

LOS ANGELES COUNTY IS NOW IN THE ORANGE TIER

Los Angeles County is in now in the Orange Tier for the State of California, but waiting for Los Angeles County to complete the move. This means that many more business sectors can reopen and other sectors can open more fully. For example our local restaurants can now open for indoor dining, following limitations and guidelines from the Los Angeles County Health Department. Our Norwalk Chamber is supporting these restaurants through our Shop Local, Stay Local and Support Local Campaign! We encourage you all to think about where you will be spending your dollars as we move through this new phase of reopening. Local businesses provide jobs



Ric Ochoa, owner of So Cal Pizza is pictured here with staff on Support Local Day.



Helen Deosado, Vice Chair Senior Citizens Commission and Esperanza Serrano, Chair Senior Citizens Commission, supporting local at So Cal Pizza.



Supporting local at So Cal Pizza are Chamber Intern Aubrey Spilsbury, Executive Director Caren Spilsbury and Past Chamber President Toni Grijalva of Cerritos College.

to many local residents and provide tax dollars through their sales to support local government. On March 18th we supported So Cal Pizza, a local business that has provided many nonprofit organizations, youth sports teams and law enforcement through fund raisers and food donations. So we gave back to So Cal Pizza by promoting Support Local at their restaurant on March 18th. Thank you to all who participated in our first Support Local day.

We will continue this support program through the rest of the pandemic, and beyond! Your hometown of Norwalk needs each of you to be aware of how important it is to put your dollars into the local community. We will be sharing our Support Local Campaign on our Social Media, in our newspaper and through our other communication avenues. Our next Support Local day is on Wednesday, April 21st and we will be promoting Diana's Delicatessen, Tortilleria & Panaderia located at 16330 Pioneer Blvd. here in Norwalk. We encourage you to visit Diana's on April 21st and make a purchase to help support a local business. While visiting, be sure and take photos and post on your Social Media with the hash tag #supportlocalnorwalkca. You can also write a review for them on Yelp, so that others seeking quality food can find your positive review. As we move forward into reopening our sectors, keep checking back with the Norwalk Chamber to see about other businesses you can support local!

NORWALK COMMUNITY HOSPITAL CELEBRATES SUCCESSES AT SPRING OPEN HOUSE

Norwalk Community Hospital held a spring "Open House" to share with attendees all of the great things that have been happening with the hospital. Chief Executive Officer Hector Hernandez spoke at the event, introducing Judy Fauria as the Administrator of Norwalk Community Hospital. They thanked the community for their support and shared that they are a National recognized clinical care and have achieved Healthgrades' national recognition in the following clinical areas:

- Top 5% in the Nation for Overall Pulmonary Services (2019 – 2020)
- Pulmonary Care Excellence Award (2019)
- Top 10% in the Nation for GI Medical Treatment (2014 – 2019)
- Top 5% in the Nation for Patient Safety (2014 – 2018)

They also shared that they are a national Healthgrades' five-star recipient for treatment of heart failure, respiratory failure, hip fractures, esophageal/stomach surgeries, COPD, pneumonia, GI bleed, bowel obstruction, and sepsis.

Norwalk Community Hospital is located in the heart of Norwalk and is a full service, acute care community hospital with a paramedic-receiving emergency department servicing patients 24/7. They are located at 13222 Bloomfield Ave here in Norwalk. Visit their website at <https://www.lach-norwalk.com/> to find out more about the hospital.



Enjoying the outdoor space at the Open House are CEO Hector Hernandez, Board Member Trisha Gutierrez, Executive Director Caren Spilsbury and Carmen Hernandez, Community Liaison, Norwalk Community Hospital.



Attendees at the Open House are hearing from CEO Hector Hernandez about the hospital's accomplishments.



Immediate Past President Trisha Gutierrez, representing the Norwalk Chamber at the Open House.



Attending the Open House are Carmen Hernandez, Norwalk Community Hospital, CEO Hector Hernandez, Norwalk Community Hospital and Trisha Gutierrez, Norwalk Chamber Executive Board Member.



NORWALK CHAMBER VIRTUAL BINGO FUNDRAISER

Join the Norwalk Chamber for a Virtual Bingo fundraiser on Friday, April 16th starting at 6:30pm on ZOOM.

Cost is \$20.00 for 5 Bingo cards to play 5 different Bingo Games. You can purchase additional Bingo cards for \$5.00

Prizes will be awarded to the winners of each game. There will be additional opportunities to win prizes at the event.

