

# CALIF ORNIA STATE RETIREES

**California State Retirees  
Board of Directors Meeting**

**Wednesday, October 22, 2025  
9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

**Hilton Arden West  
2200 Harvard Street  
Sacramento, CA 95815**

## **Minutes**

**1. Call to order**

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by President Joe Reynoso.

**2. Salute to the Flag**

The pledge of allegiance to the flag was recited.

**3. Roll Call**

Joe Reynoso, CSR President  
Keith Umemoto, Executive Vice President  
Vincent Herrera, Vice President  
Geanie Hixon, Chief Financial Officer  
Steven K. Alari, District A Director  
Leticia Soria, District B Director  
Maria Aguilar, District C Director  
Patrick Gantt, District D Director  
Gail Fasciola, District E Director  
Jerry Fountain, District F Director  
Jay Jimenez, District G Director

A quorum was established.

President Reynoso announced the passing of District A Director Sharon Stoltzman and spoke in remembrance of her service and advocacy. The Board observed a moment of silence.

Following consultation with Chapter Presidents in District A, President Reynoso announced his appointment of Steven K. Alari as District A Director.

**CSR 25/10/40 Motion:** Gantt, seconded by Umemoto –The CSR Board of Directors approves the appointment of Steven K. Alari as District A Director. CARRIED

Steven K. Alari was assigned as the Board Liaison of the PAC Committee and Gaspar Olivera was appointed as the new chair of the PAC Committee

4. **Approval of October 22, 2025, Board Meeting Agenda**

**CSR 25/10/41 Motion:** Umemoto, second by Gantt – The CSR Board of Directors approves the October 22, 2025, Board meeting agenda. CARRIED

5. **Approval of June 25, 2025, Board Meeting Minutes**

**CSR 25/10/42 Motion:** Fountain, second by Umemoto – The CSR Board of Directors approves the June 25, 2025, Board meeting minutes. CARRIED

6. **President's Report**

President Reynoso highlighted activities since the June meeting, including continued outreach and relationship-building with legislators statewide. He reported on ongoing advocacy related to retiree dental benefits, including concerns regarding Delta Dental reimbursement rates, and noted efforts to monitor anticipated impacts to health care premiums tied to potential federal Affordable Care Act subsidy changes. President Reynoso also discussed early planning efforts for Lobby Day 2026 and referenced continued engagement with the Membership Committee to support member recruitment and retention initiatives.

7. **Chief Financial Officer Report – Geanie Hixon**

Chief Financial Officer Geanie Hixon presented the financial report, noting the completion of chapter banking transitions to Wells Fargo and ongoing challenges related to reimbursement documentation compliance. She reviewed major event-related costs associated with Board meetings and Lobby Day and reported a projected 2025 net budget deficit of approximately \$88,000, which is offset by a prior budget surplus. CFO Hixon also reported that the total CSR cash money market and investment balances held at Wells Fargo and Edwards Jones were approximately \$6.6 million and the Edwards Jones account has hit \$5 million as of September 30, 2025. Measures previously approved to mitigate the projected deficit were reviewed, including reducing the October Board of Directors meeting to two days and suspending per-capita PAC contributions through 2025.

## **8. Board Member Activity Reports**

Board members provided verbal reports on chapter visits and activities:

- **Keith Umemoto (Executive Vice President)**: Umemoto provided a report on his activities since the last Board meeting. He discussed visits to multiple chapters and emphasized the importance of building and maintaining relationships with legislators and legislative staff at the chapter level. Executive VP Umemoto highlighted continued advocacy related to retiree health benefits, including engagement with CalPERS meetings and Health Benefits Committee, and raised concerns regarding private equity investments in health care facilities and their impact on access to care. He also referenced ongoing collaboration with allied organizations and encouraged chapters to use CSR advocacy efforts as talking points for member recruitment and engagement.

- **Vincent Herrera (Vice President)**: Herrera provided a report on his activities since the previous Board meeting. He reported attending chapter meetings within his district including visits to Chapter 19 and Chapter 8 and noted positive member participation and engagement. Vice President Herrera emphasized the importance of personal outreach, including direct communication with members, to support recruitment and retention efforts. He also referenced discussions related to CSR advocacy priorities and chapter-level involvement.

Vice President Herrera also and presented a report in his capacity as liaison to California Alliance for Retired Americans (CARA). He summarized CARA's advocacy efforts on issues affecting retirees and seniors, including Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid, and highlighted recent CARA activities and educational programs. Vice President Herrera discussed CSR's sustaining membership in CARA and the benefits of continued participation, including organizational representation and access to training and advocacy resources.

