

ALERT

100+ Organizations Join Affordable CA Coalition



Support continues to surge for the **Building an Affordable**

California Act (Affordable CA), with **more than 100 organizations** from across California now backing the statewide ballot measure to lower costs by cutting red tape and building essential housing and infrastructure faster.

The rapidly growing coalition reflects a broad and increasingly diverse cross-section of Californians—including civil rights leaders, healthcare providers, affordable housing advocates, clean energy leaders, water suppliers, agricultural leaders, and small business organizations united behind a common goal: making California more affordable and delivering the essential projects communities need.

Clear Message

“This growing coalition sends a clear message: Californians are ready to build the essential infrastructure we need to lower our cost of living and improve our quality of life,” said Jennifer Barrera, president and CEO of the California Chamber of Commerce. “Californians depend on essential projects every day. Affordable CA will help us deliver those projects faster, more affordably, and with the accountability communities deserve.”

Affordable CA modernizes California’s outdated project approval process by establishing clear timelines, improving accountability, and reducing unnecessary delays—cutting, in some cases, as much as 10 years off project timelines to help build essential projects faster and lower costs for consumers and taxpayers.

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CalChamber Adds Bills to ‘Cost Cutters’ List



Four legislative proposals that would take aim at the kind of business costs

that deepen California’s affordability crisis have been added to CalChamber’s list of bills that lawmakers should ratify in the coming weeks at the state Capitol.

The bills have been identified as **Cost Cutters**, a key component of CalChamber’s annual **Affordability Agenda**. In all, six bills now appear on the list of proposals that would have a positive effect on the state.

The new **Cost Cutters** include:

- **SB 84 (Niello; R-Fair Oaks)** This bill, originally introduced in the first year of the current legislative session, seeks to provide a reasonable amount of time for a business owner to resolve any alleged violations of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) — an important step towards curbing frivolous lawsuits.

- **AB 1606 (Nguyen; D-Elk Grove)** This legislation would provide a tax credit for businesses that incur expenses in the process of removing unauthorized encampments, illegal dumping, and abandoned property from commercial properties in California.

- **AB 1693 (Zbur; D-Hollywood)** The bill would streamline permitting for tenant improvements at retail locations, while ensuring these modifications comply with all applicable building, health, and safety requirements.

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California Business Outlook and Dinner: Register to Join the 100-Year Celebration



Opportunities to gain insights and connections await

for registrants who secure a spot at the California Business Outlook and Dinner on June 10.

[Register now.](#)

The Sacramento gathering is hosted by the California Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with the Sacramento Host Committee.

This year, the California Business Outlook and Dinner marks a historic

milestone — 100 years of influence, leadership, and impact in California.

The event brings together elected officials, local leaders, and top CEOs to discuss critical issues shaping California’s business climate.

Special thanks to premier sponsor, Fidelity Investments.

To register, [visit this link.](#)

Reserved tables are available for Silver Sponsors and above. For more information, contact [Naseem Moeel](#). See investment opportunities [here](#).

Inside

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*Labor Law Corner***California Overtime Covers Employee Working Temporarily Out of State**

Sharon Novak
Employment Law
Expert

We are sending a nonexempt employee to a trade show in a state that does not have daily overtime. Because the employee will be working in that state, are we still required to follow California wage-and-hour laws?

Generally, if work assigned outside California to a California-based employee is temporary, California overtime rules and other wage-and-hour laws apply.

California Protections**California-based employees are entitled to California protections.**

Employers cannot escape their California wage-and-hour responsibilities simply because an employee is working temporarily in another state. Short-term work assignments outside California, such as attending a trade show, do not alter the employees' connections to California sufficiently to override California's interest in protecting its residents from wage practices that violate its laws.

Multiple court decisions have held that employees who reside and work in California are covered by California wage-and-hour laws even when they are performing work outside California's borders.

For example, in *Tidewater Marine Western, Inc. v. Bradshaw* (14 Cal. 4th 557 (1996)), the California Supreme Court found that employees temporarily working on an oil-drilling platform outside the boundaries of the state are entitled to California overtime.

In cases involving airline employees, the courts have arrived at similar results.

(*Ward v. United Airlines*, 9 Cal.5th 732 (2020); *Oman v. Delta Air Lines*, 9 Cal. 5th 762 (2020); *Bernstein v. Virgin America*, 3 F.4th 1127 (9th Cir. 2021)).

The issue in the *Ward* case was whether the pay stub statute, Labor Code Section 226, applied to pilots and flight attendants. The court found that the key to determining the scope of California coverage was identifying where the employees worked most of the time. The court ruled that workers are covered if they perform the majority of their work in California or if they are based in California for work purposes.

