

ALERT

Governor's Actions Aim to Tackle Port Congestion



Easing port congestion was the focus of an executive order signed by Governor

Gavin Newsom last week and a federal partnership announced this week.

The executive order signed by the Governor on October 20 directs state agencies to develop longer-term proposals that support port operations and goods movement for consideration in the January 10 Governor's Budget.

This week's agreement with the U.S.

Department of Transportation (USDOT) aims to speed up projects to modernize port operations and supply chain processes,

Executive Order

The executive order builds on earlier efforts this year by the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz) to ease supply chain issues by engaging the diverse network of stakeholders along the supply chain to discuss key challenges and identify short-term and long-term solutions.

These directives come amid global

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Governor Announces New Setback Rules for Oil Wells



Governor Gavin Newsom last week announced that the Geologic

Energy Management Division (CalGEM) in the Department of Conservation released a proposed regulation curbing new oil and gas development and requiring extensive retrofitting of existing wells.

Governor Newsom characterized the action as necessary to protect public health.

Specifically, the proposed rule seeks to ban new oil wells within 3,200 feet of schools, homes, hospitals, nursing homes and other community locations deemed "sensitive."

Further, the proposal would require retrofits to existing wells within the same 3,200-foot setback area.

According to the Western States Petroleum Association, "The oil and gas industry is not opposed to setbacks and in fact, has supported many local setbacks that are based on science, data and rigorous health assessments. But this approach by the state will eliminate tax revenues and community benefits, raise costs for everyone and put thousands of people out of work."

Quoted in *The Sacramento Bee* last week, Natural Resources Secretary Wade Crowfoot said: "No new wells will mean

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First-Time Legislators Recount Experience at CalChamber Public Affairs Conference



Photo by Matt Lara

An afternoon session on October 26, the first day of the CalChamber Public Affairs Conference this week, gives attendees a chance to learn more about some of the new legislators. From left are CalChamber moderator Adam Regele, Assembly Member Suzette Valladares (R-Santa Clarita), Senator Dave Min (D-Irvine), Assembly Members Akilah Weber, M.D. (D-San Diego), Laurie Davies (R-Laguna Niguel) and Megan Dahle (R-Bieber), and Senator Rosilicie Ochoa Bogh (R-Yucaipa). Watch for more photos in the next edition of *Alert*.

Inside

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Labor Law Corner

How to Handle Paystub Listing for COVID Supplemental Paid Sick Leave



David Leporiere
HR Adviser

I read that the California COVID Supplemental Paid Sick Leave expired on September 30, but I haven't seen anything about the requirement to list the hours on the employee's paystub. Do I still need to list the hours of the supplemental paid sick leave after September 30, 2021?

You are correct that California's 2021 COVID-19 Supplemental Paid Sick Leave expired on September 30, 2021. However, if an employee was on the leave on or before September 30, you must continue to pay that employee under the government's mandate until either the employee is able to return to work, or he/she has exhausted his/her available hours of the supplemental sick leave.

If you had an employee who used the supplemental sick leave after September 30, then those hours paid under the law would be listed on the paystub (wage statement).

'Available Hours'

If your question pertains to the requirement that an employer list the "available" hours of supplemental sick

leave on the wage statement, then the answer is different.

In that the government mandate expired on September 30, for all employees who were not actually using the supplemental paid sick leave as of that date, there were no available hours remaining.

Consequently, unless an employee was on the leave on or after September 30, you no longer have to list the available hours because there were no hours available to the employees to use.

Column based on questions asked by callers on the Labor Law Helpline, a service to California Chamber of Commerce preferred and executive members. For expert explanations of labor laws and Cal/OSHA regulations, not legal counsel for specific situations, call (800) 348-2262 or submit your question at www.hrcalifornia.com.

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CalChamber-Sponsored Seminars/Trade Shows

More at www.calchamber.com/events.

Labor and Employment

HR Boot Camp Virtual Seminar.

CalChamber. December 9 and December 10, Online. (800) 331-8877.

