

**Agenda for  
May 20, 2024 via Zoom**  
(Agenda item order subject to change)

1. **Opening Welcome**
2. **Approval of April Minutes:** Attached to Agenda package;
3. **Guest Speakers – Mike Merlo**, Vice President, Title Operations manager, Lawyers Title Company; What needs to be done practically and legislatively to reduce the potential for fraud in real estate remote transactions and digital assets. *ref. SB696 and SB95 (15-20 minute including Q&A);*  
  
California Chamber of Commerce President & CEO, **Jennifer Barrera**; **Ben Golombek**, Executive VP & Chief of Staff for Policy Sacramento trip; Job killer bills *(15-20 minute including Q&A)*
4. **Rep reports:** Federal Prove It Act of 2024 effect on job creators, community builders and small businesses; MWD working with LADWP - rate increases; City budget
5. **Chair Reports:**
6. **Open Discussion:** If time permits,
7. **Adjournment**

**Next Government Affairs Meeting**

June 17, 2024

State Senator Scott Wilk



GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEETING  
MINUTES APRIL 15TH, 2024

**Present:** Richard Fisk, Florine Goodman, Varant Majarian, Scott Krassner, Annie Nepomuceno, Mike Stafford, Jill Kline, Jeanett Capaldi, Horace Heidt, David Honda, Sherry Keowen, David Phelps, Dennis Zine, Diana Oganessian, Vickie Bourdas Martinez, Allen Budzichowski, Bonnie Bursk, Les Himes, Jose Rodriguez, Tammy Scher, Denny Schneider, Elizabeth deCarteret, Susie Herrera, Colleen King, Mirna Ezquivel, Gaby Gurrola, Nichol Richardson, Mercy Albert, Cindy Cleghorn, Andreas Farmal Calidis, Mikkie Loi, Stephanie Molen, Tom Ross, Lucie Volotzky, Lorena Bernal, Kris Hough, Tami Stephens, Anne-Marie Williams

**Call to Order:** Richard Fisk called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m.

**Minutes: March 8, 2024** - Richard asked if there were any additions or corrections to the Government Affairs Minutes from March 8, 2024, as there were none,

Minutes were approved by all as submitted

**Guest Speaker:** Richard - introduced Joshua Heller, Joshua has 18 years of experience working on Federal, State, and local campaigns. During his 18 years of experience, he has worked on or managed all facets of campaigns, including coalition building, issue research, opposition research, field operations, media production, message development and fundraising

JOSHUA is from the Sacramento based JSQ GROUP, who will be discussing the initiative drive against a proposal that is once again chipping away at the Costa-Hawkins Act of 1995.

**JOSHUA HELLER**

Joshua discussed "California Fair Housing" which was created by Michael Weinstein to include the shut down of housing production, restrict rent control (less affordable housing). Joshua stated that this must be defeated. It is the third attempt to chip away at Costa Hawkins.

Questions and comments included the fact that rooms/garages in homes for rent would also be adversely affected.

A motion was made to have United Chambers be part of the organizations that are behind the initiative drive awaiting formal state approval to be on the November ballot. Horace Heidt made the motion, second by Dennis Zine

VOTE: OPPOSE 16 – ABSTENSION – 1

## LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

### TAMI STEPHENS (CONGRESSMAN MIKE GARCIA)

Tami reported that the Congressman had voted on many bills, including: 1. Spending Package 2. Regulation of Oil and Gas 3. No Presidential Ban 4. Clean Water Project 5. Carbon Tax 6. Election Integrity.

He has also introduced several bills on Iran and Israel.

CONTACT: [tami.stephens@gmail.house.gov](mailto:tami.stephens@gmail.house.gov)

### GABY GURROLA (ASSEMBLYMEMBER SCHIAVO)

Gaby mentioned that twenty-two bills had been introduced, including AB2135 regarding Wages, AB2424, Mortgage Protection and AB3106 addressing teachers' issues regarding infectious diseases they are exposed to and their excusal from work. This one has moved forward into Committee.

Gaby also mentioned Chatsworth Block Fest this past Saturday, that although affected by the rain, was still a great event. She also announced an event coming up on May 4, 2024, Youth and Family, being held at the College of the Canyons from 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

CONTACT: [gaby.gurola@asm.ca.gov](mailto:gaby.gurola@asm.ca.gov)

### DIANA OGANESYAN (SUPERVISOR BARGER)

Diana mentioned that there is hope that The 99Cents Only Stores may be saved.

