California State Senate

ELECTIONS AND CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

SCOTT WIENER
CHAIR

AGENDA

Tuesday, June 30, 2026
9:30 a.m. -- State Capitol, Room 113

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MEASURES HEARD IN FILE ORDER

1.	AB 686	Berman	Elections: deceptive audio or visual media.
2.	AB 1130	Berman	Political Reform Act of 1974: campaign disclosures.
3.	AB 2153*	Berman	Voter registration: residency confirmation.
4.	AB 2281	Berman	Office of Elections Cybersecurity.
5.	AB 2604	Berman	Elections: ballot curing.
6.	AB 1560*	Tangipa	Lobbyist certification.
7.	AB 1610*	Ransom	Elections: notice.
8.	AB 2413*	Ransom	Large-format public advertisements: public expense.
9.	AB 2255	Pellerin	Political Reform Act of 1974: candidate controlled committees: campaign statements.
10.	AB 2573	Sharp-Collins	Voter registration information: elected officials and candidates.
11.	AB 2691	Addis	Elections: elective office: felony conviction.
12.	AB 2753	Soria	Elective office: sex offenders.
13.	AB 2786*	Elections	Elections.
14.	AJR 31	Bryan	Restoration of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

PURSUANT TO SENATE RULE 29.10(d)

15.	SB 830	Arreguín	Public Transit Revenue Measure District: revenue measure: election procedures.(Urgency)

*Proposed for Consent

SENATE COMMITTEE ON
ELECTIONS AND CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS
Senator Scott Wiener, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	AB 686	**Hearing Date:**	6/30/26
Author:	Berman		
Version:	6/9/26		
Urgency:	No	**Fiscal:**	No
Consultant:	Scott Matsumoto		

Subject: Elections: deceptive audio or visual media

DIGEST

This bill extends the sunset date, from January 1, 2027, to January 1, 2031, on the prohibition on distributing materially deceptive audio or visual media with actual malice with the intent to injure a candidate's reputation or to deceive a voter into voting for or against a candidate, unless the media includes a disclosure that it has been manipulated.

ANALYSIS

Existing federal law:

1) Provides, pursuant to Section 230 of the federal Communications Decency Act, that no provider or user of an interactive computer service shall be treated as the publisher or speaker of any information provided by another information content provider.

2) Provides, pursuant to the federal Communications Act of 1934, for the federal regulation of telephone, telegraph, television, and radio communications.

Existing state law:

1) Prohibits a person, committee, or other entity, until January 1, 2027, from distributing with actual malice, within 60 days of an election at which a candidate for elective office will appear on the ballot, materially deceptive audio or visual media of a candidate with the intent to injure the candidate's reputation or to deceive a voter into voting for or against the candidate. For the purposes of this prohibition:

   a) Defines "materially deceptive audio or visual media" as an image or an audio or visual recording of a candidate's appearance, speech, or conduct that has been intentionally manipulated if both of the following about the media are true:

      i) It would falsely appear to a reasonable person to be authentic.

      ii) It would cause a reasonable person to have a fundamentally different understanding or impression of the expressive content of the image, audio, or

video recording than the person would have if the person were hearing or seeing the unaltered, original version of the image, audio, or video recording.

b) Provides this prohibition does not apply if the audio or visual media includes a disclosure stating "This (image/video/audio) has been manipulated," and the disclosure complies with specified requirements.

c) Permits a candidate whose voice or likeness appears in a deceptive audio or visual media and was distributed in violation of existing law to seek the following relief:

   i) Injunctive or other equitable relief prohibiting the distribution of the materially deceptive audio or visual media. This action is entitled to precedence in court.

   ii) General or special damages against the person, committee, or other entity that distributed that audio or visual media. A court may award reasonable attorney's fees and costs to a prevailing party in such an action. This provision is not to be construed to limit or preclude a plaintiff from securing or recovering any other available remedy.

d) Provides that in any civil action brought pursuant to these provisions, the plaintiff bears the burden of establishing the violation through clear and convincing evidence.

e) Provides that this prohibition must not be construed to alter or negate any rights, obligations, or immunities of an interactive service provider under Section 230 of the federal Communications Decency Act.

f) Provides that this prohibition does not apply to any of the following:

   i) A radio or television broadcasting station in either of the following circumstances:

      (1) When it broadcasts materially deceptive audio or visual media as part of a bona fide newscast, news interview, news documentary, or on-the-spot coverage of bona fide news events, if the broadcast clearly acknowledges through content or disclosure that there are questions about the authenticity of the audio or visual media, as specified.

