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Subject: CalChamber asks Newsom to postpone panoply of regulations due to coronavirus

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By Debra Kahn

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The California Chamber of Commerce and three dozen other business groups are asking Gov. Gavin Newsom to postpone more than a dozen rules that are set to take effect or undergo agency review in the next few months, including the California Consumer Privacy Act and rules protecting wetlands from development.

In a [letter sent Wednesday](#), CalChamber, the California Building Industry Association, the California Retailers Association and other industry groups asked Newsom to issue an executive order temporarily suspending for at least six months all pending rulemakings and any rules or amendments that were scheduled to take effect after Newsom's March 19 stay-at-home order that aren't urgently needed to protect public health.

Industry groups have been [putting pressure on Newsom and state agencies](#) to relax new and existing regulations during the pandemic. CalEPA [said in a statement Wednesday](#) that it recognized that businesses and other regulated parties "may need additional compliance assistance as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic" and asked them to submit specific requests that "define the hardship" to relevant departments within the agency.

So far, Newsom has tended toward 60-day suspensions on various laws that might hinder coronavirus relief. For instance, he temporarily waived rules on truckers to ensure that supermarkets and hospitals can get needed supplies and suspended restrictions on child care centers so essential workers can access state-funded facilities. On Thursday, he suspended licensing deadlines for certain professionals and extended windows for agencies to review development plans.

CalChamber's letter identifies a dozen ongoing rulemakings that industry groups say can be postponed "without affecting public health and safety, or the state's response to the COVID-19 crisis."

They include:

- A vote this summer on new deadlines for gas-fired power plants to comply with the State Water Resources Control Board's water-use rules
- The Fish and Game Commission's [vote Thursday to review](#) whether to list Southern and Central Coast mountain lions under the state Endangered Species Act
- A water board workshop on setting standards for hexavalent chromium
- A host of rules under development at the California Air Resources Board, including sales requirements for electric trucks; requirements for ships to connect to onshore power at port; emissions rules for refrigerated

trucks and shipping containers; and a vote scheduled for CARB's April 23 meeting on new standards for nitrogen oxide emissions from biodiesel.

In addition, the groups requested the delay of four recently approved rules that are set to take effect this spring and summer, including the Privacy Act, the water board's [new rules protecting wetlands](#) and the Natural Resources Agency's interpretation of the California Environmental Quality Act requiring development projects to take increased driving into account.

The groups also want to delay part of Assemblyman Kevin McCarty's [CA AB827 \(19R\)](#), which requires restaurants to provide clearly marked recycling and composting bins for customers. It argues that McCarty (D-Sacramento) was [intending to clean up the law](#) with his [CA AB1506 \(19R\)](#) to clarify it doesn't apply to amusement parks.

"With the Legislature on indefinite recess, amusement parks would be expected to spend substantial sums for compliance — even if not open for business," the industry letter says.

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