

## Policy/Executive Team



### President and Chief Executive Officer

**Allan Zarembeg** is president and chief executive officer of the California Chamber of Commerce. He took over the top staff position in 1998 after six years as executive vice president and head of the CalChamber's legislative advocacy program.

Enhancing the state's economic growth has been the goal of Zarembeg's activities. He has headed statewide ballot campaigns to close the legal loophole that permitted shakedown lawsuits, to assure adequate funding for transportation infrastructure and to oppose anti-business proposals that would have raised the cost of health care, electricity and public works. He led negotiations culminating in comprehensive reforms of workers' compensation,

endangered species laws and other key issues.

He oversees the CalChamber Business Services Division, which provides employment law expertise through handbooks, services and products, including *HRCalifornia*, a continually updated website.

Before joining the CalChamber, Zarembeg served as chief legislative advisor to and advocate for Governors George Deukmejian and Pete Wilson.

Zarembeg served as a captain and flight navigator on a KC-135 jet air refueling tanker while in the U.S. Air Force from 1970 to 1975.

He holds a B.S. in economics from Penn State University and a J.D. from the McGeorge School of Law, University of the Pacific, where he was a member of the *Law Journal*.



### Executive Vice President, Policy

**Jeanne Cain** oversees the development and implementation of policy and strategy as executive vice president, policy, for the CalChamber.

She has more than 25 years of executive experience in both the private and government sectors and brings a wealth of expertise in designing and implementing advocacy and business strategies. Her experience includes serving as legislative secretary and deputy chief of staff for Governor Pete Wilson; regional vice president, Western Region, for the American Insurance Association (AIA); and deputy director for administration and fiscal integrity at the Major Risk Medical Insurance Board. With an abundance of leadership experience in and with state government, Cain has a strong understanding of legislative processes, government reform, regulatory issues, compliance and budgets.

In addition to her executive career, Cain has

extensive experience serving on boards of directors. Currently, she is on the board of the Pacific Business Group on Health, a nonprofit business coalition comprised of California's largest employers focused on health care, and is board chair and president of Fairview Farms, Inc., a family farming operation in Northern California.

Previously, Cain served as chair of the board for the State Compensation Insurance Fund, where she was responsible for overseeing more than 7,000 employees and a \$21 billion budget; and as a board member of the Civil Justice Association of California, a nonprofit, membership-supported coalition of professionals, manufacturers, financial institutions, insurers, and medical organizations.

Cain has a bachelor of arts degree from California State University, Sacramento.



### Senior Policy Advocate

**Jennifer Barrera** works with the executive vice president in developing policy strategy and represents the California Chamber of Commerce on labor and employment, taxation and legal reform issues.

She has led CalChamber advocacy on labor and employment and taxation since September 2010, and on legal reform since June 2012.

In addition, she advises the business compliance activities of the CalChamber on interpreting changes in employment law

Since May 2003 she had worked at a statewide law firm that specializes in labor/employment defense, now Carothers, DiSante & Freudenberger, LLP. She represented employers in both state and

federal court on a variety of issues, including wage and hour disputes, discrimination, harassment, retaliation, breach of contract, and wrongful termination.

She also advised both small and large businesses on compliance issues, presented seminars on various employment-related topics, and regularly authored articles in human resources publications.

Barrera earned a B.A. in English from California State University, Bakersfield, and a J.D. with high honors from California Western School of Law.

**Staff to:** *Labor and Employment Committee, Legal Reform and Protection Committee, Taxation Committee*

# Expanding Opportunity An Agenda for All Californians

## 2017 Business Issues and Legislative Guide

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### Policy Advocate

**Marti Fisher** joined the California Chamber of Commerce in January 2006 as a policy advocate. She leads CalChamber advocacy on immigration, unemployment insurance, regulatory reform, insurance, occupational safety and health, and tourism.

She has specialized in workers' compensation, small business, and banking and finance issues. From October 2006 to December 2012, she headed CalChamber advocacy on health care issues.

Fisher brought to CalChamber more than

15 years of experience in occupational safety and advocacy. She served as director of safety, health and regulatory services with the Associated General Contractors of California (AGC) immediately before joining the CalChamber policy team.

Fisher earned a B.A. in public administration from California State University, Chico, and an M.B.A. from California State University, Sacramento.

**Staff to:** *Tourism Committee, Immigration Ad Hoc Committee*

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### Policy Advocate

**Louinda V. Lacey** joined the California Chamber of Commerce in January 2017 as a policy advocate specializing in environmental policy, housing and land use, and product regulation issues.