International Trade

Expo Dubai 2021. Expo 2020 Dubai

UAE. Through March 31, 2022, Dubai, United Arab Emirates. (+971) 800 EXPO (3976).

Taiwan Trade Shows. Taipei Economic & Cultural Office, San Francisco. Through December 27, Online. (415) 362-7680.

36th Trade Expo Indonesia Digital Edition. Indonesia Ministry of Trade. Through December 20, Online. +62 (21) 829-2661.

Clean Energy Tech Forum. Consulate General of South Korea in San Francisco. November 3, San Francisco. (415) 730-5673.

Israel Defense Expo. Israel Defense & HLS Expo and Israeli Chamber of Commerce. November 9-11, Tel Aviv, Israel. +972-3-691-4564 x 300.

Future-Proof Taxation. American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce. November 15-16, Online. +30 210-699-3559.

Smart City Expo World Congress 2021. U.S. Commercial Service. November 16-18, Barcelona, Spain. (704) 248-6976.

12th World Chambers Congress: Dubai 2021. International Chamber of Commerce World Chambers Federation and Dubai Chamber of Commerce & Industry. November 23-25, Dubai, United Arab Emirates. worldchamber-scongress@iccwbo.org.

Athens International Tourism & Culture Expo 2021. Greek Ministry of Tourism and Greece 2021 Committee. November 25-27, Athens, Greece. +30 210-614-1164.

Concrete Show South East Asia 2022. MEREBO GmbH Messe International. September 14-17, 2022, Jakarta, Indonesia. 49-40-399 99 05-15.

**Quick Answers
to Tough
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 **HRCalifornia**

The Workplace

Get Ready — New Labor Laws Are Coming



In **Episode 135** of The Workplace podcast, CalChamber employment law expert Matthew Roberts and CalChamber policy advocate

Ashley Hoffman discuss five new labor laws that employers will see in 2022: AB 1033, SB 62, AB 1003, AB 701 and SB 606.

The new year is only months away, so it's time for California employers to get ready for the new laws that will take effect in 2022, Roberts tells podcast listeners.

AB 1033

One of the new laws that takes effect in the new year is CalChamber-sponsored legislation, **AB 1033**, which establishes a more practical, streamlined procedure for implementing the small employer family leave mediation program established in 2020 by AB 1867 and fixes a drafting error in SB 1383. The bill also clarifies the definition of "parent-in-law" because the term was not included in SB 1383's operative language, leading to much confusion among employers, Hoffman explains.

SB 62

SB 62 specifically targets the garment manufacturing industry and has two main pieces, Hoffman says. First, the bill eliminates a piece rate method of payment. It has always been illegal to pay garment workers below the minimum wage but removing the piece rate may be a way to help catch dishonest employers who are underpaying workers.

The CalChamber, Hoffman says, did not take issue with this first piece of the

bill. Rather, the CalChamber's focus during the legislative process centered around SB 62's second component: making honest businesses in the supply chain jointly liable for the wage violations of dishonest employers. Companies in the garment industry will need to be very careful and look at who's doing the manufacturing of their products, Hoffman warns.

AB 1003

Another new wage-and-hour law coming is **AB 1003**, which some employers have expressed fear about as it is thought that it turns wage theft into a crime, Roberts says.

Intentionally withholding someone's wages is already a crime, Hoffman points out. The CalChamber initially labeled AB 1003 a job killer bill, but later changed its position to "neutral" due to amendments done in the Assembly Public Safety Committee that narrowed the application of the bill to criminalize only fraudulent and knowingly unlawful conduct by bad actors.

This means that AB 1003 is not going to affect good faith employers attempting to do the right thing; rather, this law is meant for those employers who are not paying proper wages, know they're not paying it and refuse to do so.

Roberts advises that employers concerned with wage-and-hour practices should consult with their legal counsel and conduct wage-and-hour audits to ensure they're not running afoul of these rules.

