

## **End of Session Wrap-Up**

*Information prepared by the County's team at Nielsen Merksamer*

### **Session Runs an Extra Day, Governor Gets an Extra Day**

The 2025 California legislative session was scheduled to end on Friday, September 12. However, last minute negotiations to reauthorize the state's Cap-and-Trade program resulted in key bills being amended on Wednesday, September 10. Because Proposition 54 requires bills to be in their final form for at least 72 hours before a final vote, the Legislature waived certain procedural rules to allow these bills to be heard and to extend their session by one day, to Saturday, September 13. The Governor gets 30 days from the end of session to consider all bills on his desk. As a result, the Governor has until October 13 to sign or veto bills.

### **Senate Pro Tem Transition Scheduled**

As reported in June, Senate Democrats elected Senator Monique Limón (D-Santa Barbara) to serve as the 53<sup>rd</sup> President Pro Tempore of the California State Senate. During the last week of session, amid high stakes negotiations on topics such as climate, energy, AI, housing and public safety, Senate Democrats elected to give a specific date for Senator Limón's control of the Senate. Senator Limón will start her term as President Pro Tempore on November 17, 2025. Senator Limón will be the first woman of color to lead the California State Senate.

### **Final Budget Amendments and Trailer Bills**

The Legislature finalized negotiations on several high-profile budget issues in the waning days of the legislative session. At times in the previous weeks, it appeared that none of the deals would come together. Instead, nearly all of them did, including Cap-and-Trade reauthorization, Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) allocation (details attached), and allocations for about a third of Proposition 4 bond funds (over \$3 billion). The budget also includes limited funding in response to H.R. 1, providing targeted funding for the administration of various health and human service programs.

The final GGRF allocation plan is not very different from the current allocation, but it shifts the downside risk of low auction revenues to the continuously appropriated programs, including Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities, various transit programs, community air protection programs, and the SAFER drinking water program.

The Proposition 4 allocations are broad and deep. Many of them are for specific programs or projects, or for a scope of purposes more limited than specified in the bond. No funding is set specifically aside for technical assistance, despite the bond authorizing up to 10% of

all funds to be used for that purpose. Agencies and departments responsible for distributing the funds may still set technical assistance funds aside.

Several legislators and many environmental justice advocates were vocally frustrated with one deal that did not come together. The landmark CEQA streamlining passed as part of the main budget package this summer included streamlining for advanced manufacturing, along with housing and other developments. At the time, legislators and outside groups were assured that exemption would be narrowed to limit its impact on nearby communities and the environment. However, negotiations between the Senate and Assembly failed to progress, reportedly due to reluctance of the Assembly negotiators. No doubt this conversation will continue into next year.

### **Privacy / AI Bills Stall**

The California Chamber of Commerce was the tip of the spear in defeating four major privacy bills identified as significant cost drivers to public and private workplaces. Those bills—AB 1018, SB 259, SB 295, and AB 1331—were held in the final stages of the legislative process. AB 1331 would have caused problems for public employers by banning modern security tools that help monitor for hazards, allowing workers to take video footage home with them that included members of the public, and other problematic provisions. AB 1018 would have broadly regulated development and deployment of automated decision systems used to make any recommendations on decisions of consequence about “natural persons”. These bills can still be considered in the 2026 legislative session. Also, a similar bill, SB 7, did pass the Legislature and awaits the Governor’s signature or veto. SB 7 requires transparency around the use of automated decision systems related to employee retention and discipline.

### **Law Enforcement Visibility Bills Pass**

In response to the escalated immigration enforcement efforts throughout the state, California legislators authored bills intended to increase transparency and accountability of law enforcement agencies. SB 627 and SB 805, authored by Senators Wiener and Pérez, passed the Senate floor on Thursday and have been sent to the Governor’s desk for his signature.

If signed, [SB 627](#) will significantly restrict the use of facial coverings by on-duty law enforcement officers. The bill allows for certain circumstances that permit officers to use facial coverings such as undercover assignments, as protective gear for physical safety, and when necessary for health reasons. If a peace officer willfully and knowingly violates this law, they could be charged with a misdemeanor. [SB 805](#) would require an on-duty law enforcement officer that is not in uniform to visibly display identification of their agency

and either a name or badge number. Exemptions to this requirement include officers on undercover assignments, officers employed by many state and federal agencies (generally non-traditional peace officers, but also prison guards), and officers who wear protective equipment that obstructs the identification.

Both bills, if signed into law, would apply to peace officers employed by a city, county, local agency, federal law enforcement agency, or a law enforcement agency of another state. They would also require law enforcement agencies to publicly post a written policy regarding each new requirement. The federal government is likely to challenge the law as it pertains to federal officers.

### **Special Election Funding Imminent**

The Department of Finance released [a letter](#) to State Controller Malia Cohen to remit payment to county elections offices for the administration of the statewide special election on November 4, 2025, where voters will decide the fate of Proposition 50, related to mid-decade Congressional redistricting.

### **Bills, Bills, Bills**

A roundup of bills of interest to local agencies that passed in the last days of session. These bills now await the decision of Governor Newsom.

- [SB 79](#) (Wiener) would allow by-right development up to 75 feet near transit stops.
- [SB 303](#) (Smallwood-Cuevas) would provide that information indicating an employee's personal bias during a bias mitigation training does not constitute unlawful discrimination.
- [SB 346](#) (Durazo) would require short-term rental platforms to tell cities and counties the location of hosted properties.
- [SB 415](#) (Reyes) contains a number of "cleanup" provisions related to last year's warehouse regulation bill (AB 98), including allowing local agencies to adopt truck routing plans by ordinance instead of a circulation element update.
- [SB 634](#) (Pérez) would prohibit local ordinances from prohibiting aid to people who are homeless.
- [SB 707](#) (Durazo) would impose several new requirements on Brown Act meetings, including remote public comment for most governing boards, and a few new flexibilities, including remote participation for most advisory bodies.

- [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, with conditions.
- [AB 339](#) (Ortega) would require 45 days' written notice before issuing an RFP for services within the scope of a union employee, except for many IT and infrastructure contracts.
- [SB 485](#) (Reyes) would allow a board of supervisors to remove an appointed public defender during their term only for neglect of duty, malfeasance or misconduct in office, or other good cause.
- [AB 645](#) (Carrillo) would require public safety dispatchers to provide prearrival medical instructions to callers for situations such as airway blockage, choking, and administration of naloxone.
- [AB 648](#) (Zbur) would exempt community colleges' faculty and staff housing projects from local zoning regulations on property they own or lease and which are near a campus.
- [AB 650](#) (Papan) would allow local agencies to start their housing element updates six months earlier and reduce ambiguity in the housing element review process.
- [AB 1007](#) (Rubio) would reduce the shot clock for approving residential development projects from 90 days to 45 days.
- [AB 1108](#) (Hart) would prohibit any sheriff-coroner from conducting the autopsy or determining the cause of death in cases of in-custody deaths in any county.