

# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



Week of August 5, 2024

State Issues	
Legislature Reconvenes	The Legislature enters into its final month of the Legislative Session. Members returned to Sacramento from the summer recess on Monday. The session ends on August 31. Most of the work this week has focused on bills that are sitting in their respective Appropriations' Committees. The vote on the bills on the Suspense Calendar is set for Thursday, August 15. Normally, this is the time of year when members make final pushes for their bills to survive, and other members finally have to confront their colleagues that their bills aren't good enough to make it. This year, with the budget in the state it is in, those tough conversations are going to be much more frequent and likely more aggressive. So, tensions are already high and going to get higher. It is expected that many bills will be held or drastically amended, if they make it out of Appropriations, to address costs associated with implementing the bill. More information will be forthcoming next week regarding which key health bills survived, which ones died, and which ones have been amended beyond all recognition.
Informational Hearing on the State's Budget Policy	This week, the Assembly Budget Committee held a hearing focusing on how the State handles its budget reserves. While this may sound like a very boring topic, it can have huge ramifications for those individuals and businesses that pay taxes and those organizations that partner with the State to serve our communities. The question comes down to when we have a budgeting surplus, should the state build greater reserves for when the economy has a downturn, so that it can keep providing funding for services; or should the state return some of that money to taxpayers and cut services when revenues are low. This question is particularly relevant in California where our progressive tax system will always have extreme highs and lows. You can access the <a href="#">agenda</a> for the hearing and watch the replay of the hearing on the Assembly's Webpage under Media Archives.
Senator Changes Party Affiliation	This week, the Republican Caucus got one more member. Senator Marie Alvarado-Gil announced yesterday that she was switching from a Democrat to a Republican. Alvarado-Gil was elected in 2022 and represents Senate District 4, which includes Placer, El Dorado, Amador, Alpine, Calaveras, Tuolumne, Mariposa, Stanislaus, Madera, Merced, Mono, Nevada and Inyo counties. The district has voted Republican in the last several election cycles (voting for the recall of Governor Newsom, Brian Dahle for Governor, and Trump in 2020.) But in 2022, she succeeded as a Democrat squeaking in after 6 Republicans split 60% of the vote. She's been removed from the Latino Caucus, which has historically only allowed Democratic Latinos to join. Some Democrats are pointing out that she just endorsed Kamala Harris for President, which is not something most Republicans will do. And some in Republican circles are calling her a RINO (Republican in Name Only) and calling for her district to be represented by a "real" Republican. While it has been a rough week for the Senator, the vast majority of the Republican caucus in the Legislature has welcomed her and are happy to have at least one more to boost their still vastly limited side of the equation.

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