AB 701

Another industry-specific bill that was passed this year is **AB 701**, which focuses on warehouse employers who use a quota system, Roberts says.

The law, Hoffman explains, is limited

in scope and applies to employers with 100 or more employees at a single warehouse unit, or employers with 1,000 or more employees at one or more distribution centers in California.

Starting in 2022, warehouse employers must report their use of quotas, and give workers ample time to comply with health and safety laws, and use of restroom facilities. The goal, Hoffman says, is to prevent employees from working so hard that they put themselves in physical harm.

SB 606

The last new law Roberts and Hoffman discuss is **SB 606**.

The bill arose out of the COVID-19 pandemic and focuses on employers who violate health and safety laws. It imposes an enterprise-wide violation presumption, meaning that if an employer's policy or pattern of practice violates a health and safety law at one worksite, it will be assumed the employer is violating the law at every one of the company's worksites, Hoffman explains.

This law, she says, is trying to curb the conduct of those employers who have not made attempts to comply with health ordinances and laws.

Legislative Outlook

Hoffman and Roberts anticipate that legislators will continue to target specific industries in next year's legislative session, but will also look at laws that will affect all employers, such as further expanding leave laws and granting more paid sick leave days. If the pandemic wanes next year, employers can expect to see more general employment law bills come back up.

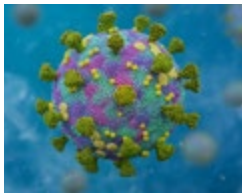


CalChamber Member Feedback

"With its extensive experience and expertise, the CalChamber is a very strong and effective voice for the business community (large and small) in California."

Jonathan O. Mayes
Senior Vice President
Albertsons Companies

State Opens Grant Program for Live Venues Hit by COVID-19



From October 29 through November 19, the state is accepting grant applications from independent live event venues that have been affected by the pandemic.

The **California Venues Grant Program** will provide grants of the lesser of \$250,000 or 20% of the applicant's gross earned revenue in California for the 2019 taxable year to support continued operation of the live venue.

To be eligible for the grants, the live event venues must have a physical address and operate in California (to be validated through submitted business tax returns). If the business tax returns don't reference a California address, the applicant will be deemed ineligible.

Applications for the venues grant are separate from the California Small Business COVID-19 Relief Grant Program.

If an eligible independent live event has been awarded a grant under the California Small Business COVID-19

Relief Grant Program, the amount of that grant will be subtracted from the grant amount to be awarded under the venues grant program. If the small business COVID-19 relief grant is greater than the venues grant, the eligible independent live event will not receive a venues grant.

For timelines, qualifications and more information, visit <https://cavenuesgrant.com/>.

State Accepting Applications for New Funded Innovation Hub Program



The California Office of the Small Business Advocate (CalOSBA) is accepting applications for

the Inclusive Innovation Hub (iHub2) Program to incubate and accelerate technology development and science-based firms in underserved regions and communities.

The agency will award each designated iHub2 \$250,000 to build and expand programs during the first year of operation. This funding will allow sponsor groups to develop plans and bolster existing programs to build local business ecosystems to support science and technology startups, particularly for women and people of color, as well as for underserved geographies and regions.

CalOSBA states that iHub2 will encourage regions to build upon their existing or emerging innovation resources and local industry concentrations to create activity hubs, promote technology transfer and assist nascent companies with layered support and partnerships

The program also emphasizes connectivity and collaboration across regional innovation assets, linking academic and research institutions to surrounding cities, trained skilled workforces to industry, and researchers and entrepreneurs to local networks and communities for support.

Application Information

The deadline to submit an application for this program is November 15, 2021 at 12 p.m. PST. Applications must be submitted by email to osba@gobiz.ca.gov.

Eligible applicants include:

- Fully accredited institutions of higher education, such as community colleges, public and private universities and state colleges;
- Private nonprofit corporations engaged in economic development activities;
- Local counties or municipalities with pre-existing community/economic development departments and/or programs; and
- Public economic development institutions, such as workforce investment boards and economic development corporations.