**CSR 25/10/43 Motion:** Alari, second by Gantt – The CSR Board of Directors approves a \$5000 contribution to CARA to maintain CSR's sustaining membership and board representation. CARRIED

- **Jay Jimenez (District G)**: Jimenez reported on district activities, including attendance at Chapter 6 and Chapter 12 meetings. He noted Chapter 12 is working to align its operations in a manner similar to Chapter 34. Director Jimenez indicated he would continue supporting chapter leadership and sharing best practices to strengthen chapter effectiveness within the district.

- **Jerry Fountain (District F)**: Fountain reported on activities within District F and noted that he also provided interim support for District A prior to the appointment of a new District A Director. He discussed attending chapter meetings,

maintaining communication with chapter leadership, and assisting with continuity of district operations during the transition period.

- **Gail Fasciola (District E):** Fasciola reported on outreach and engagement activities within her district, including attendance at chapter meetings and communications with chapter leadership. She discussed the postcard program and its use as a tool to support member outreach and engagement efforts. District Fasciola noted continued support for chapter participation in CSR programs and advocacy initiatives.

- **Pat Gantt (District D):** Gantt reported on district activities, including attendance at chapter meetings and ongoing communication with chapter leadership. He noted that Chapter 13 has steadily increased attendance at its meetings, reflecting improved member engagement within the district. Director Gantt also reported that a donation was made to the Chico Housing Action Team, and that the contribution was matched by an anonymous donor. He reaffirmed his commitment to supporting chapter operations, encouraging member participation, and maintaining coordination with CSR leadership and advocacy efforts.

- **Maria Aguilar (District C):** Aguilar thanked members for their continued activism and service and emphasized the importance of their involvement in advancing CSR's advocacy efforts. Director Aguilar reaffirmed her commitment to supporting chapter leadership and participation in CSR programs and initiatives.

- **Leticia Soria (District B):** Soria reported on district activities, including attendance at Chapter 31's meeting at a new venue. She noted positive member participation and expressed appreciation for the chapter's efforts in continuing to engage members. Director Soria reaffirmed her commitment to supporting chapter leadership and participation in CSR initiatives and advocacy efforts.

- **Steven K. Alari (District A):** Alari thanked Jerry Fountain on behalf of District A for the coverage provided.

## **9. Committee Reports**

**9a. Finance Committee – Diane Whorton:** Whorton presented the Finance Committee report and reviewed financial information relevant to the organization's operations and budget oversight. She discussed matters related to CSR financial reporting, budget considerations, and ongoing fiscal review processes. Whorton responded to questions from the Board regarding financial data and committee oversight responsibilities.

**9b. BGR Committee – Michael Ellison:** Ellison presented the report for the BGR Committee. He provided an overview of the committee's activities since the previous Board meeting and discussed ongoing work related to organizational governance and policy review. Mr. Ellison reported that the committee continues to evaluate items within its scope and will bring recommendations to the Board as appropriate.

**9c. Political Action Committee (PAC) – Steven Alari:**

Alari presented his final report as PAC Committee Chair. He provided an update on PAC activities, including discussion of phone banking efforts in support of advocacy and endorsed candidates. Director Alari thanked members for their participation and support of PAC initiatives. The Committee recommended approval of the endorsements listed by Blanning & Baker for Constitutional Officer Endorsements. The committee also recommended approval of the 2026 legislative endorsements with amendments to include Senate District 8 Angelique Ashby, Senate District 20 Caroline Menjivar, Assembly District 79 LaShae Sharp-Collins.

**9d. Health Benefits Committee (HBC) – Jose Gutierrez:** Gutierrez reported on retiree health benefit issues currently under review. The committee referenced data and statistics related to hypertension and depression among retirees, emphasizing the importance of continued attention to health outcomes and access to appropriate care. An update was provided on health-related information relevant to retirees, and the committee indicated it will continue monitoring issues within its scope and report back to the Board as appropriate.

**9e. Membership Updates**

Rocco Paternoster presented current membership data and trends for 2025. He reported that CSR membership totaled 44,754 members as of the meeting date. Mr. Paternoster noted an ongoing trend of membership loss primarily due to attrition related to deaths, with approximately 1,100 members lost since 2024. He indicated that cancellations show no significant trend beyond instances where individuals were unaware they were CSR members; staff continue outreach efforts to inform individuals of membership benefits, which has resulted in some retention.

Mr. Paternoster discussed recruitment and outreach efforts, including a focus on chapter meetings, postcard programs, email communication, and surveys, noting that surveys are among the most cost-effective communication tools. He reported that CSR staff and representatives have attended approximately 20 outreach events since 2024, primarily at state worksites, and have made contact with thousands of active state workers, increasing CSR awareness despite the inability to track applications from active employees. He noted that union affiliate membership continues to decline.

