

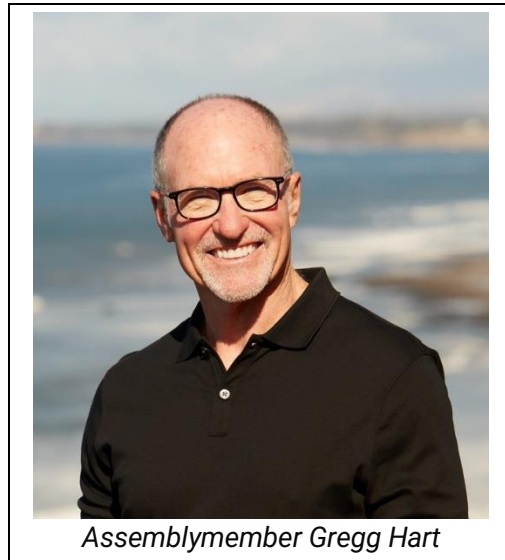


## Gov. Newsom Signs Landmark Legislation for Nonprofits and Oil Spill Protections

By Edhat Staff  
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### Nonprofit Legislation

Governor Gavin Newsom has signed Assembly Bill 590, authored by Assemblymember Gregg Hart (D-Santa Barbara). The bill will improve and expand the practice of providing nonprofits with advanced payments when they receive State grants and contracts. This legislation would substantially improve outcomes for nonprofits with limited resources serving our most vulnerable communities.



*Assemblymember Gregg Hart*

“This legislation will remove a key funding barrier to bolster the nonprofit sector and outcomes for communities across California” said Assemblymember Hart. “Providing nonprofits with upfront payments will ensure all nonprofits serving our communities have fair and equitable access to State funding.”

Currently, nonprofits rely on a reimbursement model, and are often placed in the challenging position of having to consider pursuing loans to cover costs associated with starting up State grants and contracts. For example, one nonprofit paid over \$28,000 in interest last year while waiting for payments from the State.

This bill is a game-changer,” said Alana Walczak, President and CEO of CALM (Child Abuse Listening Mediation), a nonprofit in Santa Barbara County. “It safeguards the ability of nonprofit organizations working across the State to support our youth, care for seniors, provide food and shelter, protect our environment, promote arts and culture, and build healthier communities for all in need. By providing upfront funding on critical State grants and contracts,

nonprofit organizations will have the financial strength to innovate new solutions to address the most complex challenges of our times,” said Walczak.

Just as our State agencies increasingly rely on the nonprofit sector to execute their public missions, nonprofit organizations must be able to rely on our State government to make resources available in a timely manner so as not to unduly burden these nimble, responsive, community-based organizations,” said Geoff Green, CEO of the Santa Barbara City College Foundation. “AB 590 takes a significant step forward in ensuring timely support of our nonprofit partners.”

AB 590 will provide much needed support and resources for nonprofit organizations by enabling them to have a positive cash flow while implementing vital services for residents of California,” said Sylvia Barnard, Executive Director of Good Samaritan Shelter.

This bill is an incredibly important step toward strengthening that crucial partnership between the State and nonprofit organizations,” said Jan Masaoka, CEO of CalNonprofits. “Advanced payments on contracts will not only reduce the burdens nonprofit organizations face when getting new programs off the ground, it will open the door for more nonprofits – especially those in disadvantaged communities – to participate as partners with the State. We are grateful to Governor Newsom and Assemblymember Hart for helping to break down these barriers.”

California is home to more than 110,500 nonprofits. They generate 15 percent of California’s Gross State Product, and are also key employers and service providers for communities across our state.

### **Newsom Signs Legislation to Protect Communities from Oil Spills**

Governor Newsom signed Assembly Bill 631, authored by Assemblymember Gregg Hart (D-Santa Barbara). The bill makes significant reforms to ensure oil operators are held accountable when they violate the

“This measure ensures California has 21st century enforcement tools to protect communities from oil operators that violate the law, endanger public health, and threaten the environment,” said Assemblymember Hart. “AB 631 will strengthen compliance and deter the pattern of treating violations as the cost of doing business. I applaud Governor Newsom for signing this significant legislation.”

AB 631 creates substantial civil penalties for oil operators that violate the law. The bill also empowers California's oil regulator, the California Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM), to refer cases to local prosecutors for more effective enforcement. Finally, AB 631 allows CalGEM to seek injunctive relief from a Superior Court to compel operators to correct violations that, if persistently neglected, can deteriorate into worsening conditions that could threaten public health, safety, and the environment.

A recent [Pro Publica report](#) found that between 2018 and 2020, the California Energy Management Division, also known as CalGEM, issued 66 enforcement orders and only 11 have been complied with. In 2020, CalGEM issued over \$190,000 in civil penalties and failed to collect a single dollar. AB 631 is an important step forward to deter bad actors, and ensure CalGEM has the tools to hold oil operators.

"I would like to thank Assemblymember Hart for sponsoring this important environmental legislation. The people of Santa Barbara County care deeply about protecting the environment and the natural beauty which we are fortunate enough to enjoy every day," said John Savrnoch, District Attorney for Santa Barbara County. "AB 631 will provide the DA's Office with additional tools to help prevent harm to our environment and to hold polluters accountable for the damage they cause."

This legislation is important to protect the public from bearing the cost of illegal activities by oil and gas companies," said Linda Krop, Chief Counsel for the Environmental Defense Center

"AB 631 will ensure that oil companies that violate the law are held accountable for endangering communities and that our environment and public health are valued over profits" said Fatima Iqbal-Zubair with the California Environmental Voters.

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