

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.

2013 Major Victories

Advocating Solutions for a Strong California

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.

Further emphasizing 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 2013 helped employers. See the **Advocacy Return on Investment** sheet for estimates of employer savings on some of these victories.

Preventing 37 of 38 'Job Killer' Bills from Advancing

The skill of CalChamber policy advocates, joining forces with other business groups and pro-jobs legislators, prevented 37 of 38 "job killer" bills from becoming law. Below is a sampling of "job killers" stopped before they passed the Legislature. More information at www.calchamber.com/jobkillers.

- **Costly workplace mandates**, such as expanded discrimination litigation (SB 404); new health care coverage penalties (AB 880); an expansion of the paid family leave program (SB 761); and an attempt to unravel cost-saving workers' compensation reform provisions (SB 626).
- **Barriers to economic recovery**, such as a split roll parcel tax that would have permitted school districts to assess commercial property at a higher rate than residential property (AB 59); and a split roll change of ownership bill that would have led to more frequent reassessment of commercial property (AB 188).
- **Lower vote requirement for tax increases**: Seven constitutional amendments proposed lowering from two-thirds to 55% the vote required for approving new taxes (SCA 3, SCA 4, SCA 7, SCA 8, SCA 9, SCA 11, ACA 3).
- **New double penalties** for most air/environmental citations at facilities in disadvantaged regions of the state (AB 1330);
- **Limitations on tax credits**: requiring any tax credit to end 10 years after taking effect (SB 365);
- **Dramatic increase in penalties** for unspecified types of pollution (SB 691);
- **Expensive, unnecessary regulations**, including a threat to oil and gas production that would drive up fuel and energy prices (SB 395); an unworkable ban on disposable fast-food containers (SB 529); and an expansion of reasons to sue under the California Environmental Quality Act (SB 617, SB 754).
- **Fuel and gas price increases** due to moratoriums on hydraulic fracturing (AB 1301, AB 1323) or an oil and gas severance tax discouraging production in the state (SB 241).

In addition, at the CalChamber's insistence, **the most onerous provisions were amended out of** proposals that increased exposure to frivolous litigation (AB 5); increased civil cases and penalties on employers (AB 1138); and expanded liability for use of independent contractors (SB 556).

Steering Job Creator Proposals into Law

Won approval of two job creator bills that help resolve critical problems for small business and small business investors:

- **Protecting small businesses from drive-by Proposition 65 lawsuits** by providing a 14-day right to cure for allegations of failure to post required warnings (AB 227).
- **Creating a dependable tax environment** by repealing the Franchise Tax Board decision to retroactively tax small business investors who relied in good faith on the law when investing in California and using a tax incentive that subsequently was found unconstitutional (AB 1412).

Continuing Earned Tax Credits

Supported legislation ensuring employers can use already-earned enterprise zone tax credits and clarifying the credits may be carried forward for 10 years (AB 106, SB 100).

Protecting Employer Rights/Controlling Costs

- Advocated veto of a costly double-appeal process for workplace safety citations that presumed guilt for employers (AB 1165).
- Supported veto of bill creating a one-sided evidentiary privilege that would have provided a union representative with an unfair opportunity to preclude relevant evidence during litigation regarding labor disputes or collective bargaining (AB 729).

Maintaining Access to Courts

Backed veto of unnecessary restrictions on trial courts' ability to minimize costs and contract for services in light of the budget reductions they have faced (AB 566).

Enhancing Export Opportunities

- Supported/participated in Governor's trade mission to China and opening of California office, which put the state in a better position to capture China's growing foreign investment and to continue exporting more than \$14 billion in goods to California's third largest export destination.
- Supported legislation signed into law that reduces delays in processing necessary documents for California exporters (AB 1400).

Keeping Coastal Commission in Check

Blocked passage of bill inappropriately expanding Coastal Commission enforcement authority by allowing the commission to impose administrative civil penalties (AB 976).

Preventing Cost Pressures in Workers' Compensation System

Supported veto of bill that would have exposed employers to higher costs by in effect forcing them to pay higher temporary disability payments before prevailing wage disputes are adjudicated (AB 454).

Increasing Student Success

Backed proposal improving the associate degree for transfer pathway for students (SB 440).

Streamlining Business Filings Processing

Supported appropriation of funds to eliminate Secretary of State backlog of business filings (AB 113).

Balancing Privacy Concerns with Ability to Conduct Business

Secured amendments to proposals signed into law:

- Prevented creation of new burdensome disclosure and reporting requirements for businesses using consumer credit reports in decision making (AB 1220).
- Averted subjecting "nonprescription" software providers to Confidentiality of Medical Information Act (AB 658).
- Removed unworkable process for website operators to allow consumers to opt out of online marketing (AB 370).