CONTACT: [doganesyan@bos.lacounty.gov](mailto:doganesyan@bos.lacounty.gov)

### MIRNA EZQUIVEL (SUPERVISOR HORVATH)

Mirna mentioned that the Supervisor had participated in an event in San Fernando last week on March 13, 2024.

CONTACT: [mezquivel@bos.lacounty.gov](mailto:mezquivel@bos.lacounty.gov)

### KRIS HOUGH (SENATOR SCOTT WILK)

Kris mentioned the following bills that are moving forward: SB1004 (Wild Fire Exemption), SB1023 (Cal State Study), SB996 (Sex Education Transparency with material to be presented put on a Portal for parents to review and decide if they want their child to participate), SB1194 (Parents Advisory Committee) and SB1234 (Increase certification for Veterinarians to include surgery as well as Spay and Neutering)

CONTACT; [kris.hough@sen.ca.gov](mailto:kris.hough@sen.ca.gov)

### DENISE KNITTER (MAYOR KAREN BASS)

Denise announced the Legacy Business Program which is assistance to businesses who have been in operation for 20 years or more within the same community, with Technical Assistance, Financial Assistance, Marketing Assistance and Government Connection.

Grant applications will be online to apply in the Fall of 2024, Businesses with one to five employees can apply for up to \$10K and businesses with six or more can apply for up to \$20K.

She reported that all AI Fresco Dinning Permits will expire om July 31, 2024, and must transition for a new permit. May 1, 2024, there will be a Webinar on Private Property Focus on AI Fresco.

There were several complaints regarding “pop up restaurants” that are allowed to continue while impeding sidewalks, brick and mortar businesses, and other safety and health concerns. Denise asked anyone with such information to send it to her and she would get it investigated.

CONTACT: [denise.knitter@lacity.org](mailto:denise.knitter@lacity.org)

#### JILL KLINE (CD3 COUNCILMEMBER BOB BLUMENFIELD)

Jill announced the Grand Opening, last week of Valley Work Source Center. It is complete with available meeting rooms as well as a training facility.

She also announced “Reseda Rising” which will be held on May 18, 2024, and space is still available for vendors.

CONTACT: [jill.kline@lacity.org](mailto:jill.kline@lacity.org)

#### LORENA BERNAL (COUNCILMEMBER PADILLA)

1. Digital Billboards – 5 in CD6 approved
2. Van Nuys Airport – Checking outreach to Rosio and Boss for plans
3. In conjunction with CD3 and CD7 – focus to protect workers cutting counter tops

Up coming on Saturday, April 20 is the Panorama City Clean up and the opening of a 25-unit apartment complex to accommodate “unhoused families”.

CONTACT: [lorena.bernal@lacity.org](mailto:lorena.bernal@lacity.org)

#### NICHOL RICHARDSON (Metropolitan Water District)

Nichol reported that the current Snowpack is at 127% over average. METRO WATER DISTRICT has increased the water usage to 30% from 15% due to conservation.

On April 16 at 9:00 a.m., a presentation of Water & Budget for Jan 2025 and 2026 will be made and must be voted on.

CONTACT: [nrichardson@mwdhh2o.com](mailto:nrichardson@mwdhh2o.com)

#### STEPHANIE MOLEN (L.A. METRO)

On March 26 there was a celebration for the completion of work of METRO, from Ventura Blvd to Rayen St.

“This work continues to benefit better mobility for Los Angeles,” said Stephanie.

[CONTACT: molens@metro.net](mailto:molens@metro.net)

DAVID PHELPS & SCOTT KASSNER (CO-CHAIR GOVERNMENT AFFIARS)

David presented SB1434 and ACA19 and Scott presented SB1345 and SB1137

David and Scott moved to oppose these bills and was second by Horace Heidt.

**VOTE:** All were opposed by a majority

MARIAN JOCZ (EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR)

Mentioned the upcoming Inspirational Women of the San Fernando Valley Award Luncheon on May 9, 2024, at the Hilton Hotel.

She also mentioned the Small Business Awards Breakfast, which are businesses selected by member Chambers to honor one of their Small Businesses who are also community involved. This will be held on June 7, 2024, from 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. at the Air Tel Plaza Hotel.

Plans are also under way for the June 14, 2024, Skilled Job Faire at Shepherd Church and the June 27, 2024, Mega Mixer at Anheuser Busch.

For more information contact: [marian@unitedchambers.org](mailto:marian@unitedchambers.org).

