



Zoom-side Chats with State Legislators

Episode 1: Senator Jerry Hill, California Senate District 13



Legislative Chair, Vice Mayor Neysa Fligor welcomed Senator Jerry Hill of California Senate District 13. Senator Hill has been the Mayor of San Mateo and Member, San Mateo County Board of Supervisors.

He serves as the chair of the Senate's Labor, Public Employment and Retirement Committee and the Subcommittee on Gas, Electric and Transportation Safety. He also is a member of several other high-profile Senate committees including Appropriations, Environmental Quality, Governmental Organization, and Energy, Utilities and Communications.

Q&A with Neysa Fligor and Senator Jerry Hill (July 10, 2020)

1. **What are you reading?** Erik Larson's newest book "The Splendid and the Vile: A Saga of Churchill".
2. **What are you watching?** Staying entertained by watching 2 new kittens learning navigate life with an older cat.
3. **Have you acquired any COVID related skills?** Zoom! and Senator Hill admitted to trying to cut his own hair several times (and his wife's displeasure with his attempts).
4. **Can you tell us how the session and priorities changed in March when COVID-19 changed our life?** Senator Hill briefly discussed the session prior to COVID 19 and after. A second legislator has been diagnosed with Covid-19 and so the legislators are delaying return to Capitol until July 27. [LA TIMES Article](#)

Currently approximately 500+ Assembly Bills on the Senate side, approximately 100+ Senate bills. Summaries of bills sponsored and discussed by Senator Hill:

[Senate Bill 350](#) – The Golden State Energy Act

Status: Passed by the Legislature and signed by Governor Gavin Newsom. Senator Hill attended the "physical distancing" bill signing. Effective January 1, 2021.

The Golden State Energy Act holds PG&E accountable for achieving the reforms in practices and operations that have been required by law. The Act provides California a failsafe by creating a framework for Golden State Energy, a nonprofit public benefit corporation, to step in and take over if PG&E does not transform as required by Assembly Bill 1054 (2019 Holden).

[Senate Bill 793](#)

Status as of July 10, 2020: Awaits a hearing before the Assembly Health Committee.

SB 793 would prohibit the retail sale of flavored tobacco products – including flavored electronic cigarettes – to address an unprecedented surge in youth nicotine consumption. Research shows flavored tobacco products are a gateway to harder nicotine use. Eighty percent of young people who have ever used tobacco started with a flavored product. Flavored cigarettes, except for menthol, are banned under Federal Law, but the prohibition does not apply to other tobacco products like e-cigarettes, cigars, and cigarillos.

[Senate Bill 1159](#)

Status as of July 10, 2020: Awaits a hearing before the Assembly Insurance Committee.

SB 1159 is workers compensation legislation to extend a COVID-19 rebuttable presumption to both public and private sector workers. Currently, the bill codifies an executive order issued by Governor Newsom this spring. Senator Hill and coauthor Assemblymember Tom Daly are working with stakeholders to develop a comprehensive framework so SB 1159 can also address workers' compensation and COVID-19 for the future.

5. **Speaking of housing bills** ... Senator Hill discussed his decision to oppose SB 50, which did not survive the legislative process last year, and Senate Pro-Tem Toni Atkins' commitment to increasing the availability of affordable housing. Senator Atkins appointed a working group of Senate Democrats to pursue a comprehensive approach to housing production. The Senators were directed to collaborate and develop solutions that build on the work of the Senate Housing Committee and its Chair, Senator Scott Weiner. The working group members include Senators Mike McGuire (D-Healdsburg), Anna M. Caballero (D-Salinas), María Elena Durazo (D-Los Angeles), Lena A. Gonzalez (D-Long Beach), Jerry Hill (D-San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties), Richard D. Roth (D-Riverside), and Susan Rubio (D-Baldwin Park). The package of bills, called the Senate Housing Production Legislation, is intended to increase housing supply while also aiding California's economic recovery. Senator Hill said constructive feedback and suggestions on these bills can be helpful and that it remains very important to find a way to produce housing.

Housing Production Bill Package:

SB 899 (Wiener)

Current status: Assembly Housing & Community Development Committee

- Provides a by-right approval process for affordable housing projects proposed on land already owned by a religious institution or independent nonprofit college.
 - Land must be owned by institution as of January 1, 2020.
 - 80% of units must be affordable to low-income households; remaining 20% can moderate income.
 - Parking requirements consistent with rest of package and Asm. Chiu's BART bill (AB 2923).

SB 902 (Wiener)

Current status: Assembly Local Government Committee

- Allows local governments to pass a zoning ordinance that is not subject to CEQA for projects of up to 10 units, if they are located in a transit-rich area, jobs-rich area, or urban infill site.
 - Gives local governments the choice to use this tool; not a mandate.

SB 995 (Atkins)

Current status: Assembly Natural Resources Committee

- Provides CEQA relief by expanding the existing AB-900 process for Environmental Leadership Development Projects for housing projects, particularly affordable housing, and broadening the application of the Master EIR.
 - Project must be a minimum investment of \$15 million.
 - Minimum 15% of units must be affordable.
 - Must comply with other AB-900 requirements, including prevailing wage and skilled workforce.

SB 1085 (Skinner)

Current status: Assembly Housing & Community Development Committee

- Enhance existing Density Bonus Law by increasing the number of incentives provided to developers in exchange for providing more affordable units.
 - Focus on balancing incentives with a public benefit: affordable units.

SB 1120 (Atkins)

Current status: Assembly Local Government Committee

- Encourages small-scale neighborhood development spearheaded by homeowners by creating a ministerial approval process for duplexes and lot splits that meet local zoning, environmental and tenant displacement standards.
 - Builds off state ADU law that allows for at least three units per parcel.
 - Ministerial duplexes must meet local zoning standards.
 - Ministerial lot splits must be of equal size, minimum of 1200 sq. ft., and meet local zoning.
 - Local governments are not required to permit ADUs on sites that exercise these authorities.

SB 1385 (Caballero/Rubio)

Current status: Assembly Local Government Committee

- Unlocks existing land zoned for commercial office and retail for potential residential development by making housing an eligible use on those sites.
 - Property must be below 50% occupancy for the prior 3 years to be eligible.
 - Project must provide at least 10% affordable housing; increased to 50% in jurisdictions meeting their moderate-income RHNA but not low-income RHNA.

SB 1410 (Caballero/Bradford)

Current status: Assembly Judiciary Committee

- Provides eviction protection to tenants unable to make payments during the COVID-19 pandemic by providing residential landlords and mobile-home park owners voluntary financial tax incentives to keep tenants housed.
 - Tenants have 10 years to pay back rent to the State, beginning in 2024.
 - Landlords given tax credits equal to unpaid rent, which can be sold now or retained for future benefit.
6. The Cities Association brought up the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) and the Bay Area's RHNA target number of 441,176, which was recently released by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). The Association asked: With consideration to the pandemic and changes in transportation and tele-working, should the state pause or change the RHNA timeline? The target figure of housing units could, in some cases, house the population an entire county, Senator Hill observed. He also said that the pandemic has stimulated public discussion about how office space might be reduced in the future, where workers might come from and where they might live. The Cities Association suggested it ask the state HCD and the Governor to change the RHNA timeline, and Senator Hill indicated he understood why some communities might want a reassessment. Senator Hill said he believes that the COVID-19 circumstances should call for a pause and further reflection and discussion on the future demand and needs of the region pertaining to housing and the type of housing necessary for the future.
7. What's next for you?
Senator Hill doesn't know yet. Stay tuned!

**We had hoped this would be available for viewing on our youtube channel, but we encountered a technology error.

