## Joe Stephenshaw, Director

## Economic Update

California personal income increased by 4.2 percent in 2023 after a 0.2 -percent decline in 2022, while U.S. personal income grew by 5.2 percent after 2-percent growth in 2022. California's share of U.S. personal income stayed relatively the same, dropping slightly to 13.7 percent in 2023 after decreasing to 13.8 percent in 2022.
U.S. headline inflation increased to 3.5 percent year-over-year in March 2024, up 0.3 percentage point from February 2024 but down 5.6 percentage points from its most recent peak of 9.1 percent in June 2022. Core inflation-which excludes food and energy-remained unchanged at 3.8 percent year-over-year. Shelter inflation remained unchanged at 5.7 percent. California headline inflation decreased from 3.5 percent in December 2023 to 3.3 percent year-over-year in February 2024. California's core inflation also decreased to 3.7 percent year-overyear in February 2024 from 3.8 percent in December.

## Labor Market Conditions

- In March 2024, the U.S. unemployment rate fell 0.1 percentage point to 3.8 percent as civilian unemployment decreased by 29,000 persons and employment increased by 498,000 . The U.S. added 303,000 nonfarm payroll jobs with nine sectors gaining jobs, driven by private educational and health services $(88,000)$, followed by government ( 71,000 ), leisure and hospitality ( 49,000 ), construction ( 39,000 ), trade, transportation, and utilities $(27,000)$, other services $(16,000)$, professional and business services $(7,000)$, financial activities $(3,000)$, mining and logging $(3,000)$. Jobs in the information and manufacturing sectors remained unchanged in March.
-California's unemployment rate was unchanged at 5.3 percent in March 2024, as civilian household employment decreased by 8,100 persons and unemployment increased by 4,000. California added 28,300 nonfarm payroll jobs in March 2024, driven by private educational and health services ( 13,600 ). Six other sectors added jobs in March 2024, government ( 6,400 ), professional and business services $(5,100)$, construction $(4,600)$, other services $(2,400)$, trade, transportation, warehousing, and utilities $(2,000)$, leisure and hospitality ( 600 ). Four sectors lost jobs in the month: manufacturing ( 5,300 ), information (700), mining and logging (300), and financial activities (100).


## Building Activity \& Real Estate

■ Year-to-date through February 2024, California permitted 100,000 housing units at a seasonally adjusted annualized rate (SAAR), up 1 percent from January 2024 but down 0.1 percent from a year ago in February 2023. February year-to-date total permits consisted of 64,000 single-family units (down five percent from January, and up 40.5 percent year-over-year) and 36,000 multi-family units (up 13.7 percent from January, but down 34 percent year-over-year).

- The statewide median sale price of existing single-family homes increased to $\$ 854,490$ in March 2024, up 6 percent from February 2024 and up 7.7 percent from March 2023. Sales of existing single-family homes in California were 267,470 (SAAR) in March 2024, down 7.8 percent from February 2024, and down 4.4 percent from March 2023.

Preliminary General Fund agency cash receipts were $\$ 243$ million, or 1.6 percent, below the 2024-25 Governor's Budget forecast for March, and $\$ 5.8$ billion, or 4.0 percent, below the fiscal year-to-date forecast of $\$ 146.0$ billion. The Governor's Budget forecast was completed in late November; therefore, the fiscal year-todate variances in this report reflect variance since then. A \$683-million overage in March personal income tax receipts was offset by shortfalls in sales and use tax (down $\$ 653$ million for the month) and corporation tax (down $\$ 247$ million). Fiscal year-to-date, personal income tax contributed $\$ 3.4$ billion to the overall shortfall (personal income tax estimated payments were down $\$ 4.7$ billion, withholding was up $\$ 887$ million), corporation tax receipts were cumulatively $\$ 1.4$ billion below forecast largely due to higher refunds, and sales tax receipts were $\$ 1$ billion below forecast due to ongoing weakness in taxable sales. Since March is not a particularly important month for personal income tax and corporation tax, final personal income tax and corporation tax payments for tax year 2023 due in mid-April will provide a more complete picture on cash receipts related to tax year 2023.

- Personal income tax cash receipts were $\$ 683$ million above forecast in March due to payments exceeding the forecast by $\$ 448$ million and refunds coming in $\$ 249$ million lower than projected. This brings the fiscal year-todate shortfall in personal income tax receipts to $\$ 3.4$ billion, or 3.9 percent. Withholding receipts were $\$ 887$ million above forecast cumulatively through March. While withholding reflects more of a real-time indicator of economic activity than estimated payments, single-month readings can be misleading: calendar changes can affect when payments are recorded, and the timing of stock-based compensation can also affect payments, therefore, withholding should be evaluated over multiple months for longer-term trends. Personal income tax withholding receipts were 2.1 percent above forecast for November through March and increased by 6.9 percent year-over-year over that same period. Personal income tax estimated payments exceeded the forecast by $\$ 28$ million in March but remained $\$ 4.7$ billion below forecast fiscal year-to-date, indicating weakness in tax receipts related to tax year 2023.
- Corporation tax cash receipts were $\$ 247$ million below forecast in March and $\$ 1.4$ billion, or 5.3 percent, below the fiscal year-to-date forecast. The March shortfall was due to Pass-Through Entity Elective Tax payments (\$292 million below forecast) and corporation estimated payments ( $\$ 59$ million below forecast) falling below projections, partly offset by lower refunds ( $\$ 43$ million below forecast).
- Sales and use tax cash receipts were $\$ 653$ million below forecast in March and $\$ 1$ billion, or 3.8 percent, below the fiscal year-to-date forecast. While the March shortfall was partially due to timing issues that shifted some receipts from March to February, the fiscal year-to-date shortfall and longer-term sales tax receipts trends reflect ongoing weakness in taxable sales.


