committee, meaning it speaks directly to voters on behalf of the business community to elect pro-jobs candidates. Co-chaired by the CalChamber and the California Manufacturers and Technology Association, JobsPAC may accept contributions in unlimited amounts.
- CalBusPAC is a CalChamber committee that is formed to primarily support or oppose ballot measures having an impact on the state's business climate. CalBusPAC may accept contributions in unlimited amounts.

CalChamber Position

California's business community is under constant pressure due to the disproportionate influence that special interest and government employee organizations have on the legislative and regulatory process. The CalChamber is committed to standing up for and speaking out on behalf of the state's employer community through political action, our advocacy network, and constant and direct contact with elected officials.



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