

News from Sacramento – April 25, 2025

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Bills, Bills, Bills

The Legislature has returned from spring recess and face deadlines to pass their bills through policy committee by either May 2 (fiscal bills) or May 9 (non-fiscal bills). Some bills of interest scheduled for hearing next week:

Senate Public Safety Committee

- [SB 303 \(Smallwood-Cuevas\)](#) would prevent information pertaining to a public employee's bias that was obtained through bias mitigation training from being shared or discussed, or from being used in a civil proceeding.
- [SB 691 \(Wahab\)](#) would require body-worn camera policies to be updated to provide guidance about temporarily limiting the recording of medical or psychological evaluations or treatment.

Senate Judiciary Committee

- [SB 820 \(Stern\)](#) would authorize a psychiatrist to administer psychiatric medication without informed consent to misdemeanor defendants who have been found incompetent to stand trial for up to a year when immediately necessary to preserve life or prevent serious bodily harm, or upon a court's determination that the defendant does not have the capacity to refuse treatment and is gravely disabled.
- [SB 448 \(Umberg\)](#) would establish a new process for the removal of squatters from private property.

Senate Local Government Committee

- [SB 299 \(Cabaldon\)](#) would streamline the process for passing local ordinances.
- [SB 79 \(Wiener\)](#) would allow by-right development up to 75 feet high near high-frequency transit stops.
- [SB 828 \(Cabaldon\)](#) would allow surplus land to be used for economic development purposes.

Assembly Emergency Management Committee

- [AB 591 \(Caloza\)](#) would include public works personnel, equipment, and materials in mutual aid efforts during emergencies.

- [AB 645 \(Carrillo\)](#) would require public safety dispatchers to complete training designed according to standards developed by the Commission on Emergency Medical Services.

Assembly Natural Resources Committee

- [AB 52 \(Aguiar-Curry\)](#) would make changes to the tribal consultation process, extending the consultation throughout a project instead of early in the CEQA process, potentially increasing litigation.
- [AB 527 \(Papan\)](#) would exempt geothermal exploratory projects that meet certain criteria from CEQA.

Assembly Communications and Conveyance Committee

- [AB 470 \(McKinnor\)](#) would allow legacy telephone carriers to abandon their carrier of last resort obligations.

Assembly Elections Committee

- [AB 868 \(Carrillo\)](#) would ensure that all county offices appear on the November ballot.

Assembly Local Government Committee

- [AB 648 \(Zbur\)](#) would exempt the construction of faculty and staff housing projects, student housing projects, and university housing development projects from local zoning regulations when constructed on property owned or leased by a community college district.
- [AB 1108 \(Hart\)](#) would require a sheriff-coroner to contract with an outside medical examiner to perform autopsies for in-custody deaths.
- [AB 1294 \(Haney\)](#) would require cities and counties to accept a standardized housing entitlement application developed by HCD without requiring any other documentation or approvals.

Fourth Largest Economy

As was widely reported, California is now the fourth largest economy in the world, surpassing Japan, based on new estimates from the International Monetary Fund. California's \$4.1 trillion GDP is behind only the United States as a whole (\$29.2 trillion), China (\$18.8 trillion), and Germany (\$4.7 trillion).

Less widely reported is the fact that, on a per capita basis, California's economy far exceeds all of those countries, behind only tiny Luxembourg (\$138,634), tax-haven Ireland (\$106,456), and Switzerland (\$104,523). However, three other states have a per capita GDP higher than California's: New York (\$115,619), Massachusetts (\$109,396), and Washington (\$107,397). California's per capita GDP is \$104,058.