

ALERT

CalChamber, Coalition Fight Single-Payer Health Care



The California Chamber of Commerce is leading a large and diverse coalition of California-based organizations in **opposing** two bills that establish and

raise taxes to fund a single-payer health care system called “CalCare.”

The CalChamber-identified job killer bills are **AB 1400 (Kalra; D-San Jose)** and **ACA 11 (Kalra; D-San Jose)**.

AB 1400 awaits action by the entire Assembly after passing the Assembly Health Committee on January 11 and the Assembly Appropriations Committee on January 20.

Expensive Bureaucracy

In a [letter to the Assembly](#), the

coalition, comprised of more than 130 members, points out that AB 1400 and ACA 11 “would create a new and exorbitantly expensive government bureaucracy...ultimately resulting in significant job loss to California.”

Similar past proposals have been estimated to cost more than \$400 billion annually, which is a financial commitment four times that of Medi-Cal, the coalition states in the letter.

“Successfully standing up a new function that would be twice the size of the existing state budget is highly doubtful, given the state’s recent experience with benefit delays and massive fraud in the unemployment system,” the letter states.

CalChamber Policy Advocate Preston Young, who is leading the coalition,

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Newest Job Killer Bill Will Worsen Housing Crisis



Legislation that expands a broken California environmental law and hurts the ability to build more housing was tagged by the California Chamber of

Commerce as a job killer this week.

AB 1001 (Cristina Garcia; D-Bell Gardens) expands the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to incorporate new, highly subjective, nonquantifiable and litigation-bait standards into CEQA in an attempt to address historical discriminatory land use policies.

Hard to Build

“AB 1001 will make it even more difficult to build quickly and cost effectively in California,” said CalChamber Senior Policy Advocate Adam Regele.

“Issues related to historical environmental injustices in the state should be addressed through more suitable areas of California law — but CEQA is not one of those areas. AB 1001 will impede local governments’ ability to approve new housing projects, depress jobs directly in and associated with the construction industry and further exacerbate California’s cost-of-living crisis already driving families, businesses, and jobs out of the state,” Regele said.

“This bill will worsen California’s current housing crisis by expanding CEQA’s most troubling aspects. AB

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CalChamber Policy Advocate Preston Young testifies to the Assembly Health Committee on January 11 about the costly government bureaucracy that will be created by the single-payer health care system proposed in AB 1400 and ACA 11. Standing is Assemblymember Ash Kalra (D-San Jose), the author of both job killer bills.

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Labor Law Corner

Steps to Take When Employee Tests Positive for COVID-19



Sunny Lee
HR Adviser

What am I required to do when an employee tests positive for COVID?

• **Notify employees and employers of subcontracted employees who were on the same worksite as the worker diagnosed with COVID-19 during the infectious period in writing within one business day of the notice of potential exposure.**

As Labor Code Section 6409.6 (a) (1) states: “Provide a written notice to all employees, and the employers of

subcontracted employees, who were on the premises at the same worksite as the qualifying individual within the infectious period that they may have been exposed to COVID-19 in a manner the employer normally uses to communicate employment-related information. Written notice may include, but is not limited to, personal service, email, or text message if it can reasonably be anticipated to be received by the employee within one business day of sending and shall be in both English and the language understood by the majority of the employees.”

Do not provide the name or medical condition of the employee who tested positive.

For more information on this requirement, see the California Department of Public Health memo: “[Employer Questions about AB 685, California’s New COVID-19 Law.](#)”

• **Notify your workers’ compensation carrier.** Beginning on September 17, 2020, and going until January 1, 2023, California employers are required to notify their workers’ compensation

carrier of any employee who tests positive for COVID within three business days. Employers who submit false or misleading information or fail to report may be subject to a civil penalty of up to \$10,000.

The following information is required:
1) name of the employee who tested positive;

2) date of the positive test;

3) address where the employee works and where the employee worked during the 14 days preceding the date of the test;

4) highest number of employees who reported to work within the 45-day period immediately preceding the last date that the employee testing positive worked.

Other information that may be helpful for your carrier:

• Whether the employee was at a shared worksite or working remotely from home.

• Whether the employee thinks they were exposed at work from another employee or from a family member, friend, travel or social gathering.

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CalChamber-Sponsored Seminars/Trade Shows

More at www.calchamber.com/events.

Labor and Employment

Keeping Pace with Current COVID-19 Workplace Standards. Cal Chamber. February 3, Online. (800) 331-8877.