Meeting adjourned 1:50 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Florine Goodman, Secretary

NEXT VIRTUAL MEETING – Monday, May 20, 2024

## Legislation – May 2024

Deadlines are approaching: May 24<sup>th</sup> is the last day for each house to pass bills introduced in that house; June 27<sup>th</sup> is the last day for a legislative measure to qualify for the November ballot. The description of these bills listed below are brief and meant to describe the primary objective. Complete state legislative, including specific bill information can be found at: <https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/home.xhtml>. If you find any that should be on this list or feel we should take a formal position on, please let us know.

**ACA 19** (Gallagher) The Legislature finds and declares that the intent of this measure is to **repay outstanding federal unemployment insurance loan debt** in order to protect the state and California businesses from the negative effects of COVID-19 and any future economic downturn. (Introduced Feb 16, may be heard in comm 3-18)

**SB 1434** (Durazo) **Increases Unemployment taxes** to fund benefit hikes of up to 55%, as well as providing for subsequent increases based on inflation. Also creates entirely new UI program to provide benefits to workers who do not qualify for traditional UI, to be funded by a new tax on California employers. (Introduced 2-16, referred to comm 2-29: VICA opposes; hearing canceled 4-17 ;)

**SB 1345** (Smallwood-Cuevas) Effectively **prohibits most employers from considering conviction history** of an applicant, existing employee, or contractor in employment or contracting decisions. (Introduced Feb 16, 2024; amended 3-20; set for hearing 4-16, pending receipt)

**AB 1923** (Davies) This bill would establish the Green Assistance Program within the California Environmental Protection Agency to, among other things, **assist small businesses** and small nonprofit organizations in **applying for moneys** from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund. The bill would authorize the Secretary for Environmental Protection to apply for and accept grants or contributions of funds from any public or private source for the program (Feb-5; re-referred to appr comm 3-19; ref to suspense file)

**AB 2294** (Schiavo) This bill would amend 2 sections of the Revenue and Taxation Code, expanding the definition of **qualified wages, qualified employee**, availability of the credit to businesses. Eliminate location requirement. (Introduced Feb 12, Hearing canceled 4-1)

**AB 3106** (Schiavo) This bill would require an employer to ensure that COVID-19 cases, are excluded from the workplace until prescribed return-to-work requirements are met. The bill, with specified exceptions, would **require an employer** to continue and maintain an excluded **employee's earnings, wages, seniority, and all other employee rights and benefits**. Other provisions apply. (Introduced Feb 16, amended 4-1; re-referred to comm 4-2; ref to suspense file 5-08)

**AB 2499** (Schiavo) Unlawful **employment practices: discrimination for time off**. Amends several provisions of existing law related to employee time off for jury duty, crime victims and witnesses, among other amendments. (Introduced Feb 13, re-referred to comm 4-4; ref to suspense file 5-01)

**SB 1071** (Dodd) Amends the Business & Professional Code to **exclude a licensed contractor** that has no employees from reporting on workers' compensation insurance. (Introduced Feb 12, set for hearing 5-13)

**AB 1840** (Arambula) Existing law establishes the California Housing Finance Agency in the Department of Housing and Community Development, and authorizes the agency to make loans to finance affordable housing. This bill, among other things, says that an applicant **cannot be disqualified** solely based on **immigration status**. (Introduced Jan 16, ref to comm Feb-29; ref to suspense file 5-08)

**SB 1446** ( Smallwood-Cuevas) This bill would **prohibit a grocery establishment** or a retail drug establishment from **providing a self-service checkout** option for customers unless specified conditions are satisfied. Would require the establishment to conduct a specific assessment study before implementing the technology and include the input from employees at least 60 days before drafting the study. (Introduced Feb 16, 2024; amended 3-20; set for hearing 4-17; suspense file 5-6)

**SB 1116** (Portantino) **Increases Unemployment Insurance Taxes to Subsidize Striking Workers**. SB 1116 will allow striking workers to claim UI benefits when they choose to strike. SB 1116 will effectively add more debt onto California employers. SB 1116 will effectively force employers to subsidize strikes at completely unrelated businesses. (Introduced 2-13, referred to comm 2-21; suspense file 5-6)

**AB 2943** (Rivas-Zbur) This bill would make it a crime for any person to possess property that was acquired through **one or more acts of shoplifting** from a retail business, and the person has intent to sell, and the aggregate value of the possessed property exceeds \$950. (Introduced 2-15, amended 4-3; referred to comm 4-4: VICA supports; suspense file 4-24)