Traveling Employee**California overtime rules apply when a California-based employee travels to and works in another state.**

California-based nonexempt employees do not lose their rights to overtime and other statutory protections just by crossing a border. If the employee normally works in California and the out-of-state work is temporary, the employer must comply with California laws.

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CalChamber-Sponsored Seminars/Trade Shows

More information at www.calchamber.com.

Human Resources

Wage & Hour 101: Nonexempt/Hourly Employees. CalChamber. May 21, [Webinar](#). (800) 331-8877.

Cal/OSHA Consultation Program Overview and Key Updates. May 28, Free Member Webinar. [Contact account manager](#).

HR Boot Camp. CalChamber. June 4–5, September 10–11, [Virtual Seminar](#). (800) 331-8877.

Wage & Hour 101: Exempt Employees. CalChamber. June 18, [Webinar](#). (800) 331-8877.

Supervisor Essentials. CalChamber, July 16, [Virtual Seminar](#). (800) 331-8877.

Leaves of Absence. CalChamber. August 6–7, [Virtual Seminar](#). (800) 331-8877.

Mid-Year Update (1-Hour Free Member Webinar). CalChamber. August 20. (800) 331-8877.

Conducting California Workplace Investigations. CalChamber. August 27, [Virtual Seminar](#). (800) 331-8877.
California Pregnancy Disability and Child

Bonding Leaves. CalChamber. September 17, [Webinar](#). (800) 331-8877.

Simplifying Local Ordinances: Helpful Resources for California Employers. CalChamber. [Webinar recording](#). (800) 331-8877.

2026 Employment Law Updates. CalChamber. [Webinar recording](#). (800) 331-8877.

California Employers' Guide to AI Decision Making. CalChamber. [Webinar recording](#). (800) 331-8877.

Navigating Paid Sick Leave and Time Off Requirements in California. CalChamber. [Webinar recording](#). (800) 331-8877.

International Trade

NADEC Annual Trade Conference:

Global Trade in Transition. National
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CalChamber Calendar

California Business Outlook and Dinner:
June 10, Sacramento

Trade Prosperity in Uncertain Times Depends on Cross-Border Partnerships



Susanne T. Stirling

In keeping with World Trade Month, the California Chamber of Commerce is highlighting its long-held support for a national free trade agenda and the significance

of international trade in maintaining economic growth.

Fittingly, the month-long focus on trade began as World Trade Week in California in 1926. President Franklin D. Roosevelt proclaimed the week a national observance in 1935.

World Trade Month activities provide opportunities to acknowledge the importance of global trade to the economies of California and the United States and celebrate how international trade unlocks new business opportunities, creates jobs, and strengthens the U.S. and global economy.

National Trade Policy Agenda

Earlier this year, President Trump released his annual 2026 Trade Policy Agenda emphasizing an America First Trade Policy. For 2026, the U.S. Department of Commerce, specifically the International Trade Administration, is focusing on fostering strategic, secure and inclusive trade. The department also underscores the importance of international trade for economic growth, job creation, and business expansion.

Since World War II, the world has been in an era of globalization and trade liberalization. Income and exports have grown, and extreme poverty has decreased. The United States has developed free trade agreements with Australia, Bahrain, Chile, Colombia, Central America, Israel, Jordan, Mexico and Canada, Morocco, Oman, Panama, Peru, Singapore, and South Korea. These free trade agreements translate into the removal of billions of dollars in tariffs and nontariff barriers for U.S. exports.

Since 1944, countries have relied on a set of trade rules, first under the auspices

of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and since 1993, on the more updated World Trade Organization (WTO).

The WTO is the only global international organization dealing with the rules of trade between nations. Unfortunately, the WTO is faltering. Trading partners do not always adhere to the rules — leaving the 166 WTO governments, which together account for 98% of world trade, struggling with uncertainty.

In a world where the President promised the most disruptive change in Washington, D.C. ever seen, there are increasing changes in the rules of order, trade disruption, geopolitical competition, and supply chain upheaval. There is no doubt that trade is a top-tier issue.

These cross-border partnerships are developing at a rapid rate and ultimately support the growth of markets and expand prosperity for all. Our trading partners become friends for the good of all.

CalChamber Position

The CalChamber will continue to focus on lowering and eliminating tariff and nontariff barriers to support the expansion of American exports. 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 and state government. We need to recognize this not only each May, but every month of the year.

Susanne T. Stirling is senior vice president of international affairs for the California Chamber of Commerce.

