

# ALERT

## Workplace Violence Prevention Standard

### CalChamber Continues Push to Make Rule Workable



In comments submitted recently to Cal/OSHA, a coalition led by the California

Chamber of Commerce continues its ongoing effort to make sure the workplace violence prevention standard will be workable for small businesses and large employers alike.

The comments reiterate that the standard shouldn't blur the line between hazards created at the workplace and those created externally. Workplace violence may fall into either category, depending

on the factual circumstances surrounding the violence, CalChamber notes, and it is important to separate the two as Cal/OSHA moves forward in drafting the workplace violence prevention standard.

#### Small Employers

The CalChamber coalition continues to be concerned about the feasibility of the standard for small businesses, particularly those with about 10 employees, because the rule could involve the business acquiring new materials and devices in the workplace and pushing businesses to hire professional security guards and more staff.

*See Workplace: Page 3*

### CalChamber Disappointed by Privacy Agency's Automated Decision-Making Technology Rules



The California Chamber of Commerce voiced disappointment last week after the California

Privacy Protection Agency approved sweeping regulations covering the use of automated decision-making technology (ADMT).

In a statement released July 24, the day the agency approved the regulations, CalChamber said:

"The regulations approved by board members of the California Privacy Protection Agency are primed to cause significant harm to the state's already-struggling economy.

"Even advocates who sharply disagree over the path forward on regulating automated decision-making technology raised concerns about the rush to judgment during the meeting of the board — a governing body that seemingly ignored some 400 pages of public comments as well as the suggestions made in the spring by Gov. Gavin Newsom and some two dozen legislators. Those thoughtful requests seem to have fallen on deaf ears.

"No less perplexing was the agency's paper-thin economic analysis of the impact on California jobs and businesses, a cursory review that at best admits tens of thousands of Californians will be out of work before the end of the decade due to the pending regulations. Cali-

*See CalChamber Disappointed: Page 3*

### CalChamber Names New Policy Advocate for Health Care, Taxation



Alexis Rodriguez

Last week, Alexis Rodriguez joined the California Chamber of Commerce as a policy advocate specializing in health care and taxation issues.

She joined the CalChamber policy team after serving as manager of state government affairs at Sutter Health, responsible for developing legislation for the Sacramento-based nonprofit integrated health system, directing its lobbyists' efforts and collaborating on determining the organization's public policy positions.

"We're excited to have Alexis join the team," said Ben Golombek, CalChamber executive vice president and chief of staff for policy. "Her understanding of health care policy and track record of advocating at the State Capitol will serve the business community well."

Rodriguez previously served in a number of roles at the California Medical Association (CMA), rising to the position of legislative advocate with duties that included working on strategies related to legislation critical to the association and keeping members informed about pending bills.

She began her time at the association as an executive and then legislative assis-

*See CalChamber: Page 7*

#### Inside

Podcast on Workplace  
Violence Protection Standard:  
Page 3

## Labor Law Corner

### Who Is a Volunteer? Best Practices for Adult and Minor Volunteers



**Ashley Huynh**  
Employment Law  
Expert

*We are a nonprofit organization, and have an on-site library staffed by volunteers. We want to invite youth/minors to volunteer for these roles as well. What do we need to consider to use volunteers for these roles? What documentation should we provide or have them sign?*

#### Volunteers

In general, in a for-profit organization, the people who perform work are employees, not volunteers.

According to the California Division of Labor Standards Enforcement (DLSE), a “volunteer” generally is a person who performs work for public service, religious or humanitarian reasons without promise, expectation or receipt of compensation for that work. Whether a person is properly classified as an employee or a volunteer is determined by the parties’ intent. (DLSE, *Enforcement Policies and Interpretation Manual* Section 43.6.7; DLSE Opinion Letter 1988.10.27)

For your nonprofit organization, “volunteers” would be people intending to donate their services without pay for a public service, such as library services.

You may have a mix of volunteers who are minors and adults, so you will want to understand which process/documents you need to follow/provide

depending on the age of the volunteer. In your initial application form, you can ask if the volunteer is at least 18 years old.