For full application instructions and eligibility information, see the **iHub2 request for proposals** link at <https://calosba.ca.gov/grant-and-funding-opportunities/>.

Governor Announces New Setback Rules for Oil Wells

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that, over years, thousands of wells that would be approved aren't approved." News reports also quote Crowfoot as saying that the administration believes some oil well operators will choose to decommission their existing wells within the setback area rather than pay for costly retrofits required under the draft rule.

CalChamber Statement

The California Chamber of Commerce responded to the Governor's announcement by highlighting both the cost of the proposal and the fact that it will increase dependency on foreign oil:

"Affordable energy and the tens of thousands of high-paying California jobs associated with domestic energy production are a critical part of California's economy. The reality is that fossil fuels will continue to play a crucial role in our economy for the foreseeable future.

"Small businesses, hospitals, tens of thousands of trucks moving goods at our ports and millions of families all depend on reliable and affordable energy. This proposal will drive up energy costs for millions of Californians, threatening small business employers. The result will be job loss, not only in the oil industry, but in many other sectors of the economy.

"CalChamber appreciates the safety concerns outlined in the proposed regulation. However, it is equally important to note that oil production in California is highly regulated. California should not subject itself to increased dependency on foreign oil by further limiting in-state production.

"While the final proposal leaves many unanswered questions, CalChamber will engage the agency during the formal rulemaking process to ensure California will meet the diversity of energy demands across the state in a cost-effective and safe manner with a focus on reducing any dependency on foreign oil."

Is Direct Democracy Under Attack in State?



Loren Kaye

Sometimes it seems that nobody likes California's direct democracy — except the voters.

Some legislators seem to resent it. During the last legislative session (and

for the fifth time since 2009), lawmakers approved a bill that would have prohibited proponents of an initiative, referendum or recall from paying petition circulators on a per-signature basis. Had the Governor signed the bill, it would have prohibitively raised the costs to qualify statewide ballot measures.

Now the referendum power has come under fire from a different direction. A [proposed constitutional amendment](#) is awaiting action in the state Senate to change the historic burden of proof for passing a referendum, thereby constraining the ability of voters to reconsider a bill passed by the Legislature.

The frustration over the attempted recall of Governor Gavin Newsom, easily turned back by the Governor, has elicited proposals by legislators to raise the bar on recalling elected officials.

Court Attack

It's hardly surprising that politicians resent the people's exercise of legislative powers or intra-election accountability, but now a new line of attack on the initiative power has been mounted from an unusual venue: [Alameda County Superior Court](#).

In a case challenging [Proposition 22](#), the 2020 measure giving app-based drivers benefits and rights and maintaining their ability to provide freelance work, plaintiff labor unions argued that it's OK to ignore the will of the voters — and a [judge agreed](#).

Rather than giving deference to the 59% of voters approving the proposition in a high turnout election, the court went

out of its way to undermine features of the initiative that enable voters to hold their elected officials accountable.

Courts historically have found that voters “[stand in the shoes of the Legislature](#)” when acting on an initiative. They provide the last word on the subject — until the next ballot measure.

Guest Commentary By Loren Kaye

Arbitrary Interpretation

This time, the court created new rules that, if sustained, will inhibit voters from passing new statutes.

- First, the ruling made the odd distinction that voters may legislate when exercising powers that are inherent to the Legislature but cannot exercise a power the Legislature is specifically granted by the state Constitution.

According to the ruling, voters may, like the Legislature, use the initiative to enact, amend or repeal any statute, unless the law was enacted by the Legislature under the specific direction of the Constitution. This unprecedented interpretation of the scope of the people's initiative power is as arbitrary as it is disturbing.

The state Constitution is replete with grants of authority to the Legislature over one or another realm of public policy, from public finance to public utilities to water development. If allowed to stand and extended to these other areas, this ruling will wall off great categories of public policy from the reach of statutory initiatives.

Amending Initiatives

- Second, the ruling shuffled the deck on how initiatives can be amended.

