

# 2024 Major Victories

## 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.

### 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.

## Creating a More Affordable California

The California Chamber of Commerce is the voice of California businesses of all sizes, expert at promoting pro-jobs 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. Policy makers 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.

Supporting our message are the numerous individuals who serve on CalChamber standing committees, member trade associations and nearly 200 affiliated local chambers of commerce.

Read on to learn how CalChamber advocacy in 2024 helped employers. See the **Advocacy Return on Investment** sheet for estimates of employer savings due to some of these victories.

### Private Attorneys General Act (PAGA) Reform

Worked with business community, labor and legislative leadership to negotiate landmark agreement that curtails PAGA lawsuit abuse costly to employers and creates more fairness in the process for businesses while offering better outcomes for employees who have been wronged.

### Stopping 17 of 18 Job Killer Bills

CalChamber policy advocates, supported by other business groups and pro-jobs legislators, prevented 17 of 18 job killer bills identified in 2024 from becoming law as originally proposed. Below is a sampling of job killers stopped or amended to remove the more onerous provisions. More information at [www.calchamber.com/jobkillers](http://www.calchamber.com/jobkillers).

- **Government-run health care.** Stopped plan to force all Californians into a new untested state government health plan, with no ability to opt out while eliminating Medicare for California seniors and increasing taxes on workers, income, jobs, goods and services. (AB 2200)
- **Massive tax increase.** Stopped effort to impose tax increase upon all forms of personal property or wealth, whether tangible or intangible, despite California already having the highest income tax in the country. (AB 259, ACA 3)
- **De facto ban of warehouses.** Defeated setback requirement for all new or expanded logistics use facilities and creation of new private right of action. (AB 1000)
- **Increased unemployment insurance taxes.** Stopped increase in unemployment insurance taxes to fund unemployment insurance benefit hikes and to subsidize striking workers. (SB 1434, SB 1116)
- **Artificial intelligence.** Prevented passage of pricing algorithm limits and aggressive liability provisions that would have had a sweeping, chilling effect on price competition among businesses across all industries. (SB 1154)



### **Protecting Employers' Ability to Manage their Workforces**

- Killed overly prescriptive mandate regarding use of self-checkout stations in grocery and retail stores. (SB 1446)
- Stopped bill effectively prohibiting most employers from considering the conviction history of an applicant, existing employee or contractor in employment or contracting decisions. (SB 1345)

### **Promoting AI Literacy**

- Sponsored bill signed by Governor to foster an artificial intelligence-literate population and future workforce by teaching AI literacy in schools. (AB 2876)

### **Encouraging Groundwater Sustainability**

- Secured veto of proposal unfairly exempting certain water rights users from fees and regulations under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. (AB 828)
- Stopped bill preventing installation of new or replacement groundwater wells throughout much of the state. (AB 2079)

### **Protecting Water Rights**

- Killed proposal giving broad authority to State Water Board to curtail water rights of any seniority or claim of right. (AB 1337)

### **Fostering Innovation Economy**

- Secured veto of artificial intelligence (AI) model bill creating significant uncertainty for businesses due to vague, overbroad and impractical requirements. (SB 1047)
- Stopped automated decision tools (ADT) impact assessment proposal having impractical requirements affecting every industry, businesses of all sizes and public entities. Requirements may have left many firms unable to use the new technologies. (AB 2930)

### **Keeping Critical Goods Moving**

- Contributed heavily to forging a warehouse bill compromise that avoids negative economic and environmental impacts while addressing community concerns. (AB 98)

### **Preserving Use of Capital for Housing**

- Stopped proposal that substantially shuts down housing production in California by blocking the inflow of crucial capital upon which nearly all housing production relies. (AB 2230)

### **Combating Retail Theft**

- Backed package of bills signed into law to improve public safety and reduce retail theft by providing tools for law enforcement and prosecutors to crack down on organized crime rings and retail thieves. (AB 2943, AB 1972, AB 1960, AB 1779, AB 1802, AB 3209, SB 905, SB 982, SB 1242, SB 1416)

### **Reducing Upward Pressure on Rising Health Care Costs**

- Backed veto of a bill leading to increased prescription drug costs for patients by limiting the use of preferred pharmacy networks and financial incentives. (SB 966)
- Supported veto of proposal stifling free market transactions for some health care entities. (AB 3129)

### **Averting Tax Increases**

- Killed new 5% tax on digital ads; bill is likely unconstitutional. (AB 2829)
- Killed discriminatory 7.25% tax on revenue generated from the sale of digital advertising. (SB 1327)

### **Stopping Disruptive Environmental Policy Proposal**

- Killed proposal with far-reaching negative consequences that would impair government operations; stunt development for new housing, infrastructure and clean energy projects; and have the strong potential to destabilize California's economy. (ACA 16)

### **Protecting Use of Arbitration**

As the result of a CalChamber lawsuit, the 9th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals made permanent its ruling that arbitration can continue to be used as an efficient forum in resolving disputes by employees and employers in California. The invalidated law, AB 51, sought to prohibit employers from requiring employees to sign agreements to arbitrate any disputes. (*Chamber of Commerce v. Bonta*)

### **Reinforcing Global Trade Relationships**

Hosted forums throughout the year to provide opportunities for CalChamber members to interact with trading partner representatives — including ambassadors, foreign dignitaries and consular corps members — and renew or gain trade contacts.