#### Best Practices for Volunteers

When starting a volunteer program for a nonprofit, you should provide potential volunteers with an application, including disclosures.

In addition, once you have determined that someone will become a volunteer, you should provide them with a volunteer agreement and acknowledgment. The agreement could include sections such as clarifying that this is not an employment relationship; there is no expectation of compensation; acknowledgment that the volunteer waives liability for the organization; and confidentiality obligations for the volunteer.

You also should collect the volunteer’s emergency contact information, provide a description of their role and train them.

It is good practice to have liability

*See Who Is: Page 7*

#### California Chamber Officers

**Maryam S. Brown**  
Chair

**John A. Stowell**  
First Vice Chair

**Frank Washington**  
Second Vice Chair

**Fiona Hutton**  
Third Vice Chair

**Jennifer Barrera**  
President and Chief Executive Officer

*Alert (ISSN 0882-0929) is published weekly during legislative session with exceptions by California Chamber of Commerce, 1215 K Street, Suite 1400, Sacramento, CA 95814-3918. Subscription price is \$50 paid through membership dues.*

*Send email address changes to [alert@calchamber.com](mailto:alert@calchamber.com).*

*Publisher: Jennifer Barrera. Executive Editor: Ann Amioka. Art Director: Neil Ishikawa.*

*Permission granted to reprint articles if credit is given to the California Chamber of Commerce Alert, citing original publication date of article, and reprint is emailed to Alert at address above.*

*Email: [alert@calchamber.com](mailto:alert@calchamber.com).  
Home page: [www.calchamber.com](http://www.calchamber.com).*

### CalChamber-Sponsored Seminars/Trade Shows

More information at [www.calchamber.com](http://www.calchamber.com).  
**Human Resources**

Leaves of Absence. CalChamber. August 7–8, Virtual Seminar. (800) 331-8877.

The 5 California Compliance Challenges You Can’t Ignore in 2025. CalChamber. August 14, Webinar. (800) 331-8877.

2025 Midyear Employment Law Update. CalChamber. August 21, Free Member Webinar. (800) 331-8877.

Conducting California Workplace Investigations. CalChamber. August 28, Virtual Seminar. (800) 331-8877.

HR Boot Camp. CalChamber. September 11–12, Virtual Seminar. (800) 331-8877.

Discipline and Termination: Do’s and Don’ts. CalChamber. September 18, Webinar. (800) 331-8877.

#### International Trade

California State Trade Expansion Program (STEP) Export Training Series. Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz). June 30, 2025–March 31, 2026. [Event website](#).

Green Expo Mexico. GO-Biz. September 2–4, Mexico City. GO-Biz will host four to six businesses in its California Pavilion. [Register interest](#).

14th World Chambers Congress. World Chambers Congress. September 2–4, Melbourne, Australia. <https://wcc.iccwbo.org/>.

Aquatech Mexico. GO-Biz. September 2–4, Mexico City. GO-Biz will host four to six businesses in its California Pavilion. [Register interest](#).

Medical Fair Thailand. GO-Biz. September 9–12, Bangkok, Thailand. GO-Biz will host five businesses in its California Pavilion. [Application portal](#).

California Trade Mission: Poland and Ukraine (spotlight on energy and construction sectors). GO-Biz. November 11–14, Warsaw, Poland. [Application portal](#).

**Next Alert: August 15**

## *The Workplace*

# Clearing Common Misconceptions About Workplace Violence Prevention



In **Episode 229** of The Workplace podcast, CalChamber General Counsel, Labor and Employment Bianca Saad and CalChamber

Employment Law Subject Matter Expert Vanessa Greene discuss common misconceptions about California's general industry workplace violence prevention standards and how employers can proactively remain in compliance.

It's already been one year since California's workplace violence prevention standards took effect — applying to nearly every business in California with only a few narrow exceptions. This means that since July 1, 2024, employers have been required to:

- Have a written workplace violence

prevention plan with specific technical elements;

- Provide tailored workplace violence prevention training to their employees;
- Create a process for investigating and recording workplace violence incidents; and
- Keep specific records related to their plan, training and any incidents.