To purchase your Bingo cards visit <https://norwalkchamber.com/shop/>

Sponsor Opportunities Available
Contact the Norwalk Chamber by email info@norwalkchamber.com or by phone at 562-404-0909 with any questions



Norwalk Chamber of Commerce
14783 Carmenita Road, Norwalk, CA 90650

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**Norwalk
Chamber of Commerce**

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Monday - Friday 9:30am - 5:30pm
www.norwalkchamber.com
info@norwalkchamber.com

Facebook:

http://on.fb.me/oB5EUM

PRESIDENT

AMANDA BLANTON

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
EDITOR, NCBC
CAREN SPILSBURY**

**CALENDAR
OF EVENTS**

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

PLEASE NOTE:

THESE DATES AND LOCATIONS COULD
BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE DUE TO THE
COVID-19 PANDEMIC

April 16th

Norwalk Chamber
Bingo Fundraiser
7pm via ZOOM

April 19th

Support Local Shop Local
Diana's Restaurant
All Day

April 21st

Board of Directors Meeting
9am via ZOOM

May 13th

Fun for All
Mini Golf Tournament
4pm to 7pm

June 10th

Ribbon Cutting Event
Sal Psychiatry Services

June 23rd

Norwalk Chamber Annual
Awards & Installation Event



NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS

New Members

Let's Party Planning and Rentals

Vanessa Chavez

562-440-7490

letspartyrentalsnorwalk@gmail.com

com

Instagram: @Lets_party_planning_norwalk

norwalk

Renewing Members

The following companies and individuals renewed their membership with the Norwalk Chamber of Commerce and the services we provide are made possible by their support.

46 Years

Vernola's Towing Service

Lisa Vernola
562-864-5800

45 Years

Dr. Paul Crismon, O.D.

562-864-6535

Drpaul.crismon@verizon.net

39 Years

Best Western Hotel

562-929-8831

10902 Firestone Blvd

14 Years

Norwalk Community Hospital

Judy Fauria, Administrator

562-863-4763

www.altacorp.com

13 Years

Water Replenishment District

Director Vera Robles DeWitt

562-275-4233

www.wrd.org

7 Years

Rose Hills Memorial Park

562-205-4633

www.rosehills.com

6 Years

Allergy, Asthma, Sinusitis Medical Clinic Inc.

Divyang Trivedi MD

562-864-4500

https://www.8004asthma.com/

6 Years

Thinkers 4 Autism

Chante' Wise

562-706-2128

www.thinkers4autism.org

5 Years

Don Knabe Golf Center

Neil Sauer

562-921-7047

www.playknabegolf.com

5 Years

Farmers & Merchants Bank

Amanda Blanton

562-344-2064

www.fmb.com

3 Years

Rebecca Ortiz, An Independent Agent Representing AFLAC

562-900-1070

r2_ortiz@us.aflac.com

NORWALK CHAMBER SEEKING BOARD MEMBERS AND AMBASSADORS

Each year the Norwalk Chamber of Commerce elects new and returning Board of Directors member to serve a three year term. The Board of Directors sets the goals and direction of the Chamber of Commerce following our Mission and Vision. Board members represent the voice of business in the local community by committing their time, talents and treasurers to the Chamber. Through active participation at Chamber events, City meetings and more, our Board members are able to advocate for good business legislation and provide input to the City of Norwalk on many different issues. The qualifications to become a member of our Board of Directors are to be a member in good standing of the Norwalk Chamber of Commerce, be willing to spend time each month at Board meetings and Chamber events and accept the responsibility of the Directorship. If you are interested in taking the next step of your Chamber membership, please reach out to our Board President Amanda Blanton at amanda.blanton@fmb.com or to the Norwalk Chamber office at info@norwalkchamber.com. Our annual election of Board Members takes place at our May Board of directors meeting, and the new term starts on July 1st, 2021. Our Board of Directors meets monthly on the third Wednesday at 9am via ZOOM at this time. When it is safe to do so, we will resume in person meetings.