Leaves of Absence: Making Sense of It All Virtual Seminar. CalChamber. February 17–18, April 14–15, Online. (800) 331-8877.

HR Boot Camp Virtual Seminar. CalChamber. March 10–11, May 5–6, May 26–27, 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).

Israel @ Cleantech Forum 2022. Cleantech Group. January 24–February 11, Online. (415) 986-2701.

Maritime Transportation Data Initiative Hearings. Federal Maritime Commission. February 1: Railroad Industry; February 8, Federal Partners; February 15, Ocean Transportation Intermediaries; February 22, UPS/FedEx/

Amazon, Online. (202) 523-5725.
2022 Taiwan Trade Shows. Taiwan External Trade Development Council. February 1–October 31, Online and In-Person. +886-2-2725-5200.

2022 Canada Consumer Oriented Inbound Mission to Winter Fancy Food. Western U.S. Agricultural Trade Association (WUSATA). February 6–8, Las Vegas. (360) 693-3373

CleanTech Virtual Inbound Investment Mission. SelectUSA Tech. February 14–18, Online. (212) 381-9633.

California Pavilion at Singapore Airshow. Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz) February 15–18. (213) 894-8725.

Trade Mission to Central America 2022. U.S. Commercial Service. March 27–28, Guatemala. (800) 872-8723.

Cybersecurity Business Development Mission to South America. U.S. Department of Commerce, International Trade Administration. April 5–8, Uruguay, Chile, Peru. (800) 872-8723.

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Finance Director Says Budget Windfall Gives State Opportunity to Invest in Future



State Finance Director Keely Martin Bosler presents an overview of the Governor’s budget proposal for 2022–2023 at a CalChamber webinar on January 12.

California’s revenues and economic conditions have continued to improve, enabling the state to address some of its greatest threats, such as climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic, homelessness and crime, state Finance Director Keely Martin Bosler told business leaders during a California Chamber of Commerce webinar on January 12.

The Department of Finance (DOF) is forecasting a \$45.7 billion budget surplus in the coming year, and Bosler said it’s anticipated that jobs in the state will return to pre-pandemic levels by the end of this year.

Budget Surplus

The recession brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic is unlike any other California has seen in its history, and economists have had to throw away the “old playbook” and “think about what new things are around the corner,” Bosler said.

Data shows the state experienced a steep V-shaped recovery and saw gains across all three big revenue streams: personal income tax, sales tax and corporate tax. However, two significant issues arose: inflation and supply chain problems.

State economists are assuming that these issues will linger for the remainder of this calendar year, but will resolve themselves and return to pre-pandemic trends.

Budget estimations also assume about \$14 billion in additional infrastructure spending from the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, and project the creation of 75,000 jobs at the program’s peak in 2025.

Bosler attributes the gains to the general fund to an improved economic forecast, a stronger stock market, higher inflation and a greater share of wage gains, but acknowledges that the state is heavily dependent on income tax. Capital gains realizations were at a record level in 2021, with \$25 billion in revenue attributed to capital gains.

Last year, the state was more reserved in creating new spending obligations, but the state is now in “a better place,” after having paid off all of its budgetary debt accumulated over the last several decades, the finance director said.

All these economic conditions have given the state the opportunity to make “significant investments to continue economic growth and strengthen California’s future in a way that includes more Californians,” Bosler said.

Budget Summary

Below are highlights of Bosler’s presentation; to view a video of her presentation, [click here](#) or visit www.calchamber.com/videos. A PowerPoint of the presentation is available [here](#).

- **Business Tax Credits:** Due to the state’s economic surplus, some business tax credits will be restored a year earlier than expected. This year’s budget restores research and development credits and net operating loss credits, and proposes an additional \$250 million per year for three years for qualified companies headquartered in California that are investing in research to mitigate climate change. The budget also proposes direct investments in climate-related research and development at the University of California system, including \$185 million for applied research, regional networks of climate-focused technology incubators, and workforce development and training hubs.

- **Small Business:** This year’s budget proposes an additional \$500 million for the Small Business COVID-19 Relief Grant Program over several years and \$150 million to support small businesses previously waitlisted in prior rounds of the relief program. The budget also allocates \$3 billion over the next two years to reduce the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund debt owed to the federal government. Another \$45 million is proposed to aid the state’s hard-hit tourism industry.

- **Workforce Training:** Health care and education have been some of the

See Finance Director: Page 4



CalChamber Member Feedback

“The CalChamber has helped us chart a path to success in California, in large part due to their intense focus on expanding the economic base in the state.”