Plus, California employers must annually review their workplace violence prevention plans and complete yearly employee training.

### Common Questions

Applying the law's many specific requirements to real-world worksites has created confusion for employers, so in this podcast, Greene and Saad answer common questions they have received, including:

- How do employers create a compliant workplace violence prevention plan across multiple worksites?

- How must employers involve their employees when creating, reviewing or revising their prevention plans?

- Can employers use a generic workplace violence prevention training for their employees?

- Can employers use mandatory harassment prevention training to address these workplace violence prevention training requirements?

- Which employers are exempted from these requirements?

### CalChamber Resources

Still confused about California employers' workplace violence prevention requirements? CalChamber can help demystify them with our [Workplace Violence Prevention Support Solutions](#), which provide clear, practical resources to help employers meet this law's requirements.

## Workplace Violence Prevention: CalChamber Pushes for Workable Rule

*From Page 1*

The coalition proposed that the regulation apply where multiple employees are present at any given time, thus mirroring the legislative standard set in SB 553, the 2023 law creating the workplace violence prevention program.

### Aligning with Law

The coalition expressed concern about Cal/OSHA introducing references to the Penal Code in the draft regulation, noting that Cal/OSHA inspectors or administrative law judges don't have expertise in the criminal statutes or the court cases interpreting criminal law to apply the penal codes in the workplace.

For example, one section of the draft regulation adds "stalking" to the definition of workplace violence and another relies on the Penal Code definition of "self-defense."

The "stalking" definition in the Penal Code includes lesser conduct than the definition of workplace violence in SB 553, the coalition noted.

The "self-defense" language in the draft regulation, the coalition said, "is so broad as to prevent employers from disciplining employees who create or escalate a confrontation and then are forced to resolve that situation via so-called 'self-defense.'"

The coalition suggested language

for the draft regulation to address its concerns in both cases.

### Other Suggestions

Other coalition comments were geared toward: making sure that the draft regulation doesn't create employer liability for conditions inherent to the nature of the business, clarifying how employees of small businesses can reporting workplace violence concerns, and ensuring that exceptions to post-incident response procedures maintain the usefulness of the requirement.

**Staff Contact: Robert Moutrie**

## CalChamber Disappointed by Privacy Agency's Regulations

*From Page 1*

fornians deserved transparency on how the economic analysis was conducted and whether it captured the scope of the sweeping rules being drafted.

"California faces an affordability crisis that is stifling efforts to reduce the cost of living for working families. Imposing inflexible regulations on a growing and vital part of the tech econ-

omy is a step in the wrong direction."

The next stop for the regulations is the state Office of Administrative Law, which must review and approve the rules before they go into effect.



## Details Change But Tariffs a Key Priority for Trump Administration



While the details have changed several times, tariffs are key to this administration. As this story was being prepared for publication, August 1 is the expiration date for some countries' tariff rates and the start of revised tariff rates for other nations.

Of the handful of agreements President Trump has reached with leading U.S. trade partners, only one has been signed.

And it is only presumed that the [rates announced](#) in connection with "Liberation Day" on April 2 or the President invoking the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) will snap back on August 1 without a trade deal/executive action adjusting the rate.

### Since April 2

On April 2, the President imposed a 10% tariff on all countries, effective April 5, and an individualized higher reciprocal tariff on countries with which the United States has the largest trade deficits, effective April 9. While President Trump's trade policy announcements continued to create uncertainty, as well as affecting consumer prices, the stock market and consumer confidence, the President paused the tariffs for 90 days — until July 9. He substantially lowered reciprocal tariffs during this period to 10%, yet raised the tariffs charged to China to a total of 145%.

On July 7, the President signed an executive order delaying the expiration date of some tariff rates from July 9 to August 1. He also sent letters to inform some countries about their new reciprocal tariff rates starting August 1.

### United Kingdom

The United Kingdom became the first country to secure a landmark (and signed) [economic deal](#) with the Trump administration. This will reduce tariffs

across a range of sectors, from steel and aluminum to automobiles, and cut costs for businesses operating in the UK.