Another vital leadership position for the Norwalk Chamber is the Ambassador. Our Norwalk Chamber Ambassadors serve an important role in membership outreach and event support for the Chamber. Ambassadors are those that attend Ribbon Cutting events, serve as greeters at our many events and connect with Ambassadors from many other local Chambers. This important role is necessary to support the Chamber as we connect with new businesses here in Norwalk. Our Ambassador Role statement is:

"To serve as an agent of the Chamber to provide a welcoming arm to new members. Ambassadors foster a sense of belonging to existing members with the goal of adding value to Chamber membership through activities. Ambassadors' support and represent the Norwalk Chamber of Commerce and are proactive in advancing membership retention and growth." Our Ambassador meetings are on the fourth Friday of the month at noon via ZOOM. When it is safe to do so, we will resume in person meetings. We will also restart our business visits program at a safe time, which gives Ambassadors the opportunity to meet other Chamber members face to face and find out more about their business.

Both of these leadership positions offer you as a Chamber member an opportunity to get more involved in not only the Chamber but the local business community. They help you develop new business relationships, provide opportunities to be more connected to City, County, State and Federal representatives and have a voice in what the future will bring to this community.

NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHTS



TRITA ME NICE was founded in 2020 by Tracy and Rita. They say that 2020 changed their lives and gave them an opportunity to do what they love. Here are their words about this new adventure:

Rita & I are a team, we have been together for 25 plus years and have worked together in many projects, what these projects all had in common was creativity. I own an entertainment company and Rita is an event planner, 2020 has most effectively sidelined us both. The good news.... We now have the opportunity to do what we love to do "work together and be creative" only re-imagined. Rita's background and education is graphic design, I am the detail, in front of the crowd, great customer service guy. Together we have created a line of ceramic coffee mugs, stainless tumblers and Christmas ornaments. Each item is printed in our own studio and held to our own high exacting standards. We will continue to add and grow our produce list and hope that you will come back to visit often. You can make a purchase and view their items at www.tritamenice.com.



KUNG PAO BOWL is located at 12231 Imperial Hwy in Norwalk Civic Center Square and offers delicious dining and takeout to Norwalk, CA. Kung Pao Bowl is a cornerstone in the Norwalk community and has been recognized for its outstanding Chinese cuisine, excellent service and friendly staff. Their Chinese restaurant is known for its modern interpretation of classic dishes and its insistence on only using high quality fresh ingredients. Steve Hyun is the owner of Kung Pao Bowl and will make recommendations for you if you have any questions about the best dishes to order.



WINE & DESIGN is the perfect place to unwind and have fun. We offer a range of affordable private and public paint and sip parties for all ages, groups and talents. From girl's nights out to birthday parties, work events to date nights, Wine & Design has you covered. What's better than toasting to a good time with friends? To us, not much. Wine & Design is a fun way to create memories and masterpieces. Bring your friends or significant other and enjoy a glass of wine during one of our two-hour classes. We'll provide the glasses, canvases, and paintbrushes as a local artist guides you through the evening, stroke-by-stroke. Owner Yvonne Parades-Alexander can be contacted by email at Stanton.ca@wineanddesign.com or you can visit their website to book your fun night event at www.wineanddesign.com/stanton-ca.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



We at the Norwalk Chamber are very happy that Los Angeles County has now moved into the Red Tier. This is good news, as many business sectors are able to open again and others are able to open more business services. Our restaurants can now serve patrons indoor with limited capacity, so we encourage you all to take advantage of both outdoor and indoor dining. Family entertainment such as Golf n' Stuff are now able to increase their capacity to 100% on their mini golf courses and movie theaters are now able to reopen with 25% capacity. As we navigate the Red Tier we ask that you all follow the CDC guidelines so that the business community can stay open and not have to shut down again because of an increase in COVID cases. Be smart about what you do so that we all can begin to thrive again. We are looking forward to the time when we can safely visit your business again.

I want to thank everyone who went to So-Cal Pizza on March 18th to Support Local! This campaign will continue each month with a different Chamber restaurant as the highlighted business. On April 21st we will be supporting local at Diana's Restaurant, located at 16330 Pioneer Blvd in Norwalk. Visit them for dining or shopping in their deli section.

We have a fun online event on April 16th that you can easily participate in. We are hosting a Virtual Bingo event on ZOOM. With your \$20 purchase you will be emailed 5 Bingo cards to play in 5 different games where you could win a gift card from one of our local restaurants! To play Bingo with the Chamber visit our online store to purchase your cards at <https://www.norwalkchamber.com/shop/>.

