

Assemblymember Jim Frazier
California State Assembly, 11th District
2016 Capitol & Legislative Report

California's Fifth Straight On-Time Balanced Budget

Under the leadership of Speaker Anthony Rendon, the California State Assembly fought for a budget that prioritizes working families, expands early child care, boosts K-12 spending and builds the state's rainy day reserve to a total balance of \$6.7 billion. Since the passage of Proposition 25 in 2010, this is the fifth consecutive exercise of simple majority vote power to pass an on-time balanced budget. This year's budget limits ongoing spending obligations while targeting new spending on one-time activities that include repairing and replacing infrastructure, building affordable housing and allocating resources to protect communities suffering from the effects of an ongoing historical drought. The budget also includes \$688 million for critical maintenance of levees, state parks, universities, community colleges, prisons, state hospitals and an additional \$270 million in lease bond authority for local jail facilities.

2015-16 Legislation Session Overview

The 2015-16 legislative session was among the most productive sessions in a decade covering topics ranging from wages and labor standards, health care, environmental protection, public safety and infrastructure investment. Following the August 31 deadline for passage of all legislation, the Governor had about 789 bills on his desk for consideration. The California Constitution gave the Governor until September 30 to consider legislation passed during this period. Any bill that was not acted upon by the deadline would automatically become law.

ABX1 26 (Frazier) - Transportation Funding

This bill represents two years of exhaustive work with the public, state agencies, federal agencies and the combined efforts of the State Assembly and State Senate to reach an agreement to dedicate billions of dollars each year to transportation finance. The priorities of the current bill represent a no-frills approach to policymaking that exemplifies Chairman Frazier's approach as a State Assemblymember. As discussion continues around an agreement that balances taxpayer concerns with the urgent need for sustained investment, ABX1 26 by Chairman Frazier is the 'adult in the room' approach that will deliver safer and better roads and highways and thousands of good jobs.

AB 2170 (Frazier) - Trade Corridor Improvement Fund

This bill is a significant step forward for allocating \$600 million in federal funding under the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act or 'FAST Act' - these moneys will go to critical improvements to California's land and sea ports, highway trade corridors and other trade corridor infrastructure that will keep California in its rightful place among the strongest economies in the world. AB 2170 faltered in the Senate due to uncertainty about the status of technical amendments. Thanks to the leadership of Chairman Jim Frazier and Senate President Pro Tem Kevin de Leon, the bill was passed out of both houses of the Legislature in the closing hours of the legislative session. Unfortunately the bill was vetoed because of technical implementation concerns with an understanding that we will revisit this issue together administratively next year.

AB 2107 (Frazier) - Interstate Freight Registration

This bill permanently establishes a pilot program to facilitate interstate motor freight carrier registration which eases the administrative burden for thousands of truckers that deliver the goods that keep our economy humming. AB 2170 serves as a jobs bill that reduces regulatory challenges while also improving vehicle monitoring and compliance. The bill passed unanimously in both houses and was signed into law by the Governor.

AB 2559 (Frazier) - Visitor Center Signs

This bill directs CalTrans to post visitor center signs on the highways within two miles of visitor centers that request the signs to be posted. These signs will help guide tourists and passers-by to roads less traveled. The bill is supported by the City of Fairfield and the California Travel Association and could one day guide thousands of tourists to the historical Jelly Belly jelly bean factory in Fairfield. The bill would have helped stimulate local economies around the state and will fuel growth in and around the City of Fairfield. Unfortunately the Governor vetoed the bill for technical reasons. Assemblymember Frazier and the City are pursuing alternative next steps.

AB 2306 (Frazier) - Juvenile Court Schools

This bill requires school districts to exempt former juvenile court school students from certain local graduation requirements that exceed state requirements if they transfer to a district from a juvenile court school. This will improve students' ability to get back to making progress in their lives after getting into trouble with the law. Current requirements can make it difficult for certain students to recover from their youthful indiscretions. This bill will help many students around the state get across the finish line of high school graduation, making them eligible for college or the job market. The bill was signed into law by the Governor.

AB 2371 (Frazier) - Special Olympics Tax Check-Off

This bill creates a tax check-off for taxpayers to voluntarily donate money to support the Special Olympics of Southern California and Northern California. The bill directs state tax officials to add the check-off to tax forms and automatically directs money to Southern or Northern California based on their zip code. The bill will support this important athletic community around the state and the thousands of lives that the Special Olympics touch every year. The bill was signed into law by the Governor.

AB 1785 (Quirk, Frazier) - Distracted Driving

This bill updates the state's "texting and driving law" and requires that a motorist may use a mobile phone to use an app only if the phone is affixed or mounted to the dashboard or center console of the car in a way that does not hinder the driver's view of the road. As distracted driving continues its sharp uptick as noted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, so does the need for states to intervene and confront distracted driving with new legislation to protect and promote public safety on our roads and highways. The bill is supported by a large coalition of law enforcement, medical professionals, firefighters and road safety advocates. The bill was signed into law by the Governor.

AB 806 (Dodd, Frazier) - Local Economic Development

The 2011 budget act eliminated the state's redevelopment law and the hundreds of local redevelopment agencies that stimulate local economies around the state. AB 806 will allow local governments to buy and sell property for the express purpose of raising money or working constructively with the public and private developers to improve and redevelop property within the agency's territory. This creates flexibility for local governments to invest and create jobs by accelerating key development projects. The bill was signed into law by the Governor.

AB 1668 (Calderon, Frazier and others) - Investigational Drugs "Right to Try"

This bill is a compassionate use bill to allow persons with certain serious illnesses to try unapproved investigational drugs that are still in their trial phase with the US Food and Drug Administration. The bill will allow thousands of patients that may not have a viable treatment option to try to use the latest, cutting edge medical treatments knowing the risks involved and with special legal and medical safeguards. This is the second attempt to pass this bill after a similar bill was vetoed last year. The bill was signed into law by the Governor.

AB 2906 (Frazier) - Transportation Omnibus Bill

This bill is an annual omnibus bill to update and reconcile the state's various transportation related programs covering programs ranging from the Department of Motor Vehicles to airport regulation. The bill touches every corner of the state and ensures safety and reliability for the roads, highways, railways and other transportation modes that each of us rely on each and every day. The bill was signed into law by the Governor.

AB 326 (Frazier) - Department of Industrial Relations Bond Repayment

This bill requires prompt repayment to contractors that have posted a bond in certain regulatory proceedings before the state. Existing law requires contractors to post the bonds in certain proceedings in order to ensure payment to parties in a dispute but existing law does not specify when the bonds are to be repaid leaving the contractor in financial limbo. This bill will create greater certainty for small businesses. The bill was signed into law by the Governor.

AB 1029 (Frazier) - Veterans Service Providers

This bill would have created an important auditing and certification process for veterans service organizations that serve the state's large and growing veterans community. This certification is vital as the state begins to allocate tens of millions of dollars annually to fund housing programs for veterans. The bill stalled in the Senate Appropriations Committee as the Department of Veterans Affairs was unwilling to accommodate the bill without additional staffing resources.

AB 2469 (Frazier) - Pink Plates

This bill would have expedited reaching the application threshold for issuing Breast Cancer Awareness specialty license plates ("Pink Plates") and reduced staff workload problems related to the program. Unfortunately, the Governor vetoed the bill because of technical concerns related to the operation of the program.