The reciprocal tariff rate of 10%, as originally announced on Liberation Day, is in effect.

The U.S. will agree to an alternative arrangement for the Section 232 tariffs on UK autos. Under the deal, the first 100,000 vehicles imported into the U.S. by UK car manufacturers each year are subject to the reciprocal rate of 10% and any additional vehicles each year are subject to 25% rates.

### European Union

With a handshake, the [European Union agreed](#) to purchase \$750 billion of energy and to invest \$600 billion, by 2028.

A 15% tariff rate will also apply to autos, auto parts, pharmaceuticals and semiconductors.

The sectoral tariffs on steel, aluminum, and copper will remain at 50% with no reductions.

The EU has eliminated most tariffs on U.S. goods.

### Japan

On July 22, the United States announced a landmark [U.S.-Japan Strategic Trade and Investment Agreement](#) aimed at revitalizing American industry and deepening economic ties with Japan. With \$550 billion in Japanese-directed investment toward U.S. industrial capacity, new tariff structures, and significant market access gains for American exports, this agreement sets a new benchmark for bilateral cooperation. The deal aligns with national economic priorities and reinforces the strategic partnership between two of the world's largest economies.

Target sectors include:

- Energy Infrastructure: LNG, advanced fuels, grid modernization.
- Semiconductors: end-to-end manufacturing and research.
- Critical minerals: mining, refining, and processing.
- Pharmaceuticals and medical supplies: domestic production.

- Shipbuilding: commercial and defense facilities.

The U.S. retains 90% of investment profits, benefiting American workers and communities.

A baseline 15% tariff rate will apply to imports from Japan.

### Indonesia

The United States announced a landmark reciprocal trade agreement with Indonesia aimed at expanding market access for American exports and eliminating longstanding tariff and non-tariff barriers. The [U.S.-Indonesia Agreement on Reciprocal Trade](#) includes major concessions from Indonesia that will benefit American manufacturers, farmers, and digital service providers.

This agreement is part of a broader effort to promote fair and reciprocal trade and address the U.S. trade deficit with Indonesia, which was \$17.9 billion in 2024.

- Indonesia will eliminate tariffs on more than 99% of U.S. goods, including agricultural, health, information and communication technology, automotive, and chemical products.

- A reciprocal tariff rate of 19% will apply to Indonesian goods entering the U.S.

### India

According to a July 30 announcement, the U.S. will impose a 25% tariff on India beginning August 1. Although there have been five rounds of negotiations, the new rate is only 1 percentage point less than the original amount threatened in April.

The administration states that it is seeking to curb the U.S. trade deficit with India. India imposes some of the highest tariffs of any major economy, with an average rate of around 17%.

### Philippines

The United States reached a trade deal with the Philippines on July 22 when President Trump and President Marcos met. Although not officially confirmed by the Marcos government, the Philippines

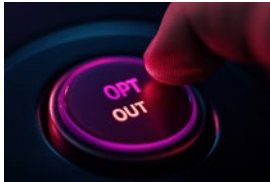
*See Details: Page 6*



## Helping Business In A Global Economy

[www.calchamber.com/international](http://www.calchamber.com/international)

# New Report: AB 566 Threatens California Economy, Consumers, Small Businesses



A new report by Capitol Matrix Consulting, commissioned by the California Chamber

of Commerce, concludes that Assembly Bill 566 (AB 566) poses a significant threat to California's consumers, small businesses, and the fundamental structure of the digital economy.

The report, "[Economic and Fiscal Impacts of AB 566: Global Opt-Out for Internet Users](#)," details the wide-ranging negative consequences of the proposed legislation.

AB 566 (Lowenthal; D-Long Beach) seeks to mandate a "global opt-out preference setting" for California internet users, allowing them to opt-out of the sale or sharing of their personal data across the many websites they visit. The report warns that this seemingly simple technical change to how the internet operates could have severe unintended consequences, including negative impacts on jobs and the economy, harm to consumers and their online experience, and disproportionate challenges for small businesses, many of which are already struggling.