Sincerely,

Amanda Blanton
2020-2021 President, Norwalk Chamber of Commerce
Farmers & Merchants Bank



Platinum Sponsor
City of Norwalk,
Council Member Ana Valencia



Gold Sponsor
Farmers & Merchants Bank



Silver Sponsor
Norwalk Community
Coordinating Council

LABOR LAW CORNER

We have furloughed an employee. This employee now wants to take baby bonding leave after the birth of his child. Is the employee's job protected under the California Family Rights Act (CFRA) while he is still furloughed?

This question received at a recent California Chamber of Commerce Leaves of Absence seminar exemplifies how complex the CFRA can be. The recent CFRA expansion has added a new and more complicated previously reported, starting January 1, 2021, employers with five or more employees must provide up to 12 weeks of job-protected leave each year. While continuing to manage the economic realities of the COVID-19 pandemic, smaller employers also must quickly understand and comply with their obligations under the CFRA.

Furlough Definition

To answer this question, it's important to know what "furlough" means. Although furlough does not have a legal definition, many employers, both large and small, furloughed their employees during the pandemic, most commonly because businesses were forced to shut down, revenue decreased sharply, or an employee's job could not be performed remotely. When furloughing employees, employers were keeping the employee on payroll as an employee but was no longer providing work for them. This is an important distinction from a layoff because a laid off employee is no longer employed. So, because this furloughed employee is still employed, we need to determine whether the employee is eligible for the CFRA. Being furloughed affects this because the employee's eligibility requirements are that:

- They've been employed for 12 months with the same employer; and
- Have actually worked 1,250 hours in the 12 months preceding the request for leave.

Evaluation

When evaluating whether an employee has been employed for 12 months, the employer looks simply at how long the employee has been employed — including time spent furloughed. However, to meet the 1,250 hours worked requirement, the employee must actually work those hours; a furloughed employee may not meet that requirement depending on how long they have been furloughed.

Let's assume the employee is eligible. Next, what leave is he entitled to while being furloughed? After all, he is not working, so do we need to provide job-protected leave in these circumstances? This is a tough question to answer because the CFRA regulations don't address this situation. When the CFRA regulations don't address an issue, the regulation directs us to the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) regulations. Unfortunately, the FMLA regulations also don't answer this furlough-related question. However, employers may take guidance from the regulations that state when an employee is not expected to report to work for one or more weeks, that time would not count against an employee's FMLA entitlement. As if that is not complex enough, even if the employee is not presently eligible for CFRA leave while furloughed, the request for leave itself is a protected activity, so employers should be very cautious and consult with legal counsel if they're making a decision to not bring a furloughed employee back to work after the employee has made the request for CFRA leave.

Information provided by Matthew J. Roberts Employment Law Counsel

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA GAS COMPANY SETS BOLD NET ZERO EMM

LOS ANGELES, March 23, 2021 /PRNewswire/ -- Southern California Gas Co. (SoCalGas), the largest gas utility in the U.S., today announced the company's bold commitment to achieve net zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in its operations and delivery of energy by 2045.

This commitment makes SoCalGas the largest gas distribution utility in North America to set a net zero target including scopes 1, 2, and 3 GHG emissions, which would eliminate not only its own direct emissions, but also those generated by customers' energy delivered by SoCalGas' energy infrastructure.

SoCalGas' commitment aligns with the Paris Climate Agreement's recommendations and reflects the company's focus on supporting California with a resilient gas grid through the energy transition to support a carbon neutral economy.

"Our mission is to build the cleanest, safest and most innovative energy company in America," said **Scott Drury, SoCalGas CEO**. "We will lead the energy transition by providing clean fuels and innovative technologies essential to carbon neutrality for California. Through collaboration and partnership, California can develop clean energy solutions at scale and serve as a global beacon for energy innovation."

SoCalGas, which serves nearly 22 million residents, representing half the state's population, has a long record of emissions reduction progress in support of California's environmental goals. This includes implementing energy efficiency programs, delivering increasing amounts of carbon-negative renewable natural gas (RNG), and developing zero-carbon hydrogen technologies, among others. These efforts have resulted in carbon reductions of over 3.2 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e), the equivalent of removing more than 700,000 passenger vehicles off the road for an entire year.

Over the next five years, SoCalGas plans to invest in initiatives to decarbonize, diversify, and digitalize the business. To guide SoCalGas' path to net zero, the company released a Climate Commitment Announcement. Select commitments along SoCalGas' path to net zero include:

By 2025 to:

- Achieve net zero energy for 100% of SoCalGas' newly constructed buildings and major renovations of buildings over 10,000 square feet.
- Replace 50% of SoCalGas' over-the-road fleet with electric, hybrid, natural gas, and/or fuel cell electric vehicles.