Susan Savage
Chief Executive Officer
Sacramento River Cats

Job Killer Carryover Bills Die



Two job killer carryover bills expanding mandates on employers died in the Assembly fiscal committee this month.

Failing to move out of the Assembly Appropriations Committee were **AB 1119 (Wicks; D-Oakland)**, expanding employers' duty to accommodate employees, and **AB 95 (Low; D-Campbell)**, a burdensome new bereavement leave mandate.

AB 1119 would have imposed new burdens on employers to accommodate

any employee with family responsibilities. This essentially would have included a new, uncapped protected leave for employees to request time off and exposed employers to costly litigation under the Fair Employment and Housing Act.

If passed, AB 1119 could have enabled an employee to challenge any adverse employment action as being related to the employee's family responsibilities, rather than an actual violation of employment policies.

AB 95 would have imposed a significant new burden on employers of every size by mandating that they provide

employees up to 10 days of bereavement leave upon the death of a spouse, child, parent, sibling, grandparent, grandchild or domestic partner, regardless of how long the employee had worked for the employer. The bill also would have opened up new avenues for litigation against California employers by establishing a brand-new private right of action — in addition to liability under the Private Attorneys General Act (PAGA) and administrative enforcement through the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement.

Staff Contact: Ashley Hoffman

Newest Job Killer Bill Will Worsen Housing Crisis

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1001 offers California more problems — protracted litigation and project delays that will limit home building and disproportionately hurt California's working families," said Regele.

Coalition Opposition

The CalChamber and a large coalition of allied groups argue that AB 1001 is unnecessary and the wrong policy mechanism because the goals of the bill are already addressed in existing law and CEQA abuse by citizen enforcers already exploits the statute to delay or block critically needed housing.

Currently, CEQA prohibits lead

agencies from approving projects with significant environmental effects to any community, including disadvantaged ones, if there are any feasible alternatives or mitigation measures that would substantially lessen or avoid those effects.

California recently has enacted a number of other laws specific to environmental justice, including laws directing funding to environmental justice communities, creating a community air quality protection program, and most recently requiring all cities and counties to adopt a new environmental justice land use element in their comprehensive, long-term general plans. The Legislature should allow these policies to be imple-

mented and provided a chance to work before upending CEQA.

Voter Concern

Cost of living and rising home prices are huge issues for California voters. In a recent CalChamber poll, when voters were asked if another state offered a greater opportunity for homeownership than California, a majority of nonhomeowners answered "yes."

More than two-thirds of renters for whom home ownership is a high priority reported that they would move if another state offered a greater opportunity for homeownership than California.

Staff Contact: Adam Regele

Finance Director: Budget Windfall Enables State to Invest in Future

From Page 3

areas most affected by the labor shortages brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, Bosler said. To help address this problem, the Governor is proposing \$1.7 billion to help train and recruit new teachers, health care and human services workers. Another \$215 million in funding is proposed toward the Oil and Gas Well Capping Initiative, with \$50 million going toward a pilot program to help retrain oil and gas workers as the state

continues to phase out oil production.

• **Infrastructure:** Almost \$20 billion is being allocated to infrastructure projects, including \$9.1 billion for high speed rail, regional transit and rail, bike and pedestrian safety, and climate adaptation. Another \$1.2 billion is proposed for the movements of goods/ports, with \$110 million allocated to workforce training and \$70 million to license more truck drivers and data improvements at the ports.

• **COVID-19 Paid Sick Leave:** Bosler said that Governor Gavin Newsom is calling for a new COVID-19 supplemental paid sick leave (SPSL) program. The details of the new program are not yet known, but it will likely differ from the supplemental paid sick leave adopted in 2021.

The Governor's budget summary is available at <https://ebudget.ca.gov/FullBudgetSummary.pdf>.

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.

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, 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.

- **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).

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).

Partnership Working to Improve Conditions, Promote Economy in Central America



Promoting economic opportunity in northern Central America to address the root causes of migration is the focus of the [Partnership for Central America \(PCA\)](#), an independent, nongovernmental organization.

Since launching in May 2021, the PCA has supported the [Call to Action](#) for Central America announced by Vice President Kamala Harris and has worked with businesses and social enterprises to make new, significant commitments to the economic health of the region.

In support of the [Call to Action](#), the PCA works closely with the [U.S. Department of State](#). The initiative sponsored by the U.S. Vice President is to foster economic development in the three Central American countries of Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador.

The PCA is a coalition of private sector organizations mobilizing long-term investments and coordinating critical programs to advance economic opportunity and address urgent climate, education and health challenges in Central America.

