



September 2025 Legislative Advocate Report

By Jennifer Baker, CalRTA Legislative Advocate

Legislature Adjourns Session

The Legislature adjourned their 2025 session on September 12th, and have left the fate of passed bills in the Governor's hands. This year, approximately 2,400 bills were introduced, with about 800 bills being passed. The Governor has until October 12th to take action on the bills awaiting his consideration. Non-urgency bills signed by the Governor will go into effect on January 1, 2026. Any urgency measures signed by the Governor will immediately go into effect.

The Legislature will resume their 2025-26 session on January 5, 2026.

Senate Pro Tempore to Transition in November

Capitol sources have confirmed that Senator Monique Limón will transition to become the next President Pro Tempore of the California State Senate on November 17th, instead of early next year. It is rumored some senators may be pushing for an even sooner transition.

Typically, it is common for many Committee Chairpersons and Committee members to shift when new leadership takes the helm. It is possible that Committees that impact CalRTA-priorities, like the Senate Education Committee, the Senate Labor, Public Employment and Retirement Committee, the Senate Appropriations Committee, and the Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 1, may receive new leadership and members. Should this occur, the announcement may happen as the Senate progresses into the New Year.

Current/Future Issues Facing Seniors

Two complex issues that seniors will be facing in a more dramatic fashion are affordable housing and the impact of Medicaid cuts on senior health care. These impact seniors' retirement security in vastly different but potentially harsh ways.

While the affordable housing crisis is often presented as an issue facing working families, its impact on seniors is dramatic. Close to 35 percent of older renters in California spend more than half their income on housing. This is difficult for a senior on a fixed income who has little wiggle-room in her monthly budget. Senior homelessness has been rising, with adults 50+ now nearly representing half of the state's homeless population.

Housing instability has been proven to worsen the health, isolation, and safety risks for seniors. Addressing affordable housing has been elusive for working families. For seniors, affordable senior housing is scarce, with 3–4-year waitlists and thousands of units at risk of loss. Seniors often must keep working into their 60s, 70s, or even 80s, or choose between rent, food, and medicine as housing encroaches on their financial security. As California searches for answers to address this expanding

crisis, it will be important to consider expanding affordable housing, providing rental help and legal protections, and preserving existing senior housing.

The recent Medicaid cuts are likely to dramatically impact California's health industry. As a result of the loss of thousands of Medicaid patients, hospital closures could result, hitting rural and community hospitals the hardest, especially in the Central Valley and Northern CA. These cuts could reduce clinics, specialists, and nursing home capacity, leaving seniors with fewer care options. Medi-Cal funds over half of all nursing home beds—losses due to Medicaid cuts could mean fewer admissions and lower staffing for Medicaid patients. Additional ripple effects include longer wait times, job losses, and more emergency room crowding. California seniors in both rural and urban areas may face greater travel for care, fewer in-home supports, and loss of long-term care services.

CalRTA-Supported Bills

The following are CalRTA-supported bills moving forward. Bills that are no longer moving forward have been removed from the list, but will be reported on the End of Session report, which will be added to the Advocacy Action section of the CalRTA website after the deadline for the Governor to sign bills in October.

Health Care/Healthy Aging

AB 251 (Kalra): Elders and dependent adults: abuse of neglect - Would allow access to justice for elderly and dependent adults physically abused and neglected in nursing homes. If a court finds that a defendant skilled nursing facility, adult community care facility, or residential care facility for the elderly intentionally destroyed evidence, this bill gives judges the discretion to apply the preponderance of the evidence standard as the burden of proof. This provision would discourage facilities from destroying or concealing legal evidence in civil cases brought under the Elder Abuse and Dependent Adult Civil Protection Act. The measure is on the Governor's desk.

AB 432 (Bauer-Kahan): Menopause - Would ensure equitable menopause and perimenopause coverage and require menopause education for care providers. AB 432 codifies treatment options and coverage for perimenopause and menopause. This bill also creates a requirement that doctors whose patient population is more than 25% women, participate in continuing medical education regarding menopause. AB 432 builds upon previous legislation and requires the Medical Board of California to include a course on menopausal health in determining its continuing education requirements. The measure is on the Governor's desk.

AB 489 (Bonta): Deceptive Terms or Letters: Artificial Intelligence - Prohibits artificial intelligence (AI) systems or similar technologies from misrepresenting "themselves" as licensed health professionals. This bill will provide state health profession boards with the clear authority to enforce title protections when AI systems or similar technologies, such as internet-based chatbots, misrepresent "themselves" as health professionals. The measure is on the Governor's desk.

AB 512 (Harabedian): Health Care Coverage: Prior Authorization - Reduces the time for authorization requests to no more than 48 hours for regular requests or 24 hours for urgent requests. The measure is on the Governor's desk.

AB 1032 (Harabedian): Coverage for behavioral health visits - Requires health care service plans and insurers, on or after January 1, 2026, to reimburse an eligible enrollee for up to 12 visits with a behavioral

health provider if the enrollee is in a county where a local or state emergency has been declared due to wildfires. AB 1032 contains an urgency clause that takes effect immediately. The measure is on the Governor's desk.

AB 1069 (Bains): Older adults: emergency shelters - Requires that the Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) programs have access to an emergency shelter for evacuation purposes for older adults as well as those with disabilities, to utilize during an emergency. The measure is on the Governor's desk.

AB 1476 (Wallis): Meal program: Senior citizens – Requires that meals provided by the Department of Aging be made available as to-go options, ensuring easy accessibility. The measure is on the Governor's desk.

SB 351 (Cabaldon): Health Facilities - Would prohibit a private equity group or hedge fund that owns a physician or dental practice from interfering with the professional judgment of physicians or dentists in making health care decisions or patient care. The measure is on the Governor's desk.

Legislative Calendar

October 12 – Last day for the Governor to sign or veto bills.

November 4 – Special Election.

January 1 – Statutes take effect.

January 5 – Legislature resumes session.

January 10 – Governor releases January budget proposal.