- Establish statewide hydrogen blending standards.
- Complete five hydrogen pilot projects.

By 2030 to:

- Eliminate 100% of vented gas during planned transmission pipeline work.
- Achieve net zero energy for 50% of all SoCalGas existing buildings.
- Deliver 20% renewable natural gas.

By 2035 to:

- Operate a 100% zero emissions over-the-road fleet.
- Achieve net zero energy for 100% of SoCalGas buildings.

Key stakeholders praised the announcement, citing the need for zero and low-carbon gases that can support renewable electricity production.

"SoCalGas' bold climate pledge demonstrates their commitment to helping California reach its goal of carbon neutrality," said **California Sen. Bob Archuleta**. "I've fought for investments in hydrogen and other clean fuel technologies because I know that gas infrastructure will be needed to provide reliable energy in a net zero carbon economy. I'm thrilled SoCalGas is leading the nation in these innovations, and that they're beginning here in the 32nd Senate District."

California Assemblymember Cristina Garcia commented, "To get to net zero in California, we need lawmakers and state agencies to engage the support and partnership of all stakeholders—universities, investors, communities, and businesses, including energy providers like SoCalGas. Because as California brings on more and more renewable electricity, we need to ensure we have

all the tools in our toolbox – solar, wind, hydrogen and renewable natural gas, and all other renewable clean sources—to work together to ensure grid reliability while still meeting our clean air and climate change goals."

"Converting electricity into fuel is a critical technology that will solve many issues for storing electricity long-term and for decarbonized transportation fuels within our existing infrastructure," said **Nate Lewis, George L. Argyros Professor of Chemistry at the California Institute of Technology**. "The linchpin is converting electricity to fuels, and SoCalGas' dedication to these solutions will help California reach carbon-neutrality faster and more cost-effectively."

"I'm proud to help SoCalGas announce its commitment to net zero emissions by 2045," said **Mayor Claudia Frometa of Downey, California**. "As the birthplace of the Apollo space program and the testing site for many of the nation's greatest aviation and space endeavors, Downey has a long history of innovation. It's perfectly fitting SoCalGas announce its commitment and plan for their new Hydrogen Home right here in Downey."

For more information and our latest news, visit newsroom.socalgas.com



NORWALK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

"Fun for All"

Miniature Golf Tournament

GOLF 'n STUFF 10555 E. Firestone, Norwalk, California

THURSDAY MAY 13TH, 2021

4:00PM TO 7:00PM

SPONSORSHIP LEVELS:

TITLE SPONSOR \$1000 - 12 Golfers, 3 Tee Signs, Program Recognition, Recognized on all Publicity, Individual Banner, Dinner for all Golfers, Logo on Website for 12 months, Business Card in Chamber newspaper for 6 months.

GOLD SPONSOR \$475 - 8 Golfers, 2 Tee Signs, Program Recognition, Individual Banner Recognition, Logo on Website for 6 months, dinner for all Golfers.

SILVER SPONSOR \$275 - 4 Golfers, 1 Tee Signs, Program Recognition, Group Banner Recognition, Logo on Website for 3 months, Dinner for all Golfers

BRONZE SPONSOR \$175 - 2 Golfers, 1 Tee Signs, Program Recognition, Group Banner Recognition, Dinner for all Golfers.

GOLFING RATES

TEAM (4 Golfers) \$140 - CHILDREN WELCOME

INDIVIDUAL GOLFERS (1) \$35

REGISTRATION & DINNER BEGINS AT 3:15 PM

TEAM MASK CONTEST AWARD - FOR BEST DECORATED MASKS - HAVE FUN!!!!

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: FRIDAY, MAY 7th, 2021

For More Information on TOURNAMENT DETAILS contact:

Norwalk Chamber of Commerce / 14783 Carmenita Rd. / Norwalk, CA 90650

Phone 562.404.0909 Email: info@norwalkchamber.com



CalChamber Releases 2021 Job Killer List

The California Chamber of Commerce released its annual job killer list yesterday, which includes 18 bills that would place California employers and the state's economy in harm's way should they become law. Of particular concern, according to CalChamber, are proposed labor and employment mandates which would hit small business employers especially hard as they attempt to recover from losses experienced due to pandemic-related shutdowns.