In general, the Legislature can only amend a statutory initiative with a bill passed by a majority vote and then ratified by voters at a statewide election. In some cases, initiative drafters enable the Legislature to amend parts or all of the initiative, sometimes insisting on super-

majority approval to amend the measure.

The ruling noted this tradition, citing cases that “any doubts should be resolved in favor of the initiative and referendum power,” and that the Legislature “is free to address matters that are related to, but distinct from, the subjects covered by the initiative or which the initiative does not specifically permit or prohibit.”

But when it came to a particular restriction on legislative amendment to Proposition 22, the ruling overturned it. Proposition 22 explicitly prevented the Legislature from authorizing “any entity or organization to represent the interests of app-based drivers in connection with drivers' contractual relationships with network companies, or drivers' compensation, benefits, or working conditions.” This provision was inserted to ensure the stability of the benefits provided by other sections of the initiative.

But in a mere three sentences, the ruling concluded that this prohibition against amending the measure was unconstitutional, because it could find no linkage between a law binding drivers to a bargaining organization and a threat to their independent contractor status.

And just like that, the right of voters to define the scope of future legislative amendments to statutory initiatives has been thrown into doubt.

Higher Courts

The final say on this case will be at the Court of Appeal or state Supreme Court. In that venue, proper deference should be given to the voters exercising their legislative powers broadly and being able to guide future changes by the Legislature.

Considering the steady attacks on direct democracy from the political branch and special interests, the judiciary should be vigilant in protecting this institution.

Loren Kaye is president of the [California Foundation for Commerce and Education](#), a think tank affiliated with the [California Chamber of Commerce](#).

Businesses Gearing Up for World Chambers Congress in Dubai



Dubai is the gathering spot this fall for the World Chambers Congress, scheduled for November 23–25.

The **World Chambers Congress** is the flagship event of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and its World Chambers Federation (WCF). The event provides a platform for chamber leaders and their business members to share best practices, exchange insights, develop networks, address the latest business issues and discover new areas of innovation.

The Dubai Chamber of Commerce is co-organizing the upcoming 12th World Congress (#12WCC), which is taking place for the first time as a hybrid event and is slated to be the most inclusive gathering to date. The Congress typically welcomes more than 1,000 international delegates.

‘Chambers 4.0’

In keeping with this year’s theme, “Generation Next: Chambers 4.0,” the program will focus on innovation, examining how chambers are rethinking their priorities and creating solutions to address existing challenges, remove trade barriers and drive global prosperity.

Speakers will include diverse and international experts from the World

Trade Organization, International Trade Centre, Google, Facebook and more. Organizers predict delegates will leave with actionable learnings to bring about a Chamber 4.0 transformation that benefits chambers and their communities worldwide, ultimately contributing to a resilient recovery from the pandemic.

Featuring 44 thought-provoking sessions, the global event also will include a hands-on digital fitness test enabling chambers to build better business resilience and ready themselves



for Chamber Model Innovation, as well as a range of **business-related activities** — such as guided networking; business matching meetings; investment and trade opportunities; site visits to United Arab Emirates free trade zones, the Dubai Silicon Oasis, Dubai Future Foundation, the Prime Minister’s Office and even access to the mega event, Expo 2020 Dubai, the first World Expo to be held in the Middle East.

World Chambers Competition

The Congress also includes the much-anticipated **World Chambers Competition**, the only global awards programme to identify and reward the most innovative, entrepreneurial solutions of chambers to today’s most pressing global challenges. The competition seeks to celebrate the achievements of these chambers while bringing their stories to a wider audience.

In spotlighting the diversity and enterprise championed by the competing chambers, the competition aims to promote change to make the world a better place.

For 2021, the competition received 78 initiatives representing 33 countries under four categories — Best Resilience Project, Best Digital Project, Best Climate Action Project and Best Unconventional Project. The total exceeds the number of entries received for the 2019 edition and shows the compelling and tireless efforts of chambers in the face of the current global landscape.