Before joining the CalChamber policy team, she provided regulatory compliance advice and enforcement defense services to businesses and individuals with a focus on environmental laws and regulations at her own Sacramento-based law firm

She also worked as an attorney at several Sacramento-area law firms, representing clients in private and government environmental enforcement actions; advising clients on matters ranging from retail, food and beverage, and environmental regulatory compliance requirements, to water/groundwater rights; and defending clients in civil

litigation related to environmental law, construction, real estate, contracts, and lending.

Prior to entering the legal field, she worked for national new home builder K. Hovnanian Homes for five years. There, she participated in its leadership development program and managed development projects relating to land acquisition, construction, and sales.

Lacey holds a B.S. in business administration and an M.B.A. in finance from California State University, Sacramento. She earned her J.D. with great distinction from McGeorge School of Law, University of the Pacific, with a Certificate in Environmental Law, graduating as valedictorian of the evening division class.

**Staff to:** *Environmental Policy Committee*

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### Policy Advocate

**Amy Mmagu** has been lobbying for the California Chamber of Commerce since April 2011. She presents the business perspective on climate change, air quality, energy, environmental justice, and transportation and infrastructure issues.

She joined the CalChamber staff in 2006, working in a wide range of areas, including labor and employment, health, education, climate change, energy, and housing and land use. She also assisted in workers' compensation, transportation and infrastructure, tourism, telecommunications, and international relations/trade.

Before coming to the CalChamber, Mmagu worked for the California Cable and

Telecommunications Association. Prior to that, she spent three years in China working for a Spanish exporting firm and also interned with the U.S. Department of State at the American embassy in Lima, Peru.

Mmagu earned a B.A. in international relations from California State University, Sacramento, spending one year at the University of Denmark in Copenhagen, studying European politics and the European Union.

**Staff to:** *Environmental Policy Committee, Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Energy and Telecommunications Ad Hoc Committee*



### Policy Advocate

**Karen Sarkissian** joined the California Chamber of Commerce in July 2016 as a policy advocate on health care and education issues.

She was an associate and then partner at Poswall, White & Cutler of Sacramento (a nationally recognized firm of successful trial attorneys) for more than 12 years. She litigated and resolved cases ranging from medical, dental and legal malpractice, to premises liability, employment law, automobile accidents, elder abuse, sexual abuse and civil rights. Sarkissian and a colleague tried and won the first expedited jury trial in Sacramento County in March 2011.

Fluent in Armenian, Sarkissian was commissioned by the Sacramento Superior Court to translate thousands of legal words, phrases, terms

and statutes for the English/Armenian Legal Glossary published by the court in 2005. In addition to being used in California, the glossary is in use in Washington, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Hawaii and Colorado.

Sarkissian holds dual B.A.s in political science and rhetoric and communication from the University of California, Davis. She earned her J.D. from the McGeorge School of Law, University of the Pacific, where she was an author and editor of the McGeorge Law Review. While at McGeorge, she received the Witkin Award of Academic Excellence in Government Lawyering.

**Staff to:** *Education Committee, Health Care Policy Committee*



### Policy Advocate

**Valerie Nera** specializes in advocacy on agriculture, water, water storage, resources, telecommunications, crime, and banking and finance issues for the California Chamber of Commerce.

Priority issues include water supply and conveyance, agricultural land use, balanced resource development policies for timber, protection of private property rights, federal and state endangered species laws, banking rules, prepaid phones and secondhand dealers, telecommunications infrastructure permits, graffiti, and organized retail theft.

Nera joined the CalChamber staff in 1978 as a legislative assistant on agricultural issues. She also has lobbied air, environmental and privacy issues for the CalChamber.

She earned a B.A. with honors from the University of California, Berkeley, and a J.D. from the McGeorge School of Law, University of the Pacific.

**Staff to:** *Water Resources Committee, Agriculture and Natural Resources Ad Hoc Committee, Energy and Telecommunications Ad Hoc Committee*



### Grassroots Coordinator/Local Chamber Program Director

**Cathryn L. Mesch** has been coordinating the California Chamber of Commerce grassroots advocacy program since December 2006.

In that role, her primary duty is to enhance the CalChamber grassroots network throughout the state, working closely with the public policy staff to secure business input as early as possible on priority issues. The CalChamber grassroots program received a Star Achievement Award for both 2012 and 2013 from the National Prosperity Project, an educational foundation to promote voter awareness and registration.

Mesch joined the CalChamber in August 2005 as executive assistant in the public policy unit. She

brought with her 25 years of management experience supervising office, sales and marketing staffs and operational procedural programs in a variety of settings, including construction, realty companies, courier services and packaging companies.

She also served as director of marketing for the California Foreign Trade Zone at the Port of Sacramento with responsibility for developing new Foreign Trade Zone sites throughout Northern California and implementing an intern program in partnership with the University of California, Davis.