"Many of these bills—particularly the labor and employment ones—seem to be solutions in search of a problem," said CalChamber President and CEO Allan Zaremberg.

Zaremberg also questioned why the Legislature is not working on ways to reduce costs on businesses struggling due to the pandemic. "Are policy makers unaware that unemployment filings increased last month? California employers cannot be the safety net for struggling workers. The billions of dollars coming to the state from the American Rescue Plan should be used to provide the safety net for struggling workers and help get businesses back up and running," Zaremberg concluded.

The CalChamber will periodically release job killer updates as legislation changes. You can track the current status of the job killer bills on www.CalChamber.com/jobkillers or by following @CalChamber and @CAJobKillers on Twitter.

The 2021 job killer list includes the following bills:

Labor and Employment Mandates

• **AB 95 (Low; D-Campbell) Burdensome New Bereavement Leave Mandate:** Imposes a significant new burden on employers of every size by mandating that they provide employees bereavement leave upon the death of a spouse, child, parent, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, or domestic partner, regardless of how long the employee has worked for the employer. The bill further opens up new avenues for litigation against California employers by establishing a brand new private right of action (in addition to liability under PAGA and administrative enforcement through the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement).

• **AB 616 (Stone; D-Scotts Valley) Forced Unionization Process for Agricultural Employees:** Limits an employee's ability to independently and privately vote for unionization in the workplace, by essentially eliminating a secret ballot election and replacing it with the submission of representation cards signed by over 50% of the employees, which leaves employees susceptible to coercion and manipulation by labor organizations. Also, unfairly limits an employers' ability to challenge the cards submitted by forcing employers to post an unreasonable bond, and then limits an employees' ability to decertify a union, by forcing them to go through the ballot election process instead of submission of representation cards. Also includes an unnecessary presumption of retaliation that is effectively unlimited in scope because it would apply for the duration of an election campaign, which could last for a year or more.

• **AB 995 (Gonzalez; D-San Diego) Costly Sick Leave Expansion on All Employers:** Imposes new costs and leave requirements on employers of all sizes, by expanding the number of paid sick days employers are required to provide, which is in addition to all of the recently enacted leave mandates (COVID-19 sick leave, Cal/OSHA emergency paid time off, CFRA leave, workers' compensation, etc.) that small employers throughout the state are already struggling with to implement and comply.

• **AB 1003 (Gonzalez; D-San Diego) Criminal Liability for Good Faith Mistakes:** Despite California's onerous, confusing, and always changing wage and hour laws, proposes to criminalize small employers, managers, and supervisors, who in good faith, make a mistake in the application of the law, that even the Labor Commissioner and the courts disagree with on how to interpret.

• **AB 1041 (Wicks; D-Oakland) Significant Expansion of Family Leave and Paid Sick Leave:** Significantly expands multiple existing leave requirements in California that apply to employers of five or more, including small employers with limited employees who are struggling as a result of the pandemic, by allowing an employee to designate any person for whom they would like to take the leave, and subjecting the employer to costly litigation under the Fair Employment and Housing Act or the Labor Code Private Attorney General Act (PAGA), for any alleged interference, interruption, discouragement, or denial.

• **AB 1074 (Gonzalez; D-San Diego) Onerous Return to Work Mandate:** Imposes an onerous and stringent process for specific employers to return employees to the workforce for specified industries, including hotels and restaurants that have been disproportionately impacted by this pandemic, which will delay rehiring and employers' ability to re-open after being forced to close or reduce operations due to COVID-19.

• **AB 1119 (Wicks; D-Oakland) Expansion of Duty to Accommodate Employees and Litigation Under FEHA:** Imposes new burdens on employers to accommodate any employee with family responsibilities, which will essentially include a new, uncapped protected leave for employees to request time off for things such as school drop-off or pick-up, and exposes employers to costly litigation under the Fair Employment Housing Act that any adverse employment action was in relation to the employee's family responsibilities, rather than a violation of employment policies.

• **AB 1179 (Carrillo; D-Los Angeles) Costly New Mandate on Employers to Pay for Employee Childcare:** Imposes a new, costly mandate on public and private employers to cover up to 60 hours of employees' childcare costs each year, with any alleged violation resulting in litigation under PAGA.