      (2) When it is paid to broadcast materially deceptive audio or visual media.

   ii) A website, or a regularly published newspaper, magazine, or other periodical of general circulation, including an internet or electronic publication, that routinely carries news and commentary of general interest, and that publishes materially deceptive audio or visual media prohibited by this prohibition, if the publication clearly states that the media does not accurately represent the speech or conduct of the candidate.

   iii) Materially deceptive audio or visual media that constitute satire or parody.

2) Prohibits a person, firm, association, corporation, campaign committee, or organization, beginning January 1, 2027, with actual malice, from producing, distributing, publishing, or broadcasting campaign material, as defined, that contains either of the following types of pictures or photographs, unless the campaign material includes a disclosure that the picture is not an accurate representation of fact:

   a) A picture or photograph of a person or persons into which the image of a candidate for public office is superimposed.

   b) A picture or photograph of a candidate for public office into which the image of another person or persons is superimposed.

This bill extends the sunset date from January 1, 2027, to January 1, 2031, in 1) of existing law. This bill also makes corresponding changes to the operative date in 2) of existing law.

BACKGROUND

Deepfake technology refers to software capable of producing a realistic looking video of someone saying or doing something that they did not say or do. In response to concerns that deepfakes could be used to spread misinformation in campaigns, AB 730 (Berman), Chapter 493, Statutes of 2019 prohibited the distribution of materially deceptive audio or visual media with actual malice with the intent to injure a candidate's reputation or to deceive a voter into voting for or against a candidate, unless the materially deceptive audio or visual media includes a disclosure that it has been manipulated. AB 730 does not apply exclusively to deepfakes. It also applies to any intentional manipulation of audio or visual images that results in a version that a reasonable observer would believe to be authentic.

AB 730 updated California's "Truth in Political Advertising Act," a law enacted through the passage of AB 1233 (Leach), Chapter 718, Statutes of 1998. AB 1233 prohibited campaign material that contains a picture of a person into which a candidate's image is superimposed or contains a picture of a candidate into which another person's image is superimposed, except if a specified disclaimer was included. The Truth in Political Advertising Act was introduced in response to the use and manipulation of photoshopped pictures in campaign materials and was designed to target the manipulation of photographs in campaign materials.

AB 730 replaced the Truth in Political Advertising Act and now regulates not only altered photographs in campaign materials, but also audio and video media that has been altered in a materially deceptive manner. The changes made through the passage of AB 730 were scheduled to sunset on January 1, 2023. The sunset date was further extended to January 1, 2027, pursuant to AB 972 (Berman), Chapter 745, Statutes of 2022.

COMMENTS

1) Author's Statement. The world has changed a lot since I first authored my original legislation to regulate election deepfakes in 2019. Not only is it easier than ever to

create deepfakes due to the advancements of artificial intelligence, but we are seeing deepfakes used increasingly to blur the line between truth and fiction, misleading voters. That is why this law continues to be essential in protecting voters from being tricked and influenced by manipulated videos, audio recordings, or images. This bill extends the sunset date of the law from January 1, 2027, to January 1, 2031, thereby ensuring that California law continues to dissuade the creation and distribution of nefarious election-related deepfakes and other manipulated content.

2) Double Referral. If approved by this committee, this bill will be referred to the Committee on Judiciary for further consideration.

RELATED/PRIOR LEGISLATION

AB 2839 (Pellerin), Chapter 262, Statutes of 2024, prohibited the distribution of digitally altered, materially deceptive campaign advertisements and other election communications close to an election unless certain conditions are met. AB 502 (Pellerin) of 2026 proposes changes to AB 2839 pertaining to, among other provisions, the types of media, the timeframe for when the media is subject to the prohibition, and who can seek judicial relief.

AB 972 (Berman), Chapter 745, Statutes of 2022, extended the sunset and operative dates prescribed by AB 730 from January 1, 2023, to January 1, 2027.