Support for Private Sector

The partnership supports private sector entities through key actions:

Mobilize Investments

The partnership helps organizations identify strategic growth opportunities and navigate a path to invest in Central America in support of both business growth strategies and environmental, social and governance investment strategies.

Coordinate Public-Private Partnership

The PCA facilitates public-private partnerships across six program areas to maximize business and social impact:

- **Financial inclusion.** Improve access to banking services, while prioritizing women and vulnerable communities.
- **Digital access.** Expand internet access with a focus on rural communities.
- **Climate resilience.** Shift agricultural practices to resilience, sustainability, and yield
- **Health.** Increase primary access with a focus on women, youth, and indigenous populations.
- **Education.** Implement a workforce training program to create job readiness.
- **Gender equity.** Translate private-sector commitments and public-sector backing into sustainable change for over 500,000 women, including their families, in the Northern Triangle.

Convene

The partnership convenes public forums and facilitates discussions on challenges, trends, and progress toward aspired social impact goals to increase visibility and engagement on shared objectives.

Partnership for Central America

The partnership is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that conducts outreach and engagement with companies and organizations in support of the Vice President's [Call to Action](#).

As an independent nonprofit, the partnership also works with companies and institutions that want to collaborate to develop and implement solutions to the economic, social and governance challenges in Central America, and to align with efforts of government and private sector partners in the United States and across the Central American region.

Call to Action

On December 13, 2021 the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with the U.S. Department of State, and in collaboration with the Partnership for Central America and the Office of the Vice President, hosted a virtual forum that brought together the White House, officials from the principal agencies involved in the U.S. government's [Call to Action](#), the Partnership for Central America, and business leaders (including the California Chamber of Commerce)

to discuss strategy and objectives for addressing the root causes of migration in Central America. Additionally, participants had the opportunity to learn how they can join the [Call to Action](#).

Speakers included:

- **Myron Brilliant**, executive vice president and head of the International Affairs Division, U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Brilliant emphasized that active participation and leadership from the U.S. private sector, the advancement of regional trade agreements like the U.S.-Dominican Republic/Central America Free Trade Agreement (US-DR-CAFTA), and adherence to the rule of law would increase investments and prosperity in the region.

- **Ambassador Brian Nichols**, assistant secretary for the Western Hemisphere, U.S. Department of State, who outlined U.S. strategic priorities in Central America.

- **Jonathan Fantini Porter**, executive director, Partnership for Central America, who described how the PCA is strengthening strategic collaborations across the public and private sectors to spur economic growth across northern Central America.

- **Vice President Harris** gave the keynote address and call to action. She announced \$540 million in private investments in Central America as a part of the administration's plan to reduce migration from the area by improving local conditions.

US-DR-CAFTA

President George W. Bush signed the CalChamber-supported US-DR-CAFTA on August 2, 2005, giving final U.S. approval of the agreement.

The United States and the six DR-CAFTA countries share roughly \$50.98 billion in total (two-way) trade in goods. U.S. goods exports to DR-CAFTA totaled \$27.25 billion in 2020. Leading U.S. exports include petroleum, food manufactures, computer and electronic products, and chemicals.

Leading U.S. imports include apparel products, agricultural products, manufactured commodities, and food manufactures.

See Partnership: Page 8

Los Angeles to Host Summit of Americas



President Joe Biden has [announced](#) Los Angeles as the host city for the Ninth Summit of the Americas, scheduled for June 6–10, with a focus on “Building a Sustainable, Resilient, and Equitable Future” for the Western Hemisphere.

The [Summit of the Americas](#) is the only hemisphere-wide convening of leaders from the countries of North, South, and Central America and the Caribbean. Per the White House release, working with the city of Los Angeles, Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, and California Governor Gavin Newsom, the United States looks forward to convening leaders and stakeholders across the hemisphere to advance a shared commitment to economic prosperity, security, human rights, and dignity.

It is expected there will be a highlighted role for Vice President Kamala Harris, a former California senator. Specific expected themes include pandemic control, a green recovery and managing migration.

The Summits of the Americas are institutionalized gatherings of heads of state and government of the Western Hemisphere where leaders discuss common policy issues, affirm shared values and commit to concerted actions at

the national and regional level to address continuing and new challenges faced in the Americas. The Summit is held every three years. The Eighth Summit of the Americas was held on April 13 and 14, 2018 in Lima, Peru.

