



April 2024 Legislative Advocate Report

By Jennifer Baker, CalRTA Legislative Advocate

Early Budget Package Passed

Earlier this month, the Legislature passed, and the Governor signed a \$17.3 billion early budget package. This early action includes \$3.6 billion in primarily one-time funding, \$5.2 billion in revenue borrowing, \$5.2 billion in delays and deferrals, as well as \$3.4 billion in cost shifts. Included in [AB 106](#) are the budget changes reflecting this early budget package.

By addressing \$17.3 billion now, while assuming \$12.2 billion will be addressed through the use of the Rainy Day Fund, the remaining shortfall that will need to be addressed by the June 15th constitutional deadline is estimated to be between \$8.4 to \$23.4 billion.

April Tax Receipts Slightly Lower

Now that the April 15th deadline has passed, the final totals for personal income tax receipts (PIT) are solidifying. The General Fund PIT receipts for 2023-24 reached a total of \$83.87 billion on March 31, reflecting a 4.34% lower than anticipated total projected in the 2024-25 budget. The Governor's budget for fiscal year 2024-25 had estimated that total PIT receipts would be \$16.3 billion. These receipts represent 7.67% of the total General Fund revenues that are estimated for 2023-24.

In addition to the updated figures provided by the Controller's office, the Department of Finance has issued their [April Finance Bulletin](#), which noted the initial General Fund agency cash receipts were 1.6% below the Governor's proposed 2024-25 budget forecast, reflecting a total of \$243 million. Personal income added \$3.4 billion to the overall fiscal shortfall. Sales and use taxes were down by \$653 million in March, followed by corporation taxes which were down by \$247 million.

California's personal income grew to 4.2% in 2023, while core inflation decreased to 3.7% year-over-year in February.

CalRTA Bill Positions

Health Care/Healthy Aging: Support

AB 1968 (Jackson): CalFresh: Enrollment for Senior Citizens – Would set a timeline for Department of Social Services and the Franchise Tax Board to share information regarding seniors 60 years of age and older that would financially qualify for CalFresh. Eligible seniors would be automatically enrolled annually. This bill is in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

AB 1975 (Bonta): Medi-Cal: Medically Supportive Food and Nutrition Interventions – Would add medically supportive food and nutrition to be included in interventions that would be a covered benefit under Medi-Cal beginning in 2026 and specifies the timelines for interventions as well as offerings. It

would first require federal approval and guidance. This bill is in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

AB 2075 (Alvarez): Resident-Designated Support Persons Act – Would provide a resident of a long-term care facility with the right to in-person, onsite access to a designated support person or a health care and social services provider during a public health emergency in which visitation rights of residents are curtailed by a state or local order. This bill is in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

AB 2169 (Bauer-Kahan): Prescription Drug Coverage: Dose adjustments – Enables adequate treatment for chronic conditions by allowing for standard dose increases of effective treatments without prior authorization. A change in dosage is not a different treatment, but insurance policies treat them equivalently. This bill is in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

AB 2180 (Weber): Health Care Coverage: Cost Sharing – Expands the types of payments and reductions that health care and pharmacy benefits must count toward patient's out-of-pocket expenses that would apply toward their maximum deductible or co-payment. This bill is in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

AB 2207 (Reyes): State Boards and Commissions: Representatives of Older Adults – Would ensure that there is increased representation from older adults on a number of key California Boards and Commissions. This bill is in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

AB 2258 (Zbur): Health Care Coverage: Cost Sharing – Would prevent non-grandfathered health care plans or policies created, amended, or renewed after 2025 from charging cost-sharing requirements for items or services that are needed for preventive care services and screenings, including sexually transmitted diseases and particular cancer screenings. This bill is in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

AB 2270 (Maienschein): Healing Arts: Continuing Education: Menopausal Mental and Physical Health – Would expand what continuing education and professional development doctors and therapists can take to include menopausal mental and physical health. This bill is in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

AB 2297 (Friedman): Hospital and Emergency Physician Fair Pricing Policies – Would allow emergency doctors to find discounts for patients with incomes under 400 percent of the federal poverty level to reduce patient costs. Would also prohibit a hospital from considering the monetary assets of a patient to determine eligibility for charity care and discount payment policies while prohibiting them from imposing time limits for eligibility. Further, it prohibits a hospital or emergency doctor from using liens on property to collect unpaid hospital or emergency physician bills, and collection agencies as well. This bill is in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