## Significant Job and Economic Losses

The report estimates the impact to websites including news and media outlets, free online services, nonprofit organizations, and e-commerce sites' ability to support themselves with person-

alized advertising would have substantial economic repercussions for California. A mere 25% opt-out rate could result in a loss of \$3.6 billion in advertising spending in California alone.

This ripple effect across the advertising industry and broader economy could lead to ongoing reductions of:

- **More than 73,000 jobs.**
- **\$6.4 billion** in labor income.
- **\$550 million** in state taxes.
- **\$270 million** in local taxes.

## Diminished Consumer Experience

The report challenges the premise that a global opt-out will maintain current access to ad-supported content. It states, "If a significant percent of users choose the global opt-out option before fully understanding the consequences of this action, the result will be a diminished online experience for all users, with fewer ad-supported websites, less content, less diversity, and fewer perspectives."

This could lead to a fragmented internet with more paywalls, with consumers losing access to valuable services and content they currently enjoy for free. For example, research shows that 71% of consumers expect personalized online services. [[McKinsey & Co.](#)]

## Disproportionate Harm to Small Businesses

Targeted advertising is a critical tool for small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) with limited marketing budgets, enabling them to reach their specific

audiences efficiently. The report highlights that if AB 566 leads to consumers unknowingly opting out of third-party personalized advertising, "then a significant business tool to acquire and maintain customers will no longer be available."

According to the U.S. Census, 87% of California businesses are SMBs, which employ 47% of the state's workforce; a downturn in their economic output would severely impact the state's economy. Industries reliant on digital advertising to reach consumers, such as online publishers, news organizations, shopping centers, and nonprofits, would also suffer disproportionately.

CalChamber and its business association allies oppose AB 566 because the legislation will cause a substantial loss of jobs and revenue to the state, create consumer confusion, and disrupt the internet. This bill is unnecessary as California consumers already exercise their opt-out rights under the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA) and have access to tools that can make it even easier for them without the massive financial impacts on small business projected by the report.

The California Privacy Protection Agency should focus its education mission on ensuring consumers are aware of their options like California Attorney General Rob Bonta's [press release](#) from earlier this year.

To see the complete study, [visit this link](#).

AB 566 awaits action by the Senate when the Legislature returns from summer recess.

FOLLOW CALCHAMBER ON



[facebook.com/calchamber](https://facebook.com/calchamber)

## Details Change But Tariffs a Key Priority for Trump Administration

*From Page 4*

reportedly is going to open the market to the U.S. with zero tariffs. The U.S. will impose a 19% tariff on imports from the Philippines, higher than the 17% “reciprocal” duty imposed on April 2.

### **Vietnam**

Vietnam will pay the U.S. a 20% tariff and 40% tariff on any transshipping. Vietnam will give the U.S. total access with a zero tariff rate.

### **Brazil**

On July 30, President Trump imposed a 50% tariff on Brazilian goods, related to several political disputes.

### **South Korea**

On July 30, President Trump announced a trade deal with South Korea with a 15% tariff rate on goods — down from the 25% set in April. In addition, South Korea pledged to invest \$350 billion in the United States and lower tariffs for the U.S. Further, South Korea will purchase \$100 billion in energy products and will announce additional investments.

### **Canada**

The U.S.-Canadian negotiations are not completed. President Trump invoked Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act for Canada’s auto, steel, aluminum and forestry industries. The President also plans to set 50% tariffs on imported copper starting August 1 — with semiconductor and pharmaceutical imports likely to follow.

### **Mexico**

On July 31, the President extended the Mexico tariff deadline for 90 days.

### **China**

The Trump administration also reached a separate understanding with China to temporarily halt an escalating trade war, with a negotiating deadline extended to August 12.

### **More Incoming**

Other regional economies, such as Cambodia and Thailand, are also still hoping to complete a deal.

### **IEEPA**

Customs and tariff revenues have totaled \$120 billion since President Trump took office — topping \$100 billion in a fiscal year for the first time — and expecting the first June budget surplus in nearly a decade. At this point, nearly 200 days into his second term, President Trump continues to be focused on tariffs as a tool of foreign, economic, and trade policy all in one — and the

belief is that tariffs will remain in some form — even if it is just a baseline of 10% or 15%.