The U.S.-hosted Ninth Summit of the Americas originally was scheduled for the second half of 2021, but postponed to 2022 due to COVID-19. This will be the first time the United States has hosted the Summit since the inaugural meeting in Miami in 1994.

History of Summit

In 1994, President Bill Clinton brought together 34 democratically elected leaders in Miami for the first Summit of the Americas. President Clinton was unequivocal about the summit’s mission. He called on leaders from across the region to open new markets and to create new free trade zones, to strengthen the movement toward democracy, and to improve the quality of life for all our people.

He said, “If we’re successful, the summit will lead to more jobs, opportunity and prosperity for our children and for generations to come.”

President Donald Trump was unable to attend the 2018 Summit of the Americas in Lima as planned as he had to tend to other international matters. Vice President Mike Pence attended in Trump’s place.

The theme of the 2018 summit was “Democratic Governance against Corruption.” Leaders vowed to confront systemic corruption at a time when graft scandals plague many of the governments that make up the Americas.

Sixteen of the 33 nations gathered at the 2018 summit issued a statement on the sidelines of the event calling on Venezuela to hold free and transparent elections as well as allow international aid. Vice President Pence gave remarks at the summit.

Ninth Summit

As many as 10,000 participants, including support staff, security, media, and businesspersons, may attend the Ninth Summit in Los Angeles. The U.S. government will organize official and informal events, bilateral meetings, and media events.

Expected attendance will include the President of the United States and up to 50 chiefs of state, heads of government, and high-level participants from the governments of the Americas, regional and global international organizations, and other special guests. Each summit delegation will likely consist of cabinet ministers, senior advisers, security officers, and members of the foreign media.

Staff Contact: [Susanne T. Stirling](#)

Partnership Working to Improve Conditions in Central America

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The United States is the main supplier of goods and services to DR-CAFTA economies. More than 40% of total goods exports to Central America come from the United States.

California exports to the DR-CAFTA market topped \$1.82 billion in 2020. California imported more than \$2.28 billion from DR-CAFTA in 2020.

CalChamber Position

The California Chamber, in keeping with long-standing policy, enthusias-

tically 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.

Multilateral, sectoral and regional trade agreements ensure that the United States may continue to gain access to world markets, resulting in an improved economy and additional employment of Americans.

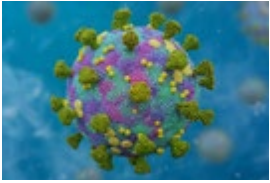
Free trade agreements contribute

to stronger economies, the rule of law, sustainable development, and more accountable institutions of governance, complementing ongoing domestic, bilateral, and multilateral efforts in a region.

The US-DR-CAFTA is an element of the U.S. strategy to liberalize trade through multilateral, regional and bilateral initiatives. The US-DR-CAFTA increases momentum toward lowering trade barriers and sets a positive example for other small economies in the Western Hemisphere.

Staff Contact: [Susanne T. Stirling](#)

Confused About COVID Workplace Standards? This Webinar Is for You



Since the onset of the global COVID-19 pandemic, employers have had the additional

task of becoming experts on prevention and mitigation strategies for infectious diseases — on top of operating their businesses.

An aspect of an employer's duty to prevent COVID-19 infections in the workplace is keeping up-to-date on government requirements, such as workplace safety rules and vaccine mandates.

On February 3, the California Chamber of Commerce is holding a [90-minute webinar](#) with employment law experts who will walk through:

- The current state of the Cal/OSHA emergency temporary standards, including the latest revisions;
- California Department of Public Health mandates and guidelines;
- The current state of government vaccine mandates;
- Guidance related to an employer-initiated vaccine mandate; and
- Any other related government guidelines that impact the workplace.

The CalChamber is uniquely positioned on the front lines of California's legislative process and can be trusted to provide accurate details about not only employment laws and their requirements, but also how they will affect your business.

Webinar Set for February 3

The "Keeping Pace with Current COVID-19 Workplace Standards" webinar will be held on **Thursday, February 3, 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. (PT)**.

To register, visit the [CalChamber Store](#).

Attendees will be able to submit questions during the webinar. Slides and a recording of the live event will be available to registered attendees.

This webinar is created for human resources professionals, office managers, business owners or anyone responsible for hiring and staffing. The course is approved for 1.5 California recertification credits toward PHR, SPHR, GPHR, APHR and PHR/CA through the HR Certification Institute (HRCI); and is approved for 1.5 MCLE credit hours.

Steps to Take When Employee Tests Positive for COVID-19

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• If the employee has been around anyone outside of work who is sick or tested positive, and whether the person who is sick or tested positive is under any isolation or quarantine order from a doctor.

