

# CLEAR ADVOCACY

CLEAR COMMENTARY  
July 23, 2020



## Another New Abnormal

With virus cases in California continuing to climb and the Governor ratcheting down the “dimmer switch” on numerous businesses and venues, both legislative houses yesterday reaffirmed their intent to commence work next Monday until they adjourn for the year on August 31.

And with that, the New Abnormal of our everyday life will also apply to the legislative process upon their return. Check out how each house intends to operate for the next five and a half weeks:

**The Senate** opines remote voting is legal and special accommodation will be provided to up to half a dozen Senators to vote remotely; but if they are a committee Chair, they would cede chair duties to another committee member on the day of the hearing.

The remote-voting Chair would still provide the vote recommendations and announce the vote on bills heard in committee. We hear that at least two Senate Committees will operate under this process.

Senate committees are scheduled to meet six days a week through August 15 and then Senate fiscal committee and floor work five days a week thereafter. It is not lost on us that two of the committees with the heaviest demand, the Senate Health and the Senate Business & Professions Committee, are both scheduled on Saturdays.

**The Assembly** disagrees with the legality of remote voting...but believes a limited proxy voting process is sustainable for floor votes—but not for committee votes.

The floor proxy vote would be limited to 12 members and the proxy votes may be cast only by four members: Speaker Rendon, Majority Leader Calderon, Minority Leader Waldron, and Republican Heath Flora.

**Both Houses** will designate committee managers to present bills in committee and would also likely serve as floor managers.

**We** will make extraordinarily large purchases at BevMo this weekend to see us through the remainder of session. Don't judge.

## If Fewer Bills Mean Fewer Laws, Then Fewer Laws Mean?...

A normal legislative year yields about 2,500 newly introduced bills. Last year, 1,042 of the roughly 2,500 bills reached Governor Newsom's desk and he signed 870 of them. The prior year, Governor Jerry Brown received 1,217 and signed 1,016 of them.

This year? Well, given the unprecedented month-long lockdown in March, the forced two-week extension of summer recess, and the need to focus only on virus, economy, or other urgent issues, it surprises nobody there are far fewer bills and pending laws remaining. Specifically, there are about 200 Senate bills and 530 Assembly bills still moving. We also recognize that, while there are twice the number of Assembly members as Senators, the Senate will ensure the number of bills from each house ultimately reaching the Governor's desk be proportionate.

While some may say that fewer laws coming from Sacramento is a positive thing, we must respectfully suggest, enjoy this year, because the pressure and need next year to address so many unaddressed issues will be ginormous (a clinical term, meaning, "very big").

Add to that the virus-imposing learning curve everybody is experiencing and will also compound the need to address new, virus-related demands, we are already casting a gimlet eye at a **bumper crop of legislative activity for next year.**

So, with that, we will complete our shopping list for BevMo and wish you a happy weekend.



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