

Hi, this is Chris Micheli with the Sacramento governmental relations firm of Aprea & Micheli and an adjunct professor at McGeorge of law here with a brief podcast on appropriation measures.

So, what essentially are appropriations measures? Unfortunately, California law does not define this term. However, it is used frequently in the law. California's Legislative Counsel, who provides legal advice and drafts bills and amendments for the California Legislature defines an appropriation as the amount of money made available for expenditure by a specific entity for a specific purpose from the General Fund or some other designated state fund or account.

California's Constitution in Article IV, Sections 8 and 10 utilize appropriations for the usual current expenses of the state. Section 12 of Article IV mentions appropriations for the salaries and expenses of the Legislature. However, nonetheless, the state constitution does not define this term.

Appropriation is used in numerous other Articles of the California Constitution and throughout many of the Codes. Again, without definition. The most common definition of an appropriation bill, sometimes called a spending bill, is essentially any measure that authorizes or makes an expenditure of government finds.

At the state level it requires adoption by the Legislature and approval by the Governor for purposes of appropriating state dollars. In California, the main appropriations measure is the annual state budget bill. Article IV, Section 12d of the California Constitution provides that the budget bill is the only measure that may contain more than one item of appropriation. IN addition, appropriations from the General Fund of the state, except for appropriations for the public schools and appropriations in the budget and trailer bills that make appropriation related to the budget bill, must be passed by a 2/3 majority vote of both houses of the Legislature.

These are the essential rules regarding appropriations measures, again, without any constitutional or statutory definition of what precisely constitutes an appropriations measure.

Thanks for joining.