The workers' compensation carrier will then investigate whether the employee's exposure was work-related.

• **View and follow the most current information on the County Public Health Department website in the county where the work is performed.**

COVID information that is posted includes requirements for masks, social distancing, isolation and quarantine times, and when an employee can report back to work. It is important to view and follow the most current information concerning isolation or quarantine times for an employee who has tested positive.

• **View and follow the most current COVID information on the website of**

the California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA).

In November 2020, Cal/OSHA put out an emergency regulation requiring that all employers create and maintain a COVID-19 Prevention Plan. A [template for that plan](#) can be obtained from Cal/OSHA's website at https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/dosh_publications/PPP.doc.

In addition, Cal OSHA has posted frequently asked questions (FAQs) interpreting its regulations. The COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standards Frequently Asked Questions were last updated on January 24, 2022, and can be found at <https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/coronavirus/COVID19FAQs.html>.

More Information

If you have questions about reporting positive tests for workers' compensation purposes, contact your workers' compensation carrier.

If you have questions about quarantine times, masks or testing, refer to your County Public Health Department and also Cal/OSHA.

For general questions, you may call the CalChamber Labor Law Helpline.

For specific questions about your situation and what you should do, contact your attorney.

The CalChamber posts updates from its blogs, podcasts and government sources, and keeps a list of county public health department websites at www.calchamber.com/coronavirus.

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.

CalChamber-Sponsored Seminars/Trade Shows

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30th Annual Africa and Diaspora International Conference. Center for African Peace and Conflict Resolution, California State University, Sacramento.

April 28–30, Sacramento. (916) 278-6282.

Trade Mission to South America. U.S. Department of Commerce, International Trade Administration. May

15–20. (800) 872-8723.

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

CalChamber-Led Coalition Fights Single-Payer Health Care Proposals

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has said that the taxes needed to fund the single-payer health care system as outlined in ACA 11 will have a significant impact on nearly all California employers. According to the Tax Foundation, ACA 11 would increase taxes by \$12,250 per household annually.

Biggest Tax Hike in History

The proposals outlined in AB 1400 and ACA 11 would represent the biggest tax increase in state history, punishing Californians as a whole by increasing personal income taxes, payroll taxes, and gross receipts taxes.

This enormous tax increase would come at a time when California is experiencing a \$31 billion surplus, which pales in comparison to the annual expenditures that a government-run health system demands. This type of tax increase would likely lead to significant layoffs or relocations, discouraging companies from

growing in or relocating to California.

If ACA 11 is enacted, California's top personal income tax rate for individuals and sole proprietors — already the highest in the country — would increase by 2.5%. Additionally, ACA 11 would implement a payroll tax of 1% of the aggregate amount of wages or other compensation paid by the employer to resident employees in excess of \$49,900, and a gross receipts tax of 2.3% on businesses with more than \$2 million in gross revenues.

Proponents of the measure recently indicated that the tax increases would likely generate \$160 billion–\$170 billion annually. Prior versions of similar single-payer proposals were estimated to cost more than \$400 billion a year, including existing state and federal tax contributions.

California voters have twice rejected a government-run health care system at the ballot box — in 1994 and 2004.

Budget Proposal

Currently, about 94% of Californians have health care coverage in some fashion. A majority of the uninsured population is comprised of undocumented individuals. Governor Gavin Newsom's 2022–2023 budget proposal addresses this very issue and would make California the first state to offer health care coverage for all income-eligible residents regardless of immigration status.

AB 1400 will need to pass the Assembly by January 31 to remain alive. The companion constitutional amendment, ACA 11, has not yet been brought forward for a vote.

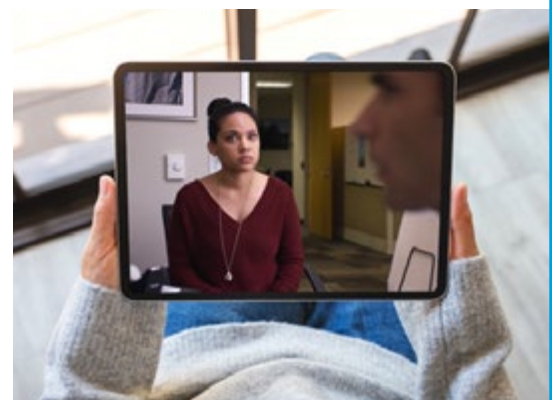
See the coalition letter to the Assembly [here](#).

Staff Contact: Preston Young

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