Commentary

By Susanne T. Stirling

Subnational Commercial Diplomacy

The global changes put California and CalChamber in a unique position to encourage interest in and understanding of international trade as a vital part of our economy. Too often the positive impact of international commerce on our state's economy is taken for granted, without considering that in 2025, California exported \$188.40 billion in goods to roughly 227 foreign economies. California's top export markets are Mexico, Canada, Taiwan, Japan and China.

California's nominal gross domestic product (GDP) reached \$4.25 trillion in 2025, placing California behind only the United States, China, Germany and Japan in global rankings. California is currently the fifth largest economy in the world.

Although trade is a nationally determined policy issue, its impact on California is immense. Trade offers the opportunity to expand the role of California's exports. In its broadest terms, trade can literally feed the world and raise the living standards of those around us.

Through subnational commercial diplomacy, we continue to place value on our trade and investment relationships with many partners across the globe.

Californians' Electric Bills Would Be Much Lower without State's Program Fees

Reliable electricity is an essential part of our lives, so making it affordable should be a top priority of California's elected officials. Unfortunately, lawmakers keep introducing proposals that make the affordability crisis worse.

And they refuse to consider a change that could quickly cut the average customer's annual bill by hundreds of dollars: removing mandatory extra charges that have nothing to do with the electricity they use.

A study released last summer found these [fees add nearly 37%](#) to the average Californian's electricity bill. In addition to paying for power generation and delivery to households, electricity customers foot the bill for a collection of hidden "public purpose" programs and state mandates. Customers who get their power from investor-owned utilities such as Southern California Edison, Pacific Gas & Electric and San Diego Gas & Electric pay about \$820 a year for these programs.

Examples of these extra charges include subsidies for rooftop solar, bill discounts for low-income customers, energy efficiency programs, upgrades to school air conditioning and plumbing, and forest and tree management throughout the state.

The goals of these mandates may be

noble, but the method of funding them is regressive. Simply put, it is unfair and inequitable to make some electricity customers pay for programs that benefit society at large and are largely unrelated to the cost of providing electric service. In many other states, people pay for these items through their taxes, not their utility bills.

Guest Commentary By Ahmad Holmes and Pat Fong Kushida

Nowhere is this inequity more glaring than in the state's rooftop solar subsidies. For years wealthier homeowners have installed rooftop solar to lower their electric bills, while costs are quietly shifted onto everyone else.

Utilities are required to pay solar households for the excess power they send to the grid. They spread the cost of those payments across everyone else's electricity bill. Meanwhile, solar customers pay far less toward maintaining the grid that everyone relies on. The result is higher electricity bills for renters, lower-income families and others who couldn't afford solar.

According to a different study by the

California Public Advocates Office — a consumer agency at the California Public Utilities Commission — customers without rooftop solar pay [more than \\$8.5 billion each year](#) on their electric bills to subsidize customers with rooftop solar systems. That adds about \$440 per year, or 20%, to every non-solar customer's bill, primarily hitting low-income families, seniors and renters hardest.

For Latino, Black, and Asian American communities, this disproportionately affects renters, residents of multi-unit buildings where rooftop solar is not an option and customers who cannot afford to install solar. As a result, families who already are paying a high share of their income on housing and utilities are forced to cover someone else's solar subsidy.

California lawmakers must face these rate realities. Too many of their policies are making matters worse, jeopardizing electric system reliability and ultimately raising customer electric bills. If legislators want to get serious about affordability, they should start by cutting the costly mandates and lowering electric bills.

Ahmad Holmes is president and CEO of the California African American Chamber of Commerce. Pat Fong Kushida is president and CEO of the CalAsian Chamber of Commerce. This commentary appeared first on [CalMatters](#).

California Overtime Covers Employee Working Temporarily Out of State

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In addition, employees are entitled to be paid for their travel time to and from the other state when they go there to work. This includes all time the employee spends waiting at the airport and traveling from the airport to the hotel and worksite.

For more information on this requirement, see the [Travel and Commute Time](#) section on [HRCalifornia](#).

Out-of-State Employees

California wage-and-hour laws apply to nonresidents performing work in California for a California-based employer.

California-based employers also need to be aware that if they bring employees based in other states to work in California, those out-of-state employees are covered by California wage-and-hour laws while working in California.

In *Sullivan v. Oracle* (51 Cal.4th 1191 (2011)), the California Supreme Court held that California overtime laws apply to nonresidents performing work in California for a California-based employer. The court found that the state has a legitimate interest in protecting employees who are working in California.

California overtime rules will likely not apply once an employee is perma-

nently reassigned or moves to another state to perform their duties. When an employee is living and working in another state permanently, the connection to California has been broken and the laws of the new state will apply.

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](#).

