

**Agenda for  
June 17, 2024 via Zoom**  
(Agenda item order subject to change)

1. **Opening Welcome**
2. **Approval of May Minutes:** Attached to Agenda package;
3. **Guest Speaker – State Senator Scott Wilk;** speaking his mind as a termed out political minority in his last year in state legislation  
(20-25 minute including Q&A);
4. **Rep reports:** Questions were sent to reps: City Budget; Comments on noted bills
5. **Chair Reports:** 6 State bills as discussed last month and their status – *First 6 on legislative handout*
6. **Open Discussion:** If time permits
7. **Adjournment**

**Next Government Affairs Meeting**

July 15, 2024

Paul Weber from LA Alliance

Assemblymember Schiavo scheduled for September



GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEETING  
MINUTES MAY 20, 2024

**Present:** Richard Fisk, Florine Goodman, Varant Majarian, Scott Krassner, Annie Nepomuceno, Mike Stafford, Jill Kline, Horace Heidt, David Honda, David Phelps, Dennis Zine, Diana Oganessian, Allen Budzichowski, Bonnie Bursk, Les Himes, Denny Schneider, Susie Herrera, Mirna Ezquivel, Nichol Richardson, Cindy Cleghorn, Stephanie Molen, Tom Ross, Kris Hough, Sharon Bronson, Charles Navarro, James Roy, Michelle Vergara, Marisol Espinosa, Audrey Rolim

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

**Minutes: April 15, 2024** - Richard asked if there were any additions or corrections to the Government Affairs Minutes from April 15, 2024, as there were none,

Minutes were approved by all as submitted

*GUEST SPEAKER: MIKE MERLO (VICE PRESIDENT, TITLE OPERATION MANAGER, LAWYERS TITLE COMPANY (INTRO BY SCOTT KASSNER) AND JENNIFER BARRERA, CALIFORNIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PRESIDENT & CEO (INTRO BY DAVID PHELPS))*

**MIKE MERLO (LAWYERS TITLE COMPANY)**

Mike discussed the use of the Electronic Age's beginning and its contrary effects on important documents which are being allowed to accept this option of doing business.

This option took strong hold during the Covid19 Pandemic which began allowing Digital Signatures and electronic "Notaries" as being acceptable. California did not approve these types of documents, however, some were done "on the sly." Other states did accept these digital acknowledgements which affected many business transactions as well as Home Title/Sales.

In January 2024, California did approve this way of submitting forms, however it is not officially allowed for Digital signatures until 2030 for Notaries. The State of Virginia will accept digital Notary signatures.

Questions regarding why digital notaries are not considered a reason for being treated as fraud, and what can we do to protect ourselves and our interests? Mike stated that even "in person" notarizations have seen problems. Make sure you use a certified/license notary!

As for how to protect yourself, he stated that even though a company may notify you of a transaction of this type, it is usually too late. Getting Title Insurance is a good option if you own the property.

Mike also mentioned that wire Money Transfers can also be dangerous as that money could end up going to outside industries, another country, or another person.

#### JENNIFER BARRERA (CALIFORNIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PRESIDENT & CEO)

Jennifer discussed some of the bills that Cal Chamber is monitoring:

1. SB1116 (Portantino) - Access to unemployment benefits for employees on strike
2. SB149(Menjivar) - Tax on Fossil fuel (gas & oil). This will affect forty companies to address climate change.
3. SB1327(Glacier) - Tax on Digital Advertising
4. ACA 16(Bryan) - Environmental Rights Constitutional Amendment
5. AB2499(Schiavo) – Employment practices: discrimination for time off.
6. SB1193(Menjivar) – Leaded Fuel in Piston Aircraft (impacts local Van Nuys Airport operators)

They have also noted AB2829, AB200, AB275, AB1345, and AB2374.

Questions proposed to Jennifer included the fact that bills against business seemed to be prevalent, are there ever bills for what business can do? Also, the concern for the many businesses leaving California, and Home Insurance Companies being a reason for concern as it affects property sales.

Jennifer said that California Chamber does try to do positive bills for business, but many have been killed in committee! They are also working with Insurance providers, as well as their premiums, to insure coverage for losses.

Another question involved SB1446 (Self Check Out), which has been suggested to create an increase in retail crime. Jennifer responded that the Labor Unions are in favor of eliminating Self Check out, as it will not deter theft, but will save jobs.

#### CHARLES NAVARRO (CONGRESSMAN MIKE GARCIA)

Charles reported that the Congressman has been working on: Federal Funding Planning, Crime Victim's Fund, and HR5863 (Disasters incurred by Wildfires or Natural Disasters).

He also mentioned that the Congressman will be holding a Town Hall Meeting sometime in August. He will get back with more specific information.

#### KRIS HOUGH (SENATOR SCOTT WILK)

Kris mentioned the following bills: SB9966 was killed – SB1023 Cal State University study (killed) – SB1233 Animal Shelters (moving forward) – SB1359 illegal Dumping (moving forward) SB1004 (moving forward)

DIANA OGANESYAN (SUPERVISOR BARGER)

Diana noted that the Supervisor was opposed to the motion to supply legal representations to the students who were arrested during the recent protests (Palestine/Israel).