AB 730 (Berman), Chapter 493, Statutes of 2019, prohibited the distribution of materially deceptive audio or visual media with actual malice with the intent to injure a candidate's reputation or to deceive a voter into voting for or against a candidate, unless the materially deceptive audio or visual media includes a disclosure that it has been manipulated.

AB 3075 (Berman), Chapter 241, Statutes of 2018, created the Office of Elections Cybersecurity and requires the office, among other provisions, to assess false or misleading information regarding the electoral process, mitigate the false or misleading information, and educate voters with valid information from election officials or the Secretary of State, as specified.

AB 1233 (Leach), Chapter 718, Statutes of 1998, prohibited campaign material that contains a picture of a person into which a candidate's image is superimposed, or contains a picture of a candidate into which another person's image is superimposed, except if a specified disclaimer was included.

PRIOR ACTION

Prior votes are not relevant.

POSITIONS

Sponsor: Author

Support: None received

Oppose: None received

-- END --

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ELECTIONS AND CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Senator Scott Wiener, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	AB 1130	**Hearing Date:**	6/30/26
Author:	Berman		
Version:	6/11/26		
Urgency:	No	**Fiscal:**	Yes
Consultant:	Carrie Cornwell		

Subject: Political Reform Act of 1974: campaign disclosures

DIGEST

This bill imposes administrative, civil, and criminal penalties for failure to include disclosure disclaimers when a campaign committee pays a person to post political content online in support of or opposition to candidates and measures.

ANALYSIS

Existing law, known as the Political Reform Act (PRA):

1) Establishes California's campaign finance and disclosure laws for state and local campaigns, candidates, officeholders, and ballot measures, and created the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) to implement, administer, and enforce the PRA.

2) Provides for administrative, civil, and criminal penalties for violations of the PRA, including deeming any knowing or willful violation a misdemeanor.

3) Requires elected officers, candidates, and campaign committees to file campaign reports at least every six months providing details about contributions received and expenditures made. These reports must include information about each person to whom an expenditure of $100 or more has been made during the period covered by the campaign statement, including:

   a) The recipient's full name and street address.
   b) The amount of each expenditure.
   c) A brief description of the consideration for which each expenditure was made.

4) Requires a person who is paid by a committee to support or oppose a candidate or ballot measure on an internet website, web application, or digital application, as specified, to include a disclaimer stating they were paid by the committee in connection with the post. Failure to make this disclaimer, however, is <u>not</u> subject to the standard penalties under the PRA. Instead, existing law authorizes the FPPC to pursue injunctive relief to compel disclosure.

This bill:

1) Subjects the person who fails to make the required disclaimer in 4) of existing law to the standard administrative, civil, and criminal penalties under the PRA.

2) Requires the campaign committee paying for the post to tell the person posting that failing to include the disclaimer may result in penalties under the PRA.

3) Makes the person who posts and the campaign committee that paid them jointly and severally liable for any civil or administrative penalties that result from not making the required disclaimer.

4) Requires disclosure of the payment made for the post on the campaign committee's regular campaign reports to include a statement that the payment paid a third-party to make an online post.

COMMENTS

1) Author's Statement. Social media and the growing influencer industry has changed the way candidates reach voters. As more campaigns pay influencers for content, either in favor of themselves or criticizing their opponents, we need to make sure there are appropriate disclosures for voters that those posts are essentially paid political advertisements. This bill will create additional transparency for the public, require campaigns to properly report payments to influencers, and ensure that voters are not misled by content that looks organic and authentic when it's really the equivalent of an ad.

2) Putting Campaigns on the Hook. Existing law explicitly provides that the person paid by a campaign committee to post content is not liable for administrative, civil, or criminal penalties under the PRA. Because the duty to post the disclaimer is on the paid person, the campaign committee is also not subject to liability. This bill imposes liability jointly on both the paid person and the committee for any administrative or civil penalties. The person making the post could also be subject to criminal penalties when not including the disclaimer. Criminal penalties are rare under the PRA, as the FPPC handles the vast majority of cases via its administrative enforcement process.

3) Expanded Reporting. While a campaign must report any payment it makes that is $100 or more, it must provide only a brief description of what the payment was for, and typically uses standardized expenditure codes. Under existing law, a payment for a post might be described as "online outreach" or "online communications." Thus, campaigns can report these payments in ways one cannot tell on the face of the report the payment was for social media content. This bill requires more detail in the report so the public would know the campaign made the payment for posts.

