



December 2, 2021

TO: State Association of County Retirement Systems
FROM: Edelstein Gilbert Robson & Smith, LLC
RE: **Legislative Update – December 2021**

General Update

Friday, September 10, marked the last day of the first year of the 2021-22 Legislative Session. The Legislature sent 836 bills to the Governor's desk at the end of session. By the bill signing deadline of October 10, the Governor signed 770 of those bills and vetoed only 66.

The Legislature remains on interim recess through the fall. Session will reconvene in January, when Legislators will return to Sacramento to introduce new legislation and continue work on two-year bills.

In the meantime, legislative staff are packing up their offices in the State Capitol building and are beginning the move to the newly constructed "Swing Space" building on O Street in preparation for the remodeling of the State Capitol. The State Capitol Annex, the part extending off the historic capitol building that houses legislative offices, is being demolished and rebuilt. The project is anticipated to take 3-5 years. During this time, all legislative business aside from Floor Sessions will occur in this new "Swing Space." It remains to be seen if operations in this new building will impact the way the public and advocates interface with legislators and their staff throughout the legislative process. Because of the layout of the building, the Legislature is discouraging organizations to hold "capitol days" due to limited space for large groups to hold private meetings.

Redistricting

Every 10 years, after the census, the number of representatives sent to Congress from each state is reapportioned, while State and local governments draw new political boundaries to reflect changes and shifts in population. For congressional and legislative districts, new lines are drawn by an independent Redistricting Commission that ensures that new legislative and congressional lines balance populations with the requirements of the Voting Rights Act to ensure there is no discrimination in district maps.

California is in the midst of this process now, having just released draft maps for the state's Congressional, State Assembly, and State Senate districts in mid-November. Now that draft maps have been released, public input will follow into December. The Commission may adjust the lines further based on this public input. Final maps must be approved and submitted to the Secretary of State by December 27.

Due to lagging population growth and a higher growth rate in Texas and other states, California will lose a Congressional seat for the first time in state history. For state legislative districts, we could see some legislators have their homes drawn out of the districts they currently serve – state legislators must live in the district they represent, forcing tough choices like running against a colleague or moving to a nearby city that remained in their prior district.

Once the official lines are adopted at the end of the year, we will have a better sense of how they will impact the 2022 primary and general election races.

Ballot Initiative Process

Although the Legislature is on recess, Californians via the direct democracy ballot initiative process have been busy proposing and qualifying initiatives for the 2022 ballot.

As in previous election years, 2022 is shaping up to be a busy initiative election year with dozens of proposals pending review in the Attorney General's (AG) office. At this point, there are 21 measures at the AG for review right now. Once the review process is complete, these measures will join the 16 measures that are currently out for signature gathering. For those that gather enough signatures, they will join the three measures that have already qualified for the November ballot.

Not all proposed initiatives will qualify for the ballot – some will fall short of the number of required signatures, and some will get dropped by their proponents.