The **2021 World Chambers Competition finalists** will

present their projects to delegates and judges attending the #12WCC. Presentations will take place from November 23–25; the winners will be announced on the final day of the event, November 25.

Registration and more information about the World Chambers Congress are available at www.worldchamberscongress.org.
Staff Contact: Susanne T. Stirling

World Expo Kicks Off in Dubai, Continues through March 2022



After a year’s delay due to the pandemic, **Expo 2020 Dubai** kicked off on

October 1, 2021. The expo will continue through March 31, 2022.

Expo 2020 Dubai is the first world expo to be held in the region encompassing the Middle East, Africa and South Asia. Dubai, located in the United Arab

Emirates, has been described as a city of the future.

For 170 years, world expos have provided a platform to showcase innovations that shape today’s world. Expo 2020 continues that tradition with the latest technology from around the globe. The theme is “Connecting Minds and Creating the Future.”

More than 190 countries are participating in Expo 2020 Dubai, which prom-

ises participants — from families and children to governments and entrepreneurs — an opportunity to reimagine the world of tomorrow.

For more information about the expo, including the schedule of events, historical innovations and structures associated with past expos, planning a visit, tickets and merchandise, visit www.expo2020dubai.com.

AmCham Ecuador

Optimism in Air as Strong Vaccine Effort, New Regime Promote Business Recovery



The following answers to questions posed by the California Chamber of Commerce are from Felipe Espinosa, executive

director of the American Chamber of Commerce in Ecuador.

AmCham Ecuador

Please tell us a bit about the American Chamber of Commerce in Ecuador, services you provide and activities.

AmCham Ecuador is a not-for-profit that started its operation in 1974, oriented to the growth of the U.S.-Ecuador relationship. In its origin it was mainly involved with trading issues and support for American companies that were investing in our country.

The chamber has evolved through the years, providing new services, and as the relationship between our two countries evolved. Those comprise not only trade, but also rule of law, trade facilitation, anti-corruption and compliance issues, as well as close collaboration with the Ecuadorian Embassy in Washington D.C. and the American Embassy in Quito, on several other topics of interest, such as antidrug efforts, national and regional security and cooperation.

Our chamber has around 250 members and their business amounts to around 17% of the Ecuadorian gross domestic product (GDP).

U.S.-Ecuador Relations

Ecuador is a small country, located in the northwestern part of South America between Colombia and Peru. The equatorial line crosses it from east to west, providing spring-like weather all year long, although three different regions are formed with the mountain ranges that cross from north to south.

The country's main income has been oil, but an effort to increase and diversify exports has been in place for several years. Such effort has resulted in significant exports of bananas, shrimp, fish products, flowers and frozen broc-

coli, among others. Ecuador is the No. 1 bananas and shrimp exporter in the world.

The United States has, for several years, been our main trading partner. Around 23% of Ecuador's non-oil exports go to the United States. This is a very interesting fact, because the range of exports go beyond those I already mentioned. Fruits and vegetables produced all year long, which in many cases reflect the effort of local small and medium enterprises, enter yearly to the export markets.



Felipe Espinosa

Another trait I need to mention is that our countries' economies are complementary. We do not compete, but rather, both benefit from the products of the other.

In the case of a California-based company, around US \$25 billion of frozen broccoli is imported yearly to the United States.

COVID-19 Impact

As countries slowly start to recover from the pandemic, what is the economic impact of COVID-19 on businesses in Ecuador?

COVID has hit hard most of the Latin American countries. Ecuador has had a large number of contagions and deaths. Our main port city, Guayaquil, was particularly hit at the start of the pandemic.

After a first wave, with a large number of infected, dead and intensive care units (ICUs) topped and saturated, the efforts of the government, with quar-

antines and even lockdowns, etc. were partially effective. The death toll went down significantly.

This, however, severely affected the economy of the country, which even before the pandemic was already in a dire situation: a large public debt that had grown in previous years, a large deficit, increasing yearly debt payments due to large interest and capital payments, and high unemployment rates.