• **SB 62 (Durazo; D-Los Angeles) Increased Costs and Liability on Employers:** Significantly increases the

burden on non-unionized employers in the garment manufacturing industry in California, by eliminating piece rate as a method of payment even though it can benefit the employee, creating joint and several liability for contractors for any wage violations or the employer, and shifting the evidentiary standards in a Labor Commissioner hearing to limit the ability for an employer to defend against an alleged wage violation. These additional requirements will encourage companies to contract with manufacturers outside of California, thereby limiting the demand and workforce of garment manufacturers in California.

• **SB 213 (Cortese; D-San Jose) Expands Costly Presumption of Injury:** Significantly increases workers' compensation costs for public and private hospitals by presuming certain diseases and injuries are caused by the workplace and establishes an extremely concerning precedent for expanding presumptions into the private sector.

Tax Increases

• **AB 71 (Rivas, L; D-Arleta) Massive Corporate Tax Increase:** Significantly increases the state's corporate tax rate and taxation on the gross income of international companies to create a homelessness fund, thereby shifting the responsibility of the crisis onto the private sector, despite the \$15 billion dollars in unexpected revenue.

• **AB 1199 (Gipson; D-Carson) Targeted Tax on Homeowners:** Unfairly imposes an excise tax on certain individual and corporate homeowners to pay for housing related services, which will ultimately increase rental rates and worsen housing unaffordability for vulnerable tenants.

• **AB 1400 (Kalra; D-San Jose) Government-Run Health Care:** Eliminates private insurance and choice-based healthcare by creating an exorbitantly expensive new state run health care system, that will cost California more than \$400 billion, which will ultimately be funded by taxpayers, and will delay access to providers, diminish quality of healthcare, and eliminate jobs in California.

Housing

• **AB 1295 (Muratsuchi; D-Torrance) Housing Development Ban:** Removes local land use authority and exacerbates the housing crisis by prohibiting cities and counties from entering into a residential development agreement in Very High Fire Severity Zones, which strips local communities of their land use authority and applies a one-size-fits all ban on development throughout large swaths of California.

• **SB 55 (Stern; D-Canoga Park) Housing Development Ban:** Removes local land use authority by prohibiting any residential or commercial construction in either Very High Fire Severity Zones or State Responsibility Area, which effectively bans development activity in 1/3 of the state of California and will exacerbate the existing housing crisis.

• **SB 499 (Leyva; D-Chino) Housing Development Ban:** Prohibits cities and counties from designating any land uses that have potential to adversely impact disadvantaged communities, even if any potential impacts could be mitigated. In doing so, the bill removes local land use authority, creates new costly CEQA litigation and worsens the state's housing crisis.

Government Regulation and Enforcement

• **SB 606 (Gonzalez; D-Long Beach) Expansion of Cal/OSHA Authority and Enforcement:** Significantly expands Cal/OSHA authority by allowing it to multiply penalties potentially by 10x or 100x against employers, and shut down facilities that it has not even physically inspected. Finally, creates multiple new presumptions of retaliation that are duplicative of existing protections and will generate litigation.

• **SB 467 (Wiener; D-San Francisco) Oil and Gas Development Ban:** Eliminates thousands of high-paying California jobs and requires California to import even more foreign oil by shutting down approximately 95% of oil and gas production in California.

COVID CORNER

PPE DISTRIBUTION EVENTS



At the "Gateway North" PPE Unite giveaway are (l to r) Greater Whittier Chamber CEO Carol Crosby, Norwalk Chamber Executive Director Caren Spillsbury and Downey Chamber CEO Michael Calvert.

At the "Gateway South" PPE Unite giveaway are (l to r) Greater Whittier Chamber CEO Carol Crosby, CEO Cerritos Regional Chamber May Peitzsch, and Norwalk Chamber Executive Director Caren Spillsbury

Norwalk Chamber as part of the Gateway Chambers Alliance, spent two days at two different PPE giveaway events this last March. Working in conjunction with PPE Unites, we were able to provide a 30 day supply of PPE equipment to businesses for up to 100 employees. The "Gateway South" and "Gateway North" were successful in giving masks, shields and hand sanitizer to over 1500 local businesses. The next partner event will take place on April 22nd at Los Cerritos Mall and information on this event will be provided on our Social Media pages. You can sign up online to receive these supplies at www.ppeunite.org. You can also sign up and visit their location in South Los Angeles on their website if you would like to pick up supplies before April 22nd. If you have questions about the events, contact the Norwalk Chamber at info@norwalkchamber.com.