Mesch earned an M.B.A. from the American Institute of International Marketing in Arizona.



### **Executive Vice President, Corporate Affairs**

**Dave Kilby**, executive vice president, corporate affairs, joined the California Chamber of Commerce staff in December 1988 after more than 11 years in local chamber of commerce management.

In addition to working with CalChamber major members, he serves as CalChamber corporate secretary and coordinates Board relations. Kilby also serves as president/chief executive officer of the Western Association of Chamber Executives.

During his first 11 years at CalChamber, Kilby served as the CalChamber's lobbyist on economic development, land use and small business issues.

Over the years, he has coordinated local chamber relations, grassroots legislative action efforts, the CalChamber's weekly legislative conference call and the annual business legislative summit.

Kilby is a member of the U.S. Chamber's Committee of 100 and in 2011 the American Chamber of Commerce Executives named him to its "People Who Shape People" influential leaders list.

He has a B.A. in political science from California State University, Fresno.

**Staff to:** *Economic Advisory Council*

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### **Executive Vice President, Public Affairs**

**Martin R. Wilson**, executive vice president of public affairs, joined the California Chamber of Commerce in October 2011.

Wilson oversees all the CalChamber's public affairs and campaign activities, including the Public Affairs Council, a political advisory committee made up of the CalChamber's major members; its candidate recruitment and support program; and its political action committees: ChamberPAC, which supports pro-jobs candidates and legislators, and CalBusPAC, which qualifies, supports and/or opposes ballot initiatives.

He also serves as the CalChamber liaison to JobsPAC, an employer-based, independent expenditure committee that supports pro-business candidates.

Wilson has almost 40 years of experience in California politics, playing leadership roles in the election and re-election of two governors, and a U.S. senator. He also has orchestrated numerous successful ballot measure and public affairs campaigns.

In addition to his campaign experience, Wilson has served in government as a senior staff member at the local, state and federal levels.

Before joining the CalChamber, Wilson spent seven years as managing partner of Wilson-Miller Communications, where he also advised Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger as head of the Governor's political and initiative committee, the California Recovery Team.

Before founding his own firm, Wilson was managing director for Public Strategies Inc. in Sacramento for five years and held a similar position with Burson-Marsteller for six years.

Wilson has served as senior fellow for the University of California, Los Angeles School of Public Affairs, board member for the California State Fair and director of the Coro Foundation, a public affairs training organization.

He graduated from San Diego State University with a B.A. in history.

**Staff to:** *Public Affairs Council, California Chamber Fundraising Committee, ChamberPAC, CalBusPAC, Candidate Recruitment and Development Fund*

**Also:** *JobsPAC Executive Director*



### Executive Vice President and General Counsel

**Erika Frank**, executive vice president of legal affairs, joined the CalChamber in April 2004 as a policy advocate and began serving as general counsel shortly thereafter, leveraging her 10 years of combined legal, governmental and legislative experience. She was named vice president of legal affairs in 2009 and executive vice president at the start of 2017.

Before assuming full-time general counsel responsibilities in late 2005, Frank also lobbied the legislative and executive branches on taxation, civil litigation and lawsuit abuse issues.

Frank leads CalChamber's Legal Affairs Department, which participates in court cases having a broad impact on California's economy and business climate—including workers' compensation reform, labor and employment, taxation, litigation reform and commercial free speech.

As CalChamber's subject matter expert on California and federal employment law, she oversees and contributes to CalChamber's labor law and human resources compliance products, including *HRCalifornia*; co-produces and presents webinars and seminars; and heads the Labor Law Helpline.

Through their active involvement on the front lines of California's legal and labor law compliance scene, Frank and her team are first to know when and how changes in law affect employers. She uses her employment law expertise to develop and facilitate training courses for HR professionals, and is a sought-after speaker at industry events.

Frank holds a B.A. in political science from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and received her J.D. from the McGeorge School of Law, University of the Pacific.



### Vice President, Communications

**Ann Amioka** has been a communications specialist at the California Chamber of Commerce since 1980. Since 1982, she has been executive editor of the CalChamber's legislative newsletter, *Alert*. She oversees editing and production of CalChamber communications and the corporate website.

Before joining the CalChamber staff as editor of the CalChamber's agricultural labor relations newsletter, Amioka was a reporter for a daily newspaper in Yolo County. She has a B.A. in history from Stanford University and an M.A. in history from California State University, Sacramento.



### Vice President, Corporate Relations

**Drew Savage** was named vice president of corporate relations at the beginning of 2001, a position dedicated to enhancing the CalChamber's profile with major corporations.

