

2009 major victories



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.

Keeping Focus on Jobs, Economy

The California Chamber of Commerce is the voice of business, fighting proposals that increase costs and hurt the competitiveness of California employers and promoting efforts to support the state's job creators. Each year, we track more than 3,000 legislative proposals on behalf of employers. Policymakers listen to CalChamber policy advocates, knowing that we speak for more than 15,000 member businesses that together employ a quarter of the state's private workforce and reflect the diversity of the California business community.

Underscoring our message are the thousands of individuals who use our Web-based grassroots center, www.calchambervotes.com, to speak directly with their elected representatives. In 2009, visitors generated 272,786 letters on state and federal issues having an impact on how California operations do business.

Following is a brief recap of how CalChamber advocacy in 2009 helped employers. See the *Advocacy Return on Investment* sheet for estimates of employer savings from some of these victories.

Stopping ALL 33 'Job Killer' Bills

Strong opposition from the CalChamber, joined by other business groups and job-friendly legislators, prevented all but six "job killer" bills from passing the Legislature. The Governor vetoed those six proposals. Below is a sampling of "job killers" stopped or stalled this year. More details appear at www.calchamber.com/jobkillers.

- **Halted costly workplace mandates**, such as legislation hampering employment decisions (AB 943), increasing agricultural costs (SB 789) and increasing workers' compensation costs (AB 664).
- **Blocked barriers to economic development**, including legislation discouraging emission reductions (AB 1404), levying a climate change tax increase (AB 231, AB 1405, SB 31) and unreasonably increasing fines and penalties on business (AB 846).
- **Stopped inflation of liability costs** from proposals encouraging health insurance litigation (AB 2), imposing unreasonable new liability on employers (AB 793) and exposing small business to new shakedown lawsuits (AB 242).
- **Stalled expensive, unnecessary regulatory burdens**, including an expanded waste bureaucracy (AB 283, AB 479, AB 737) and severe retail restrictions (SB 601, SB 602, SB 603).

Increasing Construction Jobs through 'Job Creator' Bills

Supported to enactment legislation to help new home construction and facilitate the smooth recovery of the housing market (AB 333); and prevent the loss of thousands of jobs and support construction of vital projects in the South Coast (SB 827).

See other side for more CalChamber Major Victories.

2009 Major Victories for California Employers

Moving California Toward Water Reliability

Instrumental in developing legislative and bond package to put California on a pathway to long-term water supply reliability and ensuring a safe drinking water supply (SBX7 1, SBX7 2, SBX7 6, SBX7 7, SBX7 8).

Stopping Multiple Tax Proposals

Aggressive campaigning and advocacy by CalChamber-led coalitions damped enthusiasm for tax increases and new taxes, including targeted tax increases that would have exacerbated state budget problems and hurt the targeted industries, as well as a “split roll” proposal to tax business properties at a higher rate, an energy tax that raises the price of gasoline and California-produced crude oil and an onerous new requirement for business and government to withhold taxes on payments to independent contractors.

Promoting E-Commerce

Stalled proposals harming California online marketplaces, web-service providers, and websites of small businesses and non-profits by changing California’s sales tax law in a way that will encourage out-of-state retailers to instead do business with out-of-state counterparts (AB 178, ABX3 27).

Fighting Health Care Cost Inflation

Stopped proposals that would have increased health care premiums by establishing numerous health care coverage mandates (AB 56, AB 163, AB 214, AB 244, AB 513, SB 158, SB 161).

Protecting Businesses from Abusive Lawsuits

Presented to the California Supreme Court arguments supporting the court’s decision to narrow the scope of who may file lawsuits under the Private Attorneys General Act and California’s Unfair Competition Law (*Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1756 v. Superior Court of Los Angeles*).

Combating Costly Identity Theft

Supported enactment of a law making it easier to prosecute identity theft offenses by expanding the jurisdiction to include any place where an offense occurred (SB 226).

Neutralizing Overly Expansive Privacy Proposals

Secured amendments to proposals (ultimately vetoed) potentially exposing businesses to further data breaches by expanding the content of required breach notifications (SB 20) and requiring social networking sites to prohibit and prevent photos posted to a site from being copied (AB 632).

Improving Tax Process

Backed urgency legislation improving taxpayer confidentiality (AB 192), reducing administrative delays in the reassessment process (SB 816) and simplifying sales tax compliance for non-profits (AB 1486).

Promoting Voter Choice

- Supported legislation placing before voters on the June 2010 ballot an open primary proposal that expands voter choice and forces candidates to address a broader voter base (SB 6).
- Helped secure veto of legislation that would have had the effect of limiting the use of the referendum as a check-and-balance on the legislative branch.