100+ Organizations Join Coalition Backing Affordable California Act

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“California’s affordability crisis hits historically underserved neighborhoods hardest, driving up housing costs, delaying investment, and putting essential services further out of reach,” said Rick Callender, president of the NAACP California/Hawaii State Conference. “Affordable CA will help break down barriers that keep communities waiting and deliver the infrastructure that our state needs faster and more affordably.”

Faster Path

“California’s housing affordability crisis is being made worse by seemingly never-ending delays,” said Jenna Abbott, executive director of the California Council for Affordable Housing. “When affordable housing takes years to approve, costs rise, financing becomes harder to secure, and fewer homes get built. Affordable CA will help create a clearer, faster path to

delivering the affordable housing Californians urgently need.”

“Californians expect and deserve to receive hospital care in modern, safe facilities and delays in construction projects mean longer wait times, reduced access to care and, ultimately, higher healthcare costs for all,” said Carmela Coyle, president and CEO of the California Hospital Association. “Affordable CA will help reduce unnecessary construction delays so that hospitals and medical offices can expand capacity, improve patient access, and deliver care more affordably.”

Maintains Environmental Protections

Affordable CA maintains California’s strong environmental protections and opportunities for public input. It does not exempt projects from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Instead, it modernizes the approval process by

establishing clear timelines, improving accountability, and reducing unnecessary delays to ensure essential projects move forward faster.

“The Building an Affordable California Act is a major opportunity for California to accelerate clean energy, strengthen grid reliability, and lower costs for families,” said Alex Jackson, executive director of American Clean Power – California. “We’re proud to join such a broad coalition united around building a cleaner, more affordable, and more prosperous California.”

Last week, supporters submitted nearly 1 million signatures to qualify Affordable CA for the November 2026 ballot—nearly double the number required—marking a major milestone and underscoring growing statewide momentum behind the measure.

Learn more at BuildAffordableCA.com.

CalChamber Adds Bills to ‘Cost Cutters’ List

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• **AB 2205 (Quirk-Silva; D-Fullerton)** This important proposal would reinstate California’s New Employment Credit (NEC), which has been highly effective in incentivizing businesses to hire full-time employees in designated census tracts and economic development areas. The program ended last December and should be reauthorized by the Legislature.

Cost Cutters identified earlier were:

• **AB 2124 (Pacheco; D-Downey)**

This bill would create a framework for independent evaluation of proposed legislation that imposes costs on utility customers, helping identify unnecessary or duplicative programs and reducing future rate pressure.

• **AB 2366 (Ávila Farías; D-Martínez)** This legislation would require state agencies and the Legislative Analyst’s Office to evaluate proposed new regulations to determine their fiscal impact

on cost of living in California, thereby ensuring affordability is considered.

CalChamber’s advocacy team works with our members and alongside other like-minded groups, urging elected officials to make affordability their highest priority. As legislation moves forward or is set aside through the spring and summer, the [Affordability Agenda](#) will be updated.

The California Legislature must take final action on all bills for the year no later than Aug. 31.

CalChamber-Sponsored Seminars/Trade Shows

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Association of District Export Councils. May 12–13, Nashville, Tennessee. [Event website](#).
USA-Eurasia Transportation Forum. Consulates General of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Kazakhstan in California with support of California Foundation on the Environment and the Economy (CFEE). May 15, Long Beach. [Request to join/RSVP by May 12](#).
BeautyWorld Saudi Arabia: California Pavilion. Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz). May 18–20. [See flyer](#). Tricia.Utterback@gobiz.ca.gov.

Asia Tech x Singapore: California Pavilion. GO-Biz. May 20–22, Singapore. [Learn more](#).
Sri Lanka Expo 2026. Sri Lanka Export Development Board. June 18–21, Sri Lanka. [Event website](#).
Seafood Expo Bharat. India Marine Products Export Development Authority. July 1–3. Chennai, India. [Event website](#).
Farnborough Airshow. GO-Biz to lead delegation of economic developers. July 20–24, London, United Kingdom. [Event website](#).
Aquatech: California Pavilion. GO-Biz with U.S. Commercial Service. September 1–3, Mexico City, Mexico.

Registration deadline: June 1 or until spaces are filled. [See flyer](#).

Semicon Taiwan: California Pavilion. GO-Biz. September 1–4, Taipei, Taiwan. Up to 8 California small businesses in semiconductor supply chain invited to apply. [See flyer](#).
2026 U.S. Business Day – Sourcing Meetings. Bureau of Foreign Trade (BOFT), Ministry of Economic Affairs; Taiwan External Trade Development Council (TAITRA); Department of Investment Services (DOIS), Ministry of Economic Affairs. October 13, Taipei, Taiwan. [More information](#).