Savage came to CalChamber in 1990 as a membership specialist following three years in a similar position at the Illinois Chamber. He was named manager

of the CalChamber's membership sales team in October 1994. After taking on additional responsibilities for working with the state's growth industries and developing relationships with larger companies, Savage was promoted to vice president of membership in late 1999.

He holds a B.A. in political science from the University of Illinois at Chicago.



### Vice President, International Affairs

**Susanne Thorsen Stirling** has headed the California Chamber of Commerce International Trade Department since 1982.

She serves on the District Export Council (appointed by the U.S. Secretary of Commerce), the National Export Council Steering Committee, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce International Policy Committee, and the Chile-California Council, in addition to serving as an alternate board member to the California International Relations Foundation.

The CalChamber supports free trade worldwide, expansion of international trade and investment, fair and equitable market access for California products abroad, and elimination of disincentives that impede the international competitiveness of California business.

The department sponsors and participates in trade, investment and other international events. It also assists members with general export and

import activities, maintains *www.calchamber.com/international* and provides international trade publications, including a weekly e-newsletter.

The CalChamber is a past recipient of the U.S. Presidential Award for Export Service, and received the Presidential Citation from the government of the Republic of Korea.

Before joining the CalChamber, Stirling held positions in public affairs and public relations for Burmeister & Wain A/S, an international shipbuilding company based in Copenhagen.

Stirling studied at the University of Copenhagen and holds a B.A. in international relations from the University of the Pacific, where she now serves as a member of the Board of Regents. She earned an M.A. from the School of International Relations at the University of Southern California.

**Staff to:** *Council on International Trade*

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### Vice President, Local Chamber Relations

**Russell Lahodny** joined the California Chamber of Commerce as vice president of local chamber relations in October 2014. He serves as an information resource for and CalChamber liaison with local chambers of commerce.

From 2010 until joining the CalChamber staff, Lahodny was senior vice president, communications for the Anaheim Chamber of Commerce. His role was to maintain the quality and consistency of the chamber's messaging to its members and the business community. He created and oversaw all Anaheim Chamber communication tools, including a member newspaper, weekly e-newsletters, press releases, marketing materials, and website design. He also oversaw the Anaheim Chamber's legislative actions

and coordinated monthly meetings featuring local elected officials.

Before relocating to Anaheim, Lahodny was vice president of communications at the Irvine Chamber of Commerce. During his seven years in Irvine, he helped the chamber earn 15 communications awards from the Western Association of Chamber Executives.

In his CalChamber position, Lahodny also will serve as vice president of the association.

Lahodny received his B.A. in communications with an emphasis in photojournalism from California State University, Fullerton, where he served as photo editor for the college newspaper, *The Daily Titan*.

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### Vice President, Media Relations and External Affairs

**Denise Davis** is the chief liaison with the news media for the California Chamber of Commerce. As vice president for media relations and external affairs, she oversees communications strategy and outreach, and manages the CalChamber's involvement in select issue advocacy and ballot measure campaigns.

Before joining the CalChamber, Davis was a senior-level communications consultant working on a number of high-profile campaigns, legal matters and policy issues. She was Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's chief deputy communications director and has 14 years of experience serving three California attorneys general as a spokesperson and

victim advocate. She also directed media relations for a national, nonprofit legal foundation.

Over the course of her career, Davis has worked closely with statewide officeholders, Cabinet members, major corporations and a variety of trade associations. As such, Davis has developed expertise in the areas of environmental law, land use regulation, water law, resource management, criminal justice issues, correctional law, consumer law, health care and labor relations.

Davis graduated from the University of California, Davis, receiving a B.A. in communications.

California Foundation for Commerce and Education



**President**

**Loren Kaye** was appointed president of the California Foundation for Commerce and Education in January 2006.

The Foundation is affiliated with the California Chamber of Commerce and serves as a “think tank” for the California business community. The Foundation is dedicated to preserving and strengthening the California business climate and private enterprise through accurate, impartial and objective research and analysis of public policy issues of interest to the California business and public policy communities.

Kaye has devoted his career to developing, analyzing and implementing public policy issues in California, with a special emphasis on improving the

state’s business and economic climate.

Kaye is also a gubernatorial appointee to the state’s Little Hoover Commission, charged with evaluating the efficiency and effectiveness of state agencies and programs. He served in senior policy positions for Governors Pete Wilson and George Deukmejian, including Cabinet Secretary to the Governor and Undersecretary of the California Trade and Commerce Agency. Kaye also has represented numerous private sector interests, managing issues that affect specific business sectors to promote an improved business climate or to resist further regulation or costs on business.

Kaye is a graduate of the University of California, San Diego, with a degree in political science.

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