



July 2024 Legislative Advocate Report

By Jennifer Baker, CalRTA Legislative Advocate

Teachers' Retirement Board Holds Offsite Meetings

The Teachers' Retirement Board (TRB) held its annual offsite strategic planning meetings in Monterey from July 23-25. The focus of the offsite meetings was to discuss changes to the overall CalSTRS strategic plan as well as to have a more intimate and comprehensive discussion of the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the business and investment world.

California Economy Improving

The [Department of Finance](#) issued their [July Finance Bulletin](#), which notes California's overall economic situation continues to inch forward with first quarter real GDP growth of 1.2%, followed by an 8.2% increase in personal income.

Initial General Fund cash receipts continue to increase at 1.2%, or \$361 million above the Budget Act forecast in June. This month's receipts are of particular importance as they reflect the deadline for second quarter estimated payments for 2024 taxes due, as well as prepayments for the Pass-Through Entity Elective Tax. Both these projections were slightly below forecast. While personal income tax cash receipts were one percent below the June forecast, the total forecast for the fiscal year still totals 1.1% above forecast. Corporation tax cash receipts totaled 2.4% above the June forecast and 2.5% above the fiscal year forecast. Similarly, sales and use tax cash receipts were \$65 million above the June forecast, and 20.3% above the fiscal year forecast as a result of higher than anticipated unclaimed property revenues.

Remaining Legislative Calendar

August 5 – Legislature reconvenes from summer recess.
August 16 – Last day for fiscal committees to meet and report bills.
August 19 – Floor session only.
August 23 – Last day to amend bills on the floor.
August 31 – Last day for each house to pass bills.
August 31 – Legislative recess
September 30 – Last day for Governor to sign or veto bills.
November 5 – General Election.
November 30 – Legislature adjourns.
December 2 – Legislative 2025-26 session convenes.
January 1, 2025 – Statutes take effect.

CalRTA Bill Positions

After the Legislature reconvenes following the summer recess, they will quickly hear all bills in the Appropriations Committees which have not yet had a hearing and will take up the respective suspense files on August 15th. All bills that pass out of the Appropriations Committees will have until August 31st to pass the Legislature.

Health Care/Healthy Aging: Support

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 Senate Appropriations Committee Suspense File.

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 will be heard by the Senate Appropriations Committee on August 5th.

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 will be heard by the Senate Appropriations Committee on August 5th.

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 will be heard by the Senate Appropriations Committee on August 5th.

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 Senate Appropriations Committee Suspense File.

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 on the Senate Floor.

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. It 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 will be heard by the Senate Appropriations Committee on August 5th.

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 on the Senate Floor.

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 Senate Appropriations Suspense File.

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 will be heard by the Senate Appropriations Committee on August 5th.

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 Assembly 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 on the Assembly Floor.

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 Assembly 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. It eliminates the exemption from rent control for their facilities and prohibits annual fee increases for residents from exceeding 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 Assembly 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 \$10 billion TK-community bond act on the November ballot to build and/or modernize much-needed school facilities. This bill was chaptered by the Governor on July 3rd and has moved to the November ballot as Proposition 2.

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

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). It 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 Senate Appropriations Committee Suspense File.

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 will be heard by the Senate Appropriations Committee on August 5th.

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 will be heard by the Senate Appropriations Committee on August 5th.