**AB 1772** (Ramos, Mathis, Valencia) This bill would, among other provisions, revise the definition of shoplifting to **require an intent to steal** retail property or merchandise and would require a person convicted of petty theft or shoplifting, if the person has 2 or more prior convictions for specified theft-related offenses. (Introduced January 3; Amended Feb 1; and April 3; referred to suspense file 4-24)

**AB 2374** (Haney) Revises the Displaced Janitor Opportunity Act ("Act") to apply to contractors employing one or more janitors, **increase the employee retention period from 60 to 90 days**, and provide that the successor contractor shall maintain the same work schedules and pay the same wages and benefits as were provided by the prior contractor. (Introduced Feb 12, referred to comm 4-4; suspense file 5-1)

**AB 2751** (Haney) This bill would require a public or private employer to establish a workplace policy that provides **employees the right to disconnect from communications from the employer** during nonworking hours, except as specified. (Introduced Feb 16, 2024; amended 3-21; suspense file 5-8)

**AB 1043** (Essayli) This bill, among other provisions, would **prohibit** a person from contacting, soliciting, or initiating communication with an owner to **claim the surplus funds** from a foreclosure sale of the owner's residence before 90 days after the trustee's deed has been required. (Last year's bill, motion to reconsider 5-13)

**SB 263** (Dodd) An act relating to insurance. Revises and recasts, beginning January 1, 2025, provisions related to the standards and procedures for the recommendation of **annuity products**, including any recommendation to purchase, exchange, or replace an annuity. (Sent to governor Feb-23)

**SB 923** (Archuleta) A **modification of Prop 47** that would revise the definition of shoplifting to require an intent to steal retail property or merchandise (Introduced Jan-11-24, Amended 3-18; hearing canceled April-16)

**AB 1897** (Flora) This bill would require a court, whenever a defendant prevails in a civil action, to award reasonable **attorney's fees** to a prevailing defendant against the plaintiff upon a finding by the court that the plaintiff's prosecution of the action was not in good faith. (Feb-5; referred to Judiciary comm)

**SB 970** (Ashby) Amending Civil Code; Any person or entity that sells or provides access to any **artificial intelligence** technology that is designed to create any synthetic media shall provide a consumer warning that misuse of the technology may result in civil or criminal liability for the user. (Introduced Jan 25, ref to comm Feb-14; suspense file 5-6)

## Of Interest?

**AB 2912** (Dixon) Gas Prices Act Would require the State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission, among other provisions, to post and update on its website, a monthly basis, the difference between **retail gasoline prices** in California and the national average. (Introduced Feb 15, may be heard in comm 3-17)

**SB 961** (Weiner) This bill would require certain vehicles, commencing with the 2027 model year, to be equipped with an intelligent speed limiter, that would **limit the speed of the vehicle to 10 miles per hour** over the speed limit. It would create a criminal offense imposing a state-mandated local program. (Introduced Jan 23, set for hearing April-23)

**AB 3067** (Gipson) This bill would **require a residential insurer**, by January 1, 2026, to include questions on insurance applications regarding the presence and storage of any **firearms** kept in the household. Insurers would have to report this annually. (Introduced Feb 16, ref to comm 3-11)

**SB 1160** (Portantino) This bill would require every **firearm** in the state, except those specifically exempted, to be **annually registered** with the department. The bill would require the registrant to annually pay a fee. This bill would prohibit possession of an unregistered firearm, a violation of which would be punishable as an infraction. (Introduced Feb 14, hearing canceled April-2)

**SB 53** (Portantino) This bill would, beginning on July 1, 2025, **prohibit a person from keeping or storing a firearm** in a residence owned or controlled by that person unless the firearm is stored in safe that is listed on the Department of Justice's list of approved firearms safety devices and is properly engaged to render it inaccessible by any person other than the owner. The bill would make a first violation of this offense punishable as an infraction (Introduced Dec 5, 2022, In assy Jan-29 held at desk)

**AB 2092** (Mathis) This bill would require the PUC to conduct a feasibility study on the impact of permitting the building of small modular **nuclear reactors** and to submit a report to the Legislature on or before January 1, 2027. (Introduced Feb 5, amended 3-18; re-referred to comm 3-19)

**AB 2200** (Kalra) **Government-Run Health Care**. Forces 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 at least \$250 billion a year on workers, income, jobs, goods and services. (Introduced Feb 7; referred to comm 3-21)