## 2023-24 Comparison of Actual and Forecast Agency General Fund Revenues (Dollars in Millions)

| Revenue Source | MARCH 2024 |  |  |  | 2023-24 YEAR-TO-DATE |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  |  |  | Percent Difference |  |  |  | Percent Difference |
|  | Forecast | Actual | Difference |  | Forecast | Actual | Difference |  |
| Personal Income | \$6,087 | \$6,770 | \$683 | 11.2\% | \$86,860 | \$83,446 | -\$3,414 | -3.9\% |
| Withholding | 9,606 | 9,824 | 218 | 2.3\% | 70,762 | 71,649 | 887 | 1.3\% |
| Estimated Payments | 222 | 249 | 28 | 12.5\% | 20,507 | 15,852 | -4,655 | -22.7\% |
| Final Payments | 611 | 714 | 103 | 16.9\% | 9,357 | 9,907 | 550 | 5.9\% |
| Other Payments | 500 | 599 | 99 | 19.8\% | 4,759 | 4,761 | 2 | 0.0\% |
| Refunds | -4,714 | -4,465 | 249 | -5.3\% | -16,811 | -17,072 | -261 | 1.6\% |
| MHSF Transfer | -109 | -121 | -12 | 11.2\% | -1,556 | -1,495 | 61 | -3.9\% |
| Corporation | \$4,294 | \$4,048 | -\$247 | -5.7\% | \$26,069 | \$24,679 | -\$1,390 | -5.3\% |
| Estimated Payments | 801 | 742 | -59 | -7.3\% | 8,057 | 7,796 | -260 | -3.2\% |
| PTE Payments | 2,702 | 2,410 | -292 | -10.8\% | 16,590 | 16,300 | -289 | -1.7\% |
| Other Payments | 1,216 | 1,277 | 61 | 5.0\% | 4,748 | 4,835 | 86 | 1.8\% |
| Refunds | -425 | -382 | 43 | -10.2\% | -3,326 | -4,252 | -927 | 27.9\% |
| Sales \& Use | \$3,149 | \$2,496 | -\$653 | -20.7\% | \$26,325 | \$25,319 | -\$1,006 | -3.8\% |
| Insurance | \$788 | \$732 | -\$56 | -7.1\% | \$2,760 | \$2,729 | -\$30 | -1.1\% |
| Pooled Money Interest | \$395 | \$296 | -\$99 | -25.0\% | \$2,269 | \$2,019 | -\$251 | -11.0\% |
| Alcohol | \$29 | \$28 | -\$1 | -3.1\% | \$322 | \$314 | -\$8 | -2.5\% |
| Tobacco | \$3 | 3 | \$0 | -1.6\% | \$34 | \$38 | \$3 | 9.5\% |
| Other | \$120 | \$250 | \$129 | 107.4\% | \$1,361 | \$1,624 | \$262 | 19.3\% |
| Total | \$14,865 | \$14,622 | -\$243 | -1.6\% | \$146,001 | \$140,167 | -\$5,834 | -4.0\% |

This is an agency cash report and the data may differ from the Controller's report to the extent that cash received by agencies has not yet been reported to the Controller. The personal income total includes Individual Shared Responsibility Penalty transfers. The forecast is from the 2024-25 Governor's Budget.

Figure 1
Quarterly GDP Growth
Seasonally Adjusted Annualized Rate (\%)


Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA)

Figure 2
Personal Income Growth Rates
Seasonally Adjusted Annualized Rate (SAAR)


Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA)

Figure 3
U.S. and California Consumer Price Index (CPI) Rates


[^0]Figure 4
U.S. and California Unemployment Rate


[^1]Figure 5
California Home Sales and Median Home Sales Price of Existing Single-Family Homes


Source: California Association of Realtors (CAR)

Figure 6
Comparison of Actual and 2024-25 Governor's Budget Forecast: Agency General Fund Cash Receipts


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Comparison of Actual and 2024-25 Governor's Budget Forecast: Personal Income Tax


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Comparison of Actual and 2024-25 Governor's Budget Forecast:
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Comparison of Actual and 2024-25 Governor's Budget Forecast: Sales \& Use Tax


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Agency General Fund Revenues - Cumulative Difference


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Historical Agency General Fund Cash Receipts


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Historical Agency General Fund Cash Receipts


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Historical Agency General Fund Cash Receipts


Figure 190

Historical Agency General Fund Cash Receipts



[^0]:    Sources: Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and California Department of Industrial Relations (DIR)

[^1]:    Source: California Employment Development Department (EDD), Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)

