



Delivering Results While Leading by Example

2024 has been a powerful reminder that meaningful workplace policy is born from civility, not division. At SHRM, we remain steadfast in our commitment to *Policy, Not Politics* and promoting civility in every facet of our policy work. These principles guide SHRM's efforts as we work to advance policies that empower HR professionals, elevate the workplace and support the people who power our businesses.

SHRM has continued to play a key role in shaping conversations on the most pressing issues impacting workers and workplaces -- and SHRM has strengthened its reputation as the trusted advisor to policymakers around the world. None of our achievements would be possible without your continued support, engagement and advocacy. Together, we are driving change, strengthening our workplaces and shaping the future of work.

This year will present new opportunities to collaborate with policymakers at all levels — from state legislatures to Congress to the White House and beyond. As newly elected officials take office, SHRM stands ready to build bridges, foster productive dialogue and advance policies that create better workplaces for a better world.

I encourage you to explore SHRM's "[10 Trends That Shaped HR in 2024](#)" and our predictions for 2025 — a guide that highlights key developments, from artificial intelligence (AI) integration to the evolving labor market. These insights will equip you to navigate the future of work effectively.

On behalf of the entire SHRM team, thank you for your leadership and commitment to the HR profession. I wish you a restful holiday season and a prosperous New Year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Emily M. Dickens".

Emily M. Dickens, J.D.
Chief of Staff, Head of Government Affairs
and Corporate Secretary for SHRM

2024 Year-End Review

Advocacy Impact Report

SHRM Government Affairs 2024 Wins: U.S. Congress

SHRM Executives Elevate the Voice of HR Before Congress

On Feb. 28, SHRM President and CEO Johnny C. Taylor, Jr., SHRM-SCP, testified before the U.S. Senate Committee on Armed Services during the hearing, ["Evolving Workforce Dynamics and the Challenges for Defense Acquisition and Defense Industrial Base Personnel."](#) Taylor addressed the challenges of talent acquisition and retention within the Department of Defense (DOD) and the broader defense industry, emphasizing innovative strategies to attract, retain and empower the workforce.

Taylor highlighted the value of untapped talent among former military personnel to enhance the DOD's existing talent pool, urging both public and private sectors to prioritize employee needs for a competitive, thriving workforce.

Additionally, SHRM's Chief of Staff and Head of Government Affairs, Emily M. Dickens shared insights with the [New Democrat Coalition's](#) Artificial Intelligence working group. Dickens advocated for a balanced, human-centric approach to AI integration, combining technological innovation with human intelligence to maximize value for American employers and workers. As one of the leading professions to utilize AI, Dickens helped ensure that HR's perspective is central to discussions on the safe and effective use of AI in the workplace.



SHRM Testifies at Senate Subcommittee Hearing on AI in the Workplace

On Sept. 25, SHRM participated in a Senate Subcommittee on Employment & Workplace Safety hearing. Ken Meyer, SHRM-SCP, the immediate past President of the New York City Chapter of SHRM and current Senior Director of HR at Ryan Health, testified on behalf of SHRM. The hearing addressed the growing role of AI in the workplace and the importance of preparing workers and employers for rapid advancements in this technology.



SHRM emphasized its commitment to helping businesses integrate AI into HR functions responsibly. Meyer shared SHRM's proactive efforts, which include developing AI literacy programs, providing comprehensive resources for HR professionals, and advocating for balanced policies that encourage innovation without compromising fairness, inclusion, or diversity.

Throughout the hearing, SHRM stressed the importance of a consistent federal framework for AI regulation. With state and local laws creating a patchwork of requirements, SHRM called for thoughtful federal standards to prevent legal uncertainty that could stifle innovation, particularly for small and midsize businesses.

By ensuring the ethical and inclusive use of AI applications, SHRM supports a future in which AI enhances workplace productivity and reduces the likelihood of bias and discrimination.

SHRM Advocates for I-Plan Act Introduction

On Dec. 17, the bipartisan House Paid Family Leave Working Group, led by Representatives Chrissy Houlahan (D-PA) and Stephanie Bice (R-OK), [released](#) two draft pieces of legislation aimed at expanding paid family leave access.

One of these proposals, the Interstate Paid Leave Action Network Act (I-PLAN Act), incorporates recommendations from SHRM to address the fragmented landscape of state paid leave programs. The I-PLAN Act proposes a framework to harmonize paid leave benefits across states, establishing clear and consistent standards that benefit employees, employers, and states.