Pre-Pandemic Improvements

The government that had come into office in 2017 had been improving institutions and governance, and had focused on bringing up anticorruption practices and legal actions against individuals involved in previous corruption acts. Improvement was slow, but it was felt.

Although there is no good time for a phenomenon such as COVID, timing with Ecuador was bad. The help of the multilateral institutions and the agreement reached with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) were essential to palliate the crisis.

In April 2021, a new president was elected, bringing hope to Ecuador, with the promise of an open economy, free enterprise and attraction of investments, and much-needed creation of jobs.

Vaccinations

The first task the president set to his government was the vaccination effort. After a very slow, struggling initiation by the outgoing president's regime, the new government vowed to vaccinate 9 million Ecuadorians in the first 100 days of government — a huge task that involved international supply of vaccines, logistics at all levels, and general population positive response.

The task was a great success for the government and proved that private-public alliances can be very fruitful, since the government teamed with the private sector to accomplish the goal. A very auspicious result, that set world records, has been the outcome. As an example, the capital city of Quito (close to 3 million inhabitants) has 83% of its population already inoculated with both doses.

This government has promised to revitalize our country and to show the

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Governor's Executive Order, Federal Partnership Tackle Port Congestion

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disruptions to the goods movement supply chain. Record demand for imported goods combined with capacity issues across the entire supply chain have slowed distribution at ports on the California coast.

The executive order also directs state agencies to continue coordinating with the Biden-Harris Administration Supply Chain Disruptions Task Force to address state, national and global supply chain challenges.

Lastly, under the order, state agencies are directed to identify state-owned properties and other locations that could be available to address short-term storage needs once goods are unloaded from ships; to identify priority freight routes to be considered for a temporary exemption

to current gross vehicle limits to allow for trucks to carry additional goods; and to create workforce training and education programs. AB 639's (Cervantes, 2020) implementation is also expedited through this executive order.

Partnership

A joint release from the Governor's office and USDOT identifies projects that could receive support from the partnership agreement as including:

- Port-specific upgrades;
- Expanding capacity for freight rail;
- Developing inland port facilities for increased warehouse storage;
- Railyard and truck electrification;
- Highway upgrades to improve truck travel times;

• Grade-separated crossings to reduce the number of rail-street intersections and improve safety and efficiency;

- Land ports of entry to expand trade capacity and cross-border commerce; and
- Other projects identified by the California State Transportation Agency.

Shipping Challenges

Earlier this month, the commissioner of the Federal Maritime Commission, Carl Bentzel, joined the CalChamber to discuss the state of U.S. ports and short- and long-term challenges in the shipping industry. To read the *Alert* story summarizing Commissioner Bentzel's remarks, visit <https://calchamberalert.com/2021/10/15/commissioner-offers-insights-into-factors-affecting-congestion-at-u-s-ports/>.

Optimism in Air as Strong Vaccine Effort, New Regime Promote Recovery

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possibilities it presents to the international community and to investors; that is, a country that respects rule of law and will abide with international law and arbitration ruling, with strong institutions, and a "dollarized economy" (the U.S.

dollar has been the official currency since 2000) which guarantees that a dollar invested remains as such and will not be subjected to devaluations.

Businesses are recovering and investments are picking up. There is a general sentiment of optimism, although chal-

lenges persist. It is important to maintain positivity and support the government's efforts to continue to change laws to promote further business recovery and the creation of new jobs.

Staff Contact: Susanne T. Stirling

Compliance Updates You Can Count On

Your Required California Notices Have Mandatory Updates

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HR Expert & Business Advocate™



Now's the time to preorder your all-in-one California and Federal Labor Law poster from CalChamber to display in each business location and jobsite starting January 1, 2022. The English or Spanish options reflect mandatory updates, so you can be confident you'll be posting the most current California and federal employment notices. **Preferred and Executive Members receive their 20 percent member discount.**

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