WHEN CAN YOU GET VACCINATED?

Guidelines are constantly changing and adapting as we move forward into the vaccine process. At the time of this writing those that are eligible for the vaccine in California are in Phase 1A, Phase 1B and all adults 50 and older. In Los Angeles County, those in Phase 1A, Phase 1B, Tier 1 and all adults 50 and older are being offered the vaccine. The lists of those that can make an appointment for the vaccine include:

- Healthcare Workers
- Long-term Care Facility Residents
- Persons 50 years and older
- Education and Childcare Workers
- Emergency Services Workers
- Food and Agriculture Workers
- Janitorial, Custodial and Maintenance Services Workers
- Transportation and Logistics
- People who live or work in congregate living spaces
- Individuals with Health Conditions and Disabilities

(Individuals with these conditions are strongly encouraged to seek vaccination with a primary health care provider or system or in an alternate clinical setting. The County asks you to check with your usual health care provider as you may be able to be vaccinated at one of their facilities.)

In order to be vaccinated you will need to show proof of identity, proof that you live or work in Los Angeles County and proof that you are in one of the eligible groups. To find out additional details about getting vaccinated visit the Los Angeles County Health Department website at <https://bit.ly/2P1ckUf>.

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT BRINGS MORE FINANCIAL RELIEF

On March 11, 2021, President Joe Biden signed into law the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), creating a third stimulus package since the COVID-19 pandemic started one year ago. The ARPA focuses on several employment-related economic benefits such as paid sick leave, financial support for small businesses and enhanced unemployment benefits. Here are the main ARPA points that employers should know.

Emergency Paid Sick Leave Updates

One of the first COVID-19-related federal bills passed last year, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), created a new emergency paid sick leave (EPSL) and expanded the Family and Medical Leave Act (EFMLA). Together, these leave entitlements helped provide paid leave to workers for several COVID-19-related reasons, including to isolate and get tested as well as school and childcare closures, while employers benefitted from a tax credit for paying for the leave. As previously reported, the mandate to provide FFCRA leave expired on December 31, 2020, but the second stimulus bill, the Heroes Act, allowed employers to continue voluntarily providing

EPSL and EFMLA that employees benefit through March 31, 2021. The ARPA goes a little further than the Heroes Act, but stopped short of reinstating the employer mandate. Some of the key changes taking effect on April 1, 2021, that ARPA made to the EPSL and EFMLA leaves include:

• Continuing to let employers voluntarily provide EPSL and EFMLA and extending their ability to claim tax credits through September 30, 2021.

vaccine-related reasons.

• Giving employees who already used their EPSL allotment another 80 hours, as long as the employer voluntarily grants its use.

• Employers who choose to provide EPSL and EFMLA must do so for all classes of employees. Employers should regularly monitor both the U.S. Department of Labor and Internal Revenue Service websites for updated guidance.

Unemployment Insurance

Passed last year, the first stimulus bill, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, originally boosted state unemployment insurance systems multiple times through increased benefit amounts, duration of eligibility and expansion of eligibility to workers not normally eligible. The Heroes Act and the ARPA continue to provide enhanced unemployment benefits, including an additional \$300 per week in addition to state benefits and the ability to continue receiving unemployment benefits for 53 more weeks after the initial 24 weeks on unemployment ends. Employers have little control over whether a current or former employee is eligible but should always respond to requests for information from state agencies such as California's Employment Development Department (EDD). The EDD now allows employers to register to receive claim notices electronically which helps employers promptly respond to claims. See employer online services at <https://edd.ca.gov>.

Small Business Financial Assistance

Last year, the CARES Act also created the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), which allowed businesses to apply for forgivable loans to help keep employees on the payroll. The Heroes Act provided an opportunity for small, hard-hit businesses to receive a second loan. The ARPA has expanded access to this program as well as several other financial assistance programs that the Small Business Administration (SBA) administers.

Employers looking for further financial relief should review the programs available at the SBA website. As both the federal and California governments eye a continued reopening of the economy, employers should continue to check CalChamber's Coronavirus resources page at www.calchamber.com/coronavirus for updates.

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rules.

• Allowing employers who provide EPSL to now offer it for employees taking time off to obtain a vaccine; recover from a vaccine-related injury, illness or other condition; seek a COVID-19 test or diagnosis due to an exposure; or at the employer's discretion.

• Allowing employees to use EFMLA for any reason also covered by EPSL, including the newly added