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## CIVIL COURTS IN THE CROSSHAIRS

**SACRAMENTO (Feb. 22)** – This will be a critical week for civil justice, the environment and labor issues as the California Senate holds hearings in its 8<sup>th</sup> Extraordinary Session on the fiscal crisis and continues to grapple in the coming weeks with the state’s \$21-billion deficit. Among the most important bills:

**SBX8 69 (Huff)** – This eviscerates seller responsibility in product defect actions alleging breach of warranty. The seller would be immunized unless it (1) exercised substantial control over the design and manufacturer, (2) altered the product, or (3) had actual knowledge of the defective condition of the product at time of sell.

**SBX8 66 (Cox)** – Couched in terms of a “flexible” work week, this bill proposes to undermine the eight-hour workday by allowing employers to potentially force employee to work ten hours straight without paying overtime

**SBX8 70 (Dutton)** – This bill would end the right to a guaranteed meal break by shifting the burden from an employer to provide a break to a worker having to ask for the break. It would also expand which workers are eligible for on-duty lunch breaks and would let employers who cheat workers out of their breaks off the hook by shortening the statute of limitation to one year. This issue is currently before the California Supreme Court in *Brinker*.



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