He further reported that between June and October, CSR received 44 new member applications, including 19 applications with a recruiter identified, 25 applications without a recruiter which are attributed to staff outreach efforts. Mr. Paternoster noted that CSR membership continues to rely significantly on rollovers, which are not guaranteed. The Board leadership is re-evaluating committee structure and considering a contact information campaign in 2026.

## Raffle winners

The winners were announced for the recruitment drawing, with each winner receiving a \$50 check:

- Carmen Billingsley, Chapter 6
- Rosita Malaguit, Chapter 6
- David Matanga, Chapter 9
- Frances DeLaTorre, Chapter 11
- Stacey Shebazz, Chapter 12

## 10. Legislative Report

Ted Toppin presented the Legislative Report and provided updates on specific legislative measures. He reported that AB 280 related to health plans having accurate directories is currently on hold, and that AB 371 related to dental provider network expansions was also held. Mr. Toppin also reported that a tax exemption measure affecting retired veterans successfully passed. He presented a list of recommended legislative candidate endorsements for the 2026 election cycle, as well as recommended constitutional officer endorsements for 2026.

**CSR 25/10/44** Motion: Alari, second by Umemoto – The CSR Board of Directors approves the CSR 2026 Legislative Candidate Endorsements- Incumbents from Blanning & Baker for CSR Endorsement. CARRIED

**CSR 25/10/45** Motion: Alari, second by Umemoto – The CSR Board of Directors approves the CSR 2026 Constitutional Officer Endorsements- Incumbents from Blanning & Baker for CSR Endorsement. CARRIED

## 11. Guest Speakers

### Anna Caballero, State Senator

Anna Caballero addressed the Board as a guest speaker. She discussed her role as Chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee and provided an overview of the state budget process, fiscal oversight, and the importance of responsible investment and economic stability to support public pension systems. Senator Caballero also spoke about energy innovation, economic development, and workforce impacts on California's economy, and emphasized her commitment to protecting retirement security and supporting retirees across the state.

### Malia Cohen, State Controller

Malia Cohen addressed the Board as a guest speaker. Controller Cohen spoke on the role of the State Controller's Office in providing fiscal oversight, promoting transparency, and ensuring accountability in public investments. She emphasized the importance of protecting public pension systems and safeguarding retirement

assets, and she reaffirmed her commitment to responsible financial stewardship on behalf of California retirees. Controller Cohen thanked the Board for its advocacy efforts and encouraged continued engagement on issues impacting retirees statewide.

Meeting Date August 18, 2025:

**CSR 25/8/28 Motion:** Umemoto, seconded by Hixon- The CSR Board of Directors approves the appointment of Gail Fasciola as District E Director. CARRIED

**CSR 25/8/29 Motion:** Hixon, seconded by Fasciola The CSR Board of Directors approves the amendment of agenda to add investments and budget. CARRIED

**CSR 25/8/30 Motion:** Gantt, seconded by Fountain The CSR Board of Directors approves the amendment of agenda to add Chapter 2 redistricting report. CARRIED

**CSR 25/8/31 Motion:** Fountain, seconded by Umemoto- The CSR Board of Directors approves the amendment of the August 18, 2025 Meeting agenda. CARRIED

**CSR 25/8/32 Motion:** Fountain, seconded by Gantt- The CSR Board of Directors approves the amendment to Governing Rule Section 18.01. CARRIED

**CSR 25/8/33 Motion:** Gantt, seconded by Umemoto- The CSR Board of Directors approves the appointment of Ramiro Nava to the Membership Committee effective 8/18/25. CARRIED

**CSR 25/8/34 Motion:** Fountain, seconded by Herrera- The CSR Board of Directors approves the Corp Investments 1-4. CARRIED. Jimenez Opposed.

**CSR 25/8/35 Motion:** Hixon, seconded by Fountain- The CSR Board of Directors approves the amendment to Governing Rule Section 14.05. CARRIED

**CSR 25/8/36 Motion:** Gantt, seconded by Fountain- The CSR Board of Directors approves the amendment to Governing Rule Section 2.07. CARRIED

Meeting Date September 17, 2025:

**CSR 25/8/37 Motion:** Fountain, seconded by Umemoto- The CSR Board of Directors approves suspension of monthly deposits into CPAC August 1,2025 through January 1.2026. CARRIED

**CSR 25/8/38 Motion:** Fountain, seconded by Hixon- The CSR Board of Directors approves the amendment to Governing Rule Section 5.00. CARRIED

### **13. Upcoming Meetings:**

The next CSR Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for February 2026 in Sacramento

**14. Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned by President Reynoso at 2:20 p.m.