By advocating for the I-PLAN Act's introduction, SHRM encourages stakeholders to help Congress continue this vital discussion. In a [letter](#) to the congressional bicameral paid leave working group, SHRM emphasized the federal government's pivotal role in establishing a national framework to unify state programs and fill gaps in coverage for workers. Additionally, SHRM is actively engaging policymakers on this issue through roundtable discussions, direct communications, and written advocacy to ensure members' perspectives are represented throughout the legislative process. SHRM is committed to working with Congress to advance this critical workplace legislation.



SHRM Government Affairs 2024 Wins: Federal Regulation

FTC Sets Aside Noncompete Ban



On Aug. 20, Judge Ada E. Brown of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas ruled in favor of setting aside the Federal Trade Commission's (FTC) [Non-Compete Clause Rule](#) ("Noncompete Rule"). Brown found the FTC's Noncompete Rule to be unlawful and barred it from taking effect.

Dickens said in a [press release](#), "SHRM has been clear on this issue from the beginning, advocating for balanced business practices that protect both workers and employers. The court's decision affirms our position — like SHRM, the Judge recognized that the FTC's sweeping ban failed to explore less restrictive alternatives and ignored the positive impact noncompete agreements can have when applied appropriately."

Dickens continued, "SHRM views this decision as a victory for smart advocacy, sound policy and ultimately, the U.S. workforce. We remain committed to supporting any further efforts to uphold the Judge's ruling and ensure that noncompete agreements, when used responsibly, remain a viable tool in our economy."

DHS Rule Boosts Work Authorization Validity

On Dec. 13, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) [finalized](#) a rule to permanently extend the validity of Employment Authorization Documents (EADs) for certain renewal applicants from 180 to 540 days. SHRM, which had advocated for the change, highlighted that the prior 540-day extension improved processing times without compromising the integrity of the immigration system and addressed employers' concerns about delays and unpredictability.

Processing delays and unpredictability within the workplace immigration system remain top challenges for American employers, as underscored by SHRM research. Regarding the publication of the rule, Dickens stated, "This critical step addresses a significant barrier in the U.S. workplace immigration system by helping to prevent unnecessary lapses in work authorization due to processing delays." Dickens continued, "SHRM has long advocated for automatic EAD renewals as a vital solution to mitigate disruptions caused by prolonged adjudication timelines."

SHRM will continue its longstanding role in advocating for workplace immigration policies that eliminate unnecessary barriers to recruiting, hiring, and retaining top talent, especially among foreign-born workers educated and trained in the United States to maintain our global competitiveness.



USCIS Publishes Final H-1B Modernization Rule

On Dec. 18, DHS and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) [published](#) its final rule modernizing H-1B visa requirements and enhancing flexibility for F-1 students and other nonimmigrant workers.



As a vocal advocate for modernizing workplace immigration, SHRM actively [engaged](#) in the public comment process, voicing support for key provisions while proposing refinements to align the program with the evolving needs of today's workforce. We are pleased to see DHS adopt several changes that reflect our recommendations.

The final rule provides greater clarity and flexibility on degree requirements, addressing concerns we raised about overly rigid interpretations. DHS also extended status for F-1 students until April, a significant win for employers seeking to retain foreign-born talent and ensure smoother transitions from education to employment. While maintaining certain specialty occupation provisions, DHS explicitly affirmed its support for skills-based hiring and alternative training programs — an approach SHRM strongly championed in our comments.

SHRM's advocacy in this process underscores our role as the trusted voice of work, workers and the workplace in advocating for a modern, talent-driven immigration system. We will continue to engage with policymakers to ensure workplace immigration policies align with long-term talent strategies and the needs of employers across industries.

SHRM Government Affairs 2024 Wins: U.S. States

SHRM Defeats Proposed California “Right to Disconnect” Legislation

SHRM, in collaboration with the California State Council of SHRM (CalSHRM), successfully stopped the proposed right-to-disconnect legislation AB 2751, a well-meaning but flawed proposal that would have imposed a near-complete ban on employers contacting employees outside of standard work hours.



On April 17, Michael Kalt, CalSHRM’s Government Affairs Director, testified on behalf of SHRM and CalSHRM in opposition to AB 2751 during the California Assembly Committee on Labor and Employment. Several SHRM members also voiced their opposition to AB 2751 during the brief public comment portion of the hearing.

We believe there are better ways to improve the lives of workers and employees while allowing businesses to function efficiently, such as flexible work and compensation policies that reflect all the ways work can be done. While the intention of this bill was to support employees’ work-life boundaries, its one-size-fits-all approach would have limited the autonomy employers and HR professionals’ need to support effective workplace cultures.

