

LACN LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Legislative and Regulatory E-mailed news and information
from the Lumber Association of California & Nevada

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This E-mailed report is a service of your Lumber Association of California & Nevada with current information on legislative and regulatory matters. In most instances there will be additional information attached with this report. If there are others in your firm who should receive this report, please contact kend@lumberassociation.org.

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This past Wednesday LACN conducted its annual Government Affairs Day in Sacramento. As we've noted, the actual legislation affecting lumber and building materials dealers is often less damaging than the rules and regulations that come out of the various state agencies. The agencies are supposed to implement rules and regulations based on the enabling legislation or policy of the executive branch, but anyone who has been around government know some agencies run amok. This year we're focusing on a number of the agencies that have the most effect – *usually negative* – on your business. The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment and its interpretation of Proposition 65 warnings and the Air Resources Board and its lack of science on emission rules are two that are notoriously anti-business.

At the same time, while the legislators dawdle and dither over the budget crisis facing state government, not a lot else is going on in the capitol. Last week, the senate Republicans introduced a series of jobs bills in the current "special session" that is to deal with the budget issues. It was a good list. We probably couldn't have added much more from a business perspective. **The full list of the bills is attached above.** Five themes were in the bills.

1. Stop California jobs from leaving.
2. Restore California's competitive job creation climate
3. Cut government spending and bureaucracy in the budget
4. Initiate regulatory review and relief
5. End frivolous lawsuits that are a "full employment act for attorneys."

The bills were dropped into the hopper and by the end of Wednesday this week the bill that would have allowed flexible work hours and another that would have slowed the frivolous lawsuits were both rejected out of hand by the majority Democrats on the Senate Labor Committee. But wait, a news release from the majority party had language to the effect "*Oh no, the bills are alive in committee and there are efforts to work out concerns.*" No, the bottom line is that any legislation of this type introduced by Republicans will never-to-rarely see the light of day. These bills are realistic, rational and necessary if this state is to regain its economic edge. More to come, and as ever the eternal optimist, maybe someone sees the light.

Also this week, there was the unprecedented meeting of the President and leaders of Congress at the Blair House to try to find some common ground on the health care debate. LACN signed on late last year to a national coalition of business organizations called "Start Over," urging some careful consideration of health care issues and a recognition that in health care, competition, choice and lower costs are necessary. The letter to the President **attached above** from Start Over lays out the issues well. More to come on this as well.