

## Successes help employers, jobs and the economy

### CAPITOL WATCHDOG

Each year, the CalChamber tracks close to 3,000 legislative proposals on behalf of member businesses.

### IMPACT CALIFORNIA

By speaking out, employers can make a difference. See hot issues at [www.impact-california.com](http://www.impact-california.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.

# 2021 Major Victories

## California Promise: Opportunity for All

The California Chamber of Commerce is the voice of California businesses of all sizes, expert at promoting pro-job policies and advising employers on the practical impact of state laws and regulations in the workplace. We track close to 3,000 legislative proposals each 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 nearly 14,000 member businesses that together employ a fourth of the state's private workforce and reflect the diversity of the California business community.

Strengthening our message are the thousands of individuals who use our web-based center, [www.impact-california.com](http://www.impact-california.com), to express their views to their elected representatives.

Each year, website visitors use the center to send numerous letters about state, federal and international issues affecting business operations.

Read on to learn how CalChamber advocacy in 2021 helped employers. See the **Advocacy Return on Investment** sheet for estimates of employer savings on some of these victories.

## Stopping 24 of 25 Job Killer Bills

CalChamber policy advocates, backed by other business groups, pro-jobs legislators and the Governor's veto, stopped all but one of the 25 job killer bills identified this year from becoming law as originally proposed. Below is a sampling of job killers stopped or amended before they passed the Legislature. More information at [www.calchamber.com/jobkillers](http://www.calchamber.com/jobkillers).

- **New leave mandates.** Stopped or amended expansion of leaves of absence opening new avenues for litigation against employers (AB 95, AB 995 AB 1041).
- **Tax increases.** Blocked massive tax increase on all forms of personal property or wealth (ACA 8, AB 310).
- **Housing development bans.** Stopped proposals removing local land use authority over residential or commercial development (AB 1295, SB 55, SB 499).
- **Higher energy costs.** Defeated proposal eliminating thousands of high-paying California jobs and requiring the state to import even more foreign oil by shutting down about 95% of oil and gas production in California (SB 467).
- **Workers' compensation.** Amended proposal that would have imposed millions of dollars of costs on workers' compensation system and reduced workers' access to quality care (AB 1465).

## Progress on Keeping Goods Moving

Practical recommendations for easing port congestion reflected in Governor's actions and state/local agency efforts to open bottlenecks in supply chain, including weight limit increases for trucks that help streamline movement of containers from cargo ships; land use variances and permit streamlining that provide additional storage space for containers.

## Averting Costly Litigation

Criminal liability for good faith mistakes amended; onerous return to work mandate amended and vetoed; public shaming of employers stopped; uncapped leave mandate stopped; significant expansion of family leave and paid sick leave amended and stopped; costly benefits mandate stopped (AB 1003, AB 1074, AB 1192, AB 1119, AB 1041, AB 1179).



### Helping Businesses Keep Track of Continuing Flood of COVID-19 Information

Distributed updates on the numerous federal, state and local pronouncements on pandemic-related relief and requirements via all communication channels and presented the feeds in one web location (*Advocacy website, HRWatchdog and Capitol Insider blogs, The Workplace podcast, HRCalifornia Extra, CalChamber Alert* – [www.calchamber.com/coronavirus](http://www.calchamber.com/coronavirus)).

### Clarification and Cleanup of COVID-19, Public Health Notices

- Led coalition that won approval of proposal improving last year's AB 685, which requires notice of COVID-19 cases in the workplace, by eliminating duplicative obligations for businesses in certain industries, matching them to corresponding federal guidelines, and making other favorable improvements (AB 654).
- Sponsored signed legislation requiring publication of local public health orders and creation of an email list to ensure stakeholders are kept apprised of any changes (SB 336).
- Led coalition giving the employer perspective and practical suggestions as the California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA) developed emergency temporary standards for preventing COVID-19 in the workplace.

### Alleviating Upward Pressure on Health Care Costs

Stalled costly, government-run health care; secured veto of proposal increasing prescription drug costs; stopped mandatory bonuses for health care workers, restrictions on personal health devices and health care mandate on chronic diseases (AB 1400, SB 524, AB 650, AB 1252, AB 1436, SB 568).

### Protecting Legitimate Uses of Technology

- Stopped automated decision systems assessment mandate for public contracts, restrictions on personal health devices, unworkable restrictions on smart speakers and limits on contact tracing (AB 13, AB 1252, AB 1436, AB 1262, AB 814).
- Secured amendments providing more flexibility for legitimate identity protection and fraud prevention when original proposal prohibited access and use of information obtained pursuant to a crime, regardless of whether access/use was for a legitimate purpose (AB 1391).

### Preserving Telehealth Options

Secured amendments protecting patient telehealth options in legislation that originally disrupted the practice (AB 457).

### Supporting Solvency of Unemployment Insurance System

Unemployment insurance (UI) fraud deterrent and requirement for Employment Development Department to prepare for future recessions signed; bill reducing penalties for UI fraud stopped (AB 110, SB 390, AB 548).

### Maintaining Packaging Options for Businesses and Consumers

Stopped ban on critical packaging materials that could have led to creation of more waste due to spoilage/breakage and additional greenhouse gas emissions from heavier packaging (AB 1371).

### Nixing Unnecessary Product Labeling and Chemical Content Requirements

- Co-led coalition that negotiated amendments to narrow proposal that originally circumvented Safer Consumer Products program by proposing to ban per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) chemicals far beyond the stated intent of banning PFAS in juvenile products, including in electronics and medical devices, with substantial unintended consequences (AB 652).
- Co-led coalition that pushed for amendments to bill that originally would have banned intentionally adding any class of PFAS in foodware products by January 1, 2023, and would have required new label for all cookware products warning customers of health and environmental risks associated with a product containing any chemical on the Department of Toxic Substances Control list of thousands of chemicals, with no thresholds or other scientific basis for establishing when a warning is appropriate. Author amendments made before bill was signed into law included eliminating the warning label and 1-800-number requirements, as well as technical amendments narrowing the scope of products covered (AB 1200).

### Easing Some Burdens on Small Business

- Sponsored new law establishing a more practical, streamlined procedure for implementing the small employer family leave mediation program established in 2020 (AB 1033).
- Supported license renewal fee relief for restaurants, bars, barbers and cosmetologists (SB 94, AB 83).
- Backed \$2.6 billion grant program to provide struggling small businesses a lifeline to help them recover from pandemic-induced shutdowns and regulations (SB 87).