Contact her for information on Grans and LACAS.

On Saturday, May 25 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. event for Vets (contact office)

The last day for the L.A. County Faire is Friday May 25<sup>th</sup>.

MIRNA EZQUIVEL (SUPERVISOR HORVATH)

Motion to supply Legal services for UCLA students arrested during the protests.

Jane Fonda Day that was scheduled is being rescheduled.

Working on the Metro Budget, programs for additional mental health services for Homeless and Domestic Violence victims.

STEPHANIE MOLEN (L.A. METRO)

Stephanie mentioned the concerns for safety on the L.A. Metro and they are constantly working to curtail this issue.

Dennis Zine shared that the LAPD is not allowed to enforce laws that are currently increasing on the Metro System. They used to use "Code of Conduct" as their rule to enforce and deter criminal activity, but that is no longer viable.

MICHELLE VERGARA (MAYOR KAREN BASS)

Michelle reported that two new Managers had been appointed to LADWP. The Budget process is winding down.

The selection of the new LAPD CHIEF is underway and there is an on-line survey, currently up, for the public to weigh in as to what they want to see in the new Chief.

The Mayor has partnered with Senator Caroline Menjivar with an event on June 29, 2024.

SHARON BRONSON (COUNCILMEMBER JOHN LEE)

Sharon mentioned the success of their program with schools that was "Making Movies That Matter."

She also mentioned that the \$12.8 Billion Budget is almost completed and ready for approval.

CD12 will hold a High School Boot Camp at CSUN from June 26 to July 31 (once a week) at no cost.

Sharon reminded everyone that styro-foam is now banned as of April 23, 2024. She was asked who would be enforcing this ban and she responded that she would find out and report back.

JILL KLINE (CD3 COUNCILMEMBER BOB BLUMENFIELD)

Jill reminded everyone that Councilmember Blumenfield is the Chair of the Budget process, and she will present a more in-depth report at the next meeting.

A program has been established with the Resource Center for a 6-week course to learn Spanish. This program will run once a week (Tuesdays), from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Reseda Rising a Street Faire, including Art, Food, Music, and more was held on Saturday May 18, 2024, on Sherman Way between Lindley and Etiwanda, was a big success.

NICHOL RICHARDSON (METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT)

Nichol reminded everyone that the Water from the Delta and Colorado River supplies water to twenty-six areas in all six counties. The current water supply is 95% normal with reserves at maximum capacity.

She also mentioned that they had a “Water Awareness Month” two weeks ago!

Meeting adjourned 1:57 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Florine Goodman, UCC Secretary

*NEXT VIRTUAL MEETING – Monday, June 17, 2024*

## Legislation – June 2024

May 24<sup>th</sup> was 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. Summer recess is from July 4 to August 4<sup>th</sup>. August 31 is the last day for bills to pass in each house that will be sent to the governor. The description of the 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>

**\*\*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; referred to comm 6-03)

**\*\*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; amended 4 times last 6-6, sent to Judiciary committee)

**\*\*SB 1193** (Menjivar) This bill **prohibits the sale of leaded aviation gasoline**, phasing it out beginning January 1, 2026. Allows counties to opt-out. (Introduced Feb 14; amended 4-11 and 5-16; ref to comm 6-03)

**\*\*SB 1497** (Menjivar) This bill **requires certain fossil fuel companies to pay** for the costs that California has or will incur as a result of climate change, as specified. (Introduced Feb 16; amended 3-20 and 4-25; inactive file by author 5-22)

**\*\*ACA 16** (Bryan) Amends the California Constitution to declare that the **people shall have a right to clean air and water** and a healthy environment (Introduced Jan 25, amended 6-06; asm 3<sup>rd</sup> reading 6-10)

**\*\*SB 1327** (Glacier) This bill Enacts the **Data Mitigation Fee Law**, which imposes a data extraction mitigation fee on persons engaged in data extraction transactions, commencing in an unspecified taxable year for news media entities that pay wages for current or newly employed journalists. (Introduced Feb 16, amended 3-20,5-02 and 5-20; Senate 3<sup>rd</sup> reading 6-11)

**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; no movement 6-10)

**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; no movement 6-10)

**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; 5-16)

**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; no movement 6-10)

**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; held under submission 5-16)

**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; held under submission 5-16)

**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; 5-29 ref to committee)

**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; amended 4 times last 6-6, ref to committee)

**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; amended 4 times last 6-6, ref to committee)

**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; held under submission 5-16)

**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; Ref to comm 6-05)

**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; held under submission 5-16)

**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; asm motion to reconsider 6-10)

**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; no action 6-10)

**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; no action 6-10)

**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; held under submission 5-16)

## Of Interest?

**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; amended 3 times last 5-08; ref to committee 6-03)

**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; amended twice last 4-24; held under submission 5-16)

**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; held under submission 5-16)

**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; amended twice last 4-30; held under submission 5-16)