AB 2356 (Wallis): Medi-Cal: Monthly Maintenance Amount: Personal and Incidental Needs – Would increase the monthly amount an individual can receive for Medi-Cal incidental needs from \$35 to \$50. This bill is in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

AB 2620 (Bains): California Commission on Aging – Reduces the number of members on the Commission on Aging to 18 members and requires them to have experience in the field of aging, including health, behavioral health, and housing. This bill is in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

AB 2701 (Villapudua): Medi-Cal: Dental Cleanings and Examinations – Restructures what is included under dental cleanings annually under the Medi-Cal program to include two cleanings and two examinations annually, regardless of age. This bill is in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

AB 3207 (J. Patterson): The Secure Seniors Online Protection Act – Creates the Secure Seniors Online Protection Act, requiring the Department of Social Services to create and administer a 24-hour-a-day toll-free hotline to help Californians dealing with online scams, with a focus on individuals 60 years of age and older. This bill is in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

AB 3260 (Pellerin): Health Care Coverage: Reviews and Grievances – Requires a health care service plan to make a grievance determination within 72 hours if it is urgent, or a 30-day timeline for those that are nonurgent and would entitle an enrollee to proceed with a grievance which would be expedited. Enrollees and their representatives would be entitled to correspondence and documents. This bill is in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

SB 1213 (Atkins): Health Care Programs: Cancer – Would allow individuals to receive free treatment for cancer screening, including breast cancer and cervical cancer, if they are low-income at or below 300 percent of the federal poverty level. This bill is in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

SB 1352 (Wahab): Continuing Care Retirement Communities – Adds nondiscrimination provisions to residents in continuing care retirement communities, including sex, race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, disability, medical condition, except as permitted by licensure requirements, marital status or domestic partner status, sexual characteristics, sexual orientation, or gender identity and expression. This bill is in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

SB 1354 (Wahab): Health Facilities: Payment Source – Requires long-term health care providers under Medi-Cal to provide services to Medi-Cal members with the same care and scope provided to others, regardless of the payment source. This bill is in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

SB 1406 (Allen): Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly: Resident Services – Adds the right for a resident in a residential care facility for the elderly to request, refuse, or discontinue a service. Eliminates the exemption from rent control for their facilities and prohibits annual fee increases for residents from exceeding less than 10 percent or the annual Consumer Price Index for the previous year, except for rate increases due to a change in the level of care. This bill is in the Senate Human Appropriations Committee.

Public Education: Support

AB 247 (Muratsuchi): Education Finance: School Facilities: TK Through Community College Public Education Facilities Bond Act of 2024 – Would place a TK-community bond act on the November ballot to build and/or modernize much-needed school facilities. This bill is in the Senate Appropriations Committee Suspense File.

AB 2226 (Muratsuchi): Mandatory Kindergarten – Would mandate kindergarten prior to entering the 1st grade by 2026-27. This bill is in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

SB 956 (Cortese): School facilities: Design-Build Contracts – Reauthorizes K-12 districts to use the design-build delivery method when constructing and designing school facilities. This bill is on the Senate Floor.

SB 1056 (Rubio): Mandatory Kindergarten - Would mandate kindergarten prior to entering the 1st grade by 2026-27. This bill is in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Oppose

SCA 9 (Grove): Educational Expenses: Education Flex Accounts and Special Education Flex Accounts – Would allow the state to provide all eligible children with a flex account for tuition and education-related expenses associated with attending a K-12 private school, including religious schools. This constitutional amendment remains in the Senate Rules Committee.

CalSTRS Retirement

Support

AB 1997 (McKinnor): Teachers' Retirement Law: Creditable Compensation - Would create an updated process for school and community colleges to report creditable compensation and service earned to the California State Teachers' Retirement System (CalSTRS). Would create a much more simplified definition of creditable service and would enhance transparency requirements regarding both pay rates and salary. This bill is in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

AB 2134 (Muratsuchi): School Employees: Transfer of Leave of Absence for Illness or Injury - Would ensure that teachers and classified employees who change school districts are entitled to keep their earned sick time by explicitly stating that there is no time frame during which unused sick leave must be transferred between school employers, requiring unused sick leave to be transferred between school employers in days and requiring charter schools to accept transfer of unused sick leave. This bill is in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

AB 2901 (Aguilar-Curry): School and Community College Employees: Paid Disability and Parental Leave – Would increase paid leave for school employees due to pregnancy, miscarriage, childbirth, termination of pregnancy, or the recovery of these conditions. It would also prohibit a leave of absence for these conditions from being deducted from other leaves of absence available to her. This bill is in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.