At issue is the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) of 1977, which gives the president special authority over economic transactions during a national emergency. Although IEEPA has been used to impose foreign sanctions, Trump is the first president to use the power to impose tariffs. He first declared a national emergency over the fentanyl crisis in the U.S. to impose tariffs on China, Canada and Mexico, then declared that the U.S. trade deficit is a national emergency to justify imposing high tariffs on trading partners around the world.

Pending court cases challenge the President’s authority to invoke IEEPA as a mechanism to authorize tariffs.

### **CalChamber Position**

The California Chamber of Commerce continues to voice concern about tariffs and any other actions that create uncertainty and increase the cost of doing business for California entrepreneurs. The CalChamber has long been committed to supporting a national free trade agenda that fosters economic growth and job creation.

The CalChamber will continue to focus on eliminating tariff and nontariff barriers to support the expansion of American exports. While strategic use of tariffs or the threat of tariffs may be a meaningful negotiation tool, the CalChamber supports efforts to reduce taxation and regulatory burdens as a means to create jobs and economic growth. Further, a focus on trade agreements instead will

ultimately lower both tariff and nontariff barriers and help create long-term, sustainable economic growth.

The CalChamber opposes protectionist measures which create uncertainty, disrupt global supply chains, raise consumer prices, limit choices of products for consumers, hinder the competitiveness of California businesses, and invite retaliation.

The CalChamber believes strengthening economic ties and enhancing regulatory cooperation through agreements with our top trading partners that encompass both goods and services, including financial services, is essential to eliminating unnecessary regulatory divergences that may act as a drag on economic growth and job creation.

The CalChamber seeks commercially meaningful outcomes in negotiations with regions around the world and supports bilateral, regional and multi-lateral trade agreements, which are critical to consumers, workers, businesses, farmers and ranchers, and would allow the United States to compete with other countries that are negotiating agreements with each other.

California’s economy is diverse, and the state’s prosperity is tied to exports and imports of both goods and services by California-based companies, to exports and imports through California’s transportation gateways, and to movement of human and capital resources.

International trade and investment are major parts of our economic engine that broadly benefit businesses, communities, consumers,

**Staff Contact: Susanne T. Stirling**





## Who Is a Volunteer? Best Practices for Adult and Minor Volunteers

*From Page 2*

insurance coverage, including accident and injury insurance, to cover nonemployees, including minors (where applicable).

The Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA) protects volunteers from harassment, so best practices include providing volunteers with a copy of your harassment prevention policy, having them sign and acknowledge the policy, providing harassment prevention training and documenting the training.

You also could review your employee onboarding process to see if there is anything else that may be applicable to volunteers, but be careful *not* to treat them as if they are employees.

### Minors

For volunteers who are younger than 18 years old, there are additional steps. Besides obtaining the minor volunteer's signature, you need to have the minor volunteer's parent or legal guardian sign any documentation, parental consent and liability release.

There isn't a lot of guidance for minors in volunteering, so you could use some of the requirements for hiring minors as a best practice. Relevant requirements include guidance on the type of duties that minors perform, such as avoiding hazardous and dangerous tasks, and ensuring minors receive proper safety training and supervision.

### Additional Considerations

When minors are involved, depending on the industry and the type of organization, such as youth service organizations, there may be additional legal requirements such as a Live Scan, mandated reporter training, and child abuse prevention policies. (Business and Professions Code Section 18975, Penal Code Section 11165.7, Penal Code Section 11105.3)

*Column based on questions asked by callers on the Labor Law Helpline, a service to California Chamber of Commerce preferred members and above. 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](http://www.hrcalifornia.com).*

## CalChamber Names New Policy Advocate for Health Care, Taxation

*From Page 1*

tant, advancing to a position responsible for developing and implementing plans to

keep CMA members involved in the association's grassroots advocacy before stepping into the legislative advocate role.

Rodriguez holds a B.A. in psychology from San Diego State University.

**Take the guesswork out of HR and employment law with expert-led education!**

**Upcoming Events >**

 **CalChamber**