Elevating the Voice of HR in Albany

On Jan. 30, SHRM hosted its first New York State Advocacy Day, bringing nearly 40 HR professionals to Albany to engage directly with legislators, key staff and appointees about issues impacting the future of work, workers and workplaces in New York. During their meetings, SHRM members advocated for policies that prioritize flexibility, embrace technological advances, and foster the acquisition and retention of skilled talent, including:

- Balancing adjustments to New York’s COVID-19 paid leave laws
- Modernizing noncompete agreements
- Responsibly harnessing the power of AI



As a result of this advocacy effort, New York Governor Kathy Hochul's FY25 state budget included a sunset provision for mandated COVID-19 sick leave, marking a significant legislative victory for New York HR professionals. This outcome brings much-needed predictability for businesses, reducing the risk of non-compliance and promoting the responsible use of benefits.



SHRM Advances Legislation to Raise the Importance of Apprenticeship Programs

SHRM and CalSHRM helped secure the enactment of AB 2179, which raises awareness of apprenticeship programs and technical education courses by requiring school districts to provide parents or guardians of students in grades 11 and 12 with information on local apprenticeship programs at the beginning of the first semester or quarter of the school year.



SHRM believes that a skilled workforce is a cornerstone of success in today's globalized economy, yet the U.S. labor market faces a growing skills gap. To address that need, AB 2179 will help students and their families learn about and take advantage of the educational opportunities available to them, including CTE and apprenticeship programs. Candidates who successfully graduate from these programs are better prepared for a wide range of high-wage, high-skill, high-demand careers.

SHRM Government Affairs 2024 Wins: Global Policy

SHRM Speaks at the Global Forum on Migration and Development

Dickens joined a panel of international leaders to discuss global trends in migration at the recent Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) in Geneva, Switzerland. Dickens discussed the strategic role of HR professionals in global talent mobility and strategies for employers to leverage local talent.

Panelists included Laura McElroy, Manager of Global Public Policy & Stakeholder Engagement at McDonald's, and Delphine Rudelli, Director General at CEEMET – European Tech & Industry Employers. Communications and Media Consultant Romaine Jean served as moderator.





SHRM Leadership at GCHRA 2024: A Landmark Experience

SHRM played a prominent role in the 2024 Global Conference on Human Resources in Africa (GCHRA), held Oct. 22-27 in Accra, Ghana. This event gathered over 400 HR professionals, business leaders, policymakers and technology experts to discuss the transformative role of AI in shaping HR practices across Africa.

Taylor delivered the keynote address on leveraging Human Intelligence (HI) and AI to propel productivity and business growth, highlighting SHRM's commitment to driving workforce innovation. Dickens contributed to a panel exploring AI's potential to enhance inclusion in the workplace.

The conference featured dynamic discussions on key themes, such as HR's strategic alignment, the evolving care economy and the future of work driven by AI. SHRM's participation underscored its dedication to fostering global collaboration and equipping HR professionals with insights to navigate emerging challenges in workforce management.



SHRM Celebrates International Equal Pay Day 2024 with Leading International Organizations

On Sept. 18 (International Equal Pay Day), SHRM joined the Equal Pay International Coalition — led by the International Labour Organization, U.N. Women, and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development — to bring together global leaders to address the persistent challenge of closing the gender pay gap. By participating in this coalition, SHRM helped unite diverse stakeholders to drive significant progress toward achieving pay equity worldwide. The event served as a powerful reminder of the ongoing efforts needed to ensure fair compensation for everyone, regardless of gender.

SHRM's role was further highlighted during its Global Policy Event, "Lessons from Brazil and the Global Business Community," held on Sept. 27 in New York City. This event, which was a major success, convened business leaders, HR professionals and policymakers to champion the B20 Brazil Women, Diversity and Inclusion in Business Action Council's recommendations ahead of the B20/G20 Summit. Featuring Dickens as a co-chair, the event highlighted strategies for advancing workplace equity and inclusion. With strong participation both in person and virtually, it served as a key moment in SHRM's 2024 advocacy efforts.



SHRM is a member-driven catalyst for creating better workplaces where people and businesses thrive together. As the trusted authority on all things work, SHRM is the foremost expert, researcher, advocate, and thought leader on issues and innovations impacting today's evolving workplaces. With nearly 340,000 members in 180 countries, SHRM touches the lives of more than 362 million workers and their families globally. Discover more at [SHRM.org](https://www.shrm.org).

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