

# 2025 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.

## Leading the Way to a More Prosperous 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 close to 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 2025 helped employers. See the **Advocacy In Action** sheet for estimates of employer and consumer savings due to some of these accomplishments.

## Strong Showing for the Affordability Agenda

In the inaugural year of CalChamber's Affordability Agenda, all 29 bills identified as being *Cost Drivers* failed to advance or were amended to remove objectionable provisions and 70% of the pro-economy *Cost Cutter* proposals were enacted.

Below is a sample of the Cost Driver bills stopped or amended to remove their more onerous provisions. Visit [www.calchamber.com/affordabilityagenda](http://www.calchamber.com/affordabilityagenda) for more information.

- **Restricting use of data in employment.** Blocked legislation seeking impractical requirements on employers of every size relating to worker data collected by a workplace surveillance tool. (AB 1221)
- **De facto PFAS ban.** Secured amendments significantly reducing the scope of what originally was a de facto ban on the use of perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl (PFAS) in all commercial and consumer products. The ban would have affected uses in aerospace, the production of lithium-ion batteries, medical devices, automotive uses and semiconductors, to name a few. (SB 682)
- **Air quality fees.** Stopped passage of proposals to empower the California Air Resources Board with additional authority to impose fees with little or no oversight while imposing extensive new mandates and permit requirements that would have increased the cost of operating in California for critical sectors such as energy, food production, manufacturing and recycling. (AB 914, SB 318)
- **Threatening workplace safety and security tools.** Stopped passage of bill that would have undermined safety in California workplaces by effectively prohibiting the use of surveillance technology, including security cameras, cybersecurity systems, and anti-theft devices. (AB 1331)
- **Return to work mandate.** Secured amendments narrowing the scope and duration of bill that would have extended a law enacted during the COVID-19 pandemic, creating a new mandate applying to any state of emergency. (AB 858)
- **Private right of action.** Stopped creation of a new private right of action for wage and hour penalties. (SB 310)

### **Advancing Technology-Neutral Recycling Requirements and Protecting Food Supply Chain.**

Led industry push that resulted in CalRecycle revising the SB 54 extended producer responsibility regulations to save billions of dollars in implementation costs, drop unworkable provisions, allow use of advanced recycling technologies, and protect the food supply chain.

### **Making Energy More Affordable**

Supported legislation to reduce energy costs for Californians by authorizing the California Independent System Operator and California utilities to integrate into a broader regional energy market. (AB 825)

### **Keeping Film/TV Jobs in California**

In a tough budget year, supported adoption of a bill more than doubling the state's Film Tax Credit to \$750 million annually, which will help to grow and retain jobs in one of California's signature industries and ultimately strengthen the economy. (AB 1138)

### **Defending Businesses' Ability to Use Technology**

Stopped a pricing algorithms bill imposing significant cost on businesses using technological tools. A second proposal focused on generative artificial intelligence training data that would have undercut California's status as a leader in artificial intelligence. (SB 295, AB 412)

### **Maintaining Balance of Current Privacy Law**

Stopped proposals that would have interfered with existing privacy law's careful balance of consumer privacy and the free flow of information — proposals that would have placed new restrictions on location data collection/use practices and expanded the scope of the law's definition of sensitive personal information. (AB 1355, SB 435)

### **Protecting Voter Choices**

Defeated proposal that upended the state ballot referendum process. Its unnecessary changes would have made these types of ballot measures lengthy and more confusing for voters. (AB 596)

### **Strengthening Wildfire Fund/Electricity Affordability**

Supported enactment of legislation that will ensure sufficient resources are available to help wildfire victims and communities recover and rebuild while taking steps to improve electricity affordability. (SB 254)

### **Protecting Water Rights**

Stopped passage of bill that would have undermined judicial oversight and water rights protections by requiring courts to defer to a groundwater sustainability agency's determination of sustainable yields in groundwater adjudications. Those changes would have stripped courts of their ability to independently assess facts, undermining water rights due process and locking in potentially flawed or unvetted data. (AB 1413)

### **Preventing Creation of New Ways to Sue Businesses**

- Negotiated amendments to remove a private right of action from proposals making it harder to offer consumer-friendly pricing, such as local discounts or loyalty programs, increasing legal liability for car dealers, and imposing new water quality permit requirements on business, agriculture, water and wastewater utilities. (AB 446, SB 766, SB 601)
- Stopped a bill requiring commercial, industrial and institutional facilities to obtain a new, costly stormwater permit subject to a private right of action. (AB 1313)

### **Protecting Employer Communications**

- A victory in court initially blocked enforcement of 2024 state law (SB 399) placing limits on employer communications with workers on a variety of issues, including possible union representation. (*California Chamber of Commerce et al. v. Robert Bonta, et al.*)
- Won permanent injunction blocking enforcement of state requirement for misleading Proposition 65 warnings about dietary acrylamide. Court found the warnings were an unconstitutional violation of Californians' First Amendment rights. (*California Chamber of Commerce v. Bonta*)

### **Stopping Duplicative Tax Enforcement**

Stopped another attempt to allow private attorneys to step into tax enforcement by filing individual lawsuits alleging tax fraud despite lack of evidence (similar attempts were made in 2019 and 2020). The proposed new collection process would have been prone to abuse and subjected businesses to conflicting interpretations of tax obligations. (SB 799)

### **Fostering World Trade Relations**

Reassured representatives of major trading partners of CalChamber's commitment to keeping lines of communication open by providing forum for partners to share their perspectives on the volatile global landscape with CalChamber members and the California business community.