

Date of Hearing: July 9, 2025

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

SB 693 (Cortese) – As Introduced February 21, 2025

Policy Committee: Labor and Employment

Vote: 7 - 0

Urgency: No

State Mandated Local Program: No

Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill extends an existing exception from meal period requirements, applicable to certain employees covered by a valid collective bargaining agreement (CBA), to an employee of a water corporation.

FISCAL EFFECT:

Minor and absorbable costs to the Department of Industrial Relations to update and provide related guidance.

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Purpose.** According to the author, “SB 693 would provide water utilities regulated by the [California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC)] the same exemption from Labor Code §512 as electric and gas utilities regulated by the CPUC.” The author contends this bill “will allow their employees workday flexibility to maintain water service, respond to emergencies without delays and ensure public health and safety.” This bill is co-sponsored by the California Water Utility Council (comprised of Utility Workers Union of America members) and California Water Service and supported by other business groups.
- 2) **Meal Period Exception.** Existing law generally prohibits an employer from requiring an employee to work for a certain period of time without providing the employee a 30-minute meal period. However, existing law provides an exception for certain employees covered by a valid CBA that expressly provides meal period provisions among other wage requirements. The exception applies to an employee employed: (a) in a construction occupation, (b) as a commercial driver, (c) in the security services industry, as specified, and (d) by an electrical corporation, gas corporation, or local publicly owned electric utility. This bill adds an employee of a water corporation to this exception.
- 3) **Related Legislation.** AB 751 (Gipson) permanently exempts certain safety-sensitive positions at petroleum facilities from rest period requirements under certain conditions. AB 751 has been ordered to Engrossing and Enrolling.

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