RELATED/PRIOR LEGISLATION

SB 678 (Umberg), Chapter 156, Statutes of 2023, requires disclosure disclaimers when a person is paid by a committee to post online political content in support of or opposition to candidates and measures.

PRIOR ACTION

Prior votes are not relevant.

POSITIONS

Sponsor: Author

Support: California Fair Political Practices Commission

Oppose: None received

-- END --

SENATE COMMITTEE ON
ELECTIONS AND CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS
Senator Scott Wiener, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	AB 2153	**Hearing Date:**	6/30/26
Author:	Berman		
Version:	2/18/26		
Urgency:	No	**Fiscal:**	No
Consultant:	Scott Matsumoto		

Subject: Voter registration: residency confirmation

DIGEST

This bill repeals an obsolete provision of law related to residency confirmation of registered voters.

ANALYSIS

Existing federal law:

1) Requires, pursuant to the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA), that each state:

   a) Provide that the name of a registrant may not be removed from the official list of eligible voters except at the registrant's request, as provided by state law by reason of criminal conviction or mental incapacity, or as provided by specified procedures outlined in the NVRA.

   b) Conduct a general program that makes a reasonable effort to remove the names of ineligible voters from the official lists of eligible voters by reason of death, or a change in the residence of the registrant.

2) Requires all the following, pursuant to the NVRA and the federal Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA):

   a) That a voter is not removed from the list of eligible voters in elections for federal office on the grounds that the registrant has changed residence unless either of the following is true:

      i) The registrant confirms their change in residence in writing; or

      ii) The registrant has failed to respond to a specified notice and has not voted or appeared to vote in an election between the time that the notice was sent and the date of the second federal general election after the notice was sent.

   b) That a voting registrar must correct an official list of eligible voters in elections for federal office in accordance with change of residence information obtained in

conformance with the state program or activity to ensure the maintenance of an accurate and current voter registration roll for elections for federal office.

Existing state law:

1) Permits a person who meets the qualifications to vote under the California Constitution to register to vote.

2) Provides that a person's voter registration is permanent, unless it is canceled by the Secretary of State (SOS) or a county elections official, as specified.

3) Requires each county elections official to conduct a pre-election residency confirmation of each registered voter prior to each primary election.

4) Provides for the status of a voter's registration to be changed to inactive if change-of-address data received by the county elections official from the USPS or its licensees indicates that the voter has moved and left no forwarding address or has moved out of the state. County election officials must send a forwardable address verification mailing to the voter in that case.

5) Permitted a county elections official, until December 31, 2019, to send an alternate residency confirmation (ARC) postcard to any voter who had not voted in an election within the preceding four years, and who had not updated their residence address, name, or party preference during that time. A county elections official may have, until December 31, 2019, made a voter's registration inactive if the voter failed to respond to an ARC postcard. This provision of law was made inoperative on January 1, 2020, but remains in state law until January 1, 2029, at which point it will be repealed by its own terms.

6) Provides that voters with an inactive voter registration status do not receive vote by mail (VBM) ballots or other election materials that otherwise are sent to registered voters and are not included in voter registration numbers for the purposes of certain election administration related processes.

7) Provides that any voter whose registration is inactive, attempts to vote, notifies the elections official of a continued residency, or confirms the voter's registration record on the SOS' website, must be removed from the inactive list and placed on the active voter list.

This bill repeals an obsolete provision of law related to residency confirmation of registered voters.

BACKGROUND

Assembly Bill 504 (Berman). AB 504 (Berman), Chapter 262, Statutes of 2019, sponsored by the SOS, made various changes to state law related to the confirmation of voters' residence addresses.

Additionally, AB 504, provided that if a voter verifies their registration record through the SOS' My Voter Status website, the verification would serve as confirmation of the

voter's residency for the purposes of pre-election residency confirmation processes and voter list maintenance procedures. When AB 504 was enacted, California's centralized voter registration database, VoteCal, did not have the ability to notify the relevant county elections official when a voter confirmed their registration record on the SOS' My Voter Status website. As a result, AB 504 enacted two versions of Section 2226 of the Elections Code, which contains rules for voter list maintenance. One version of Section 2226 went into effect on January 1, 2020, and the second version specified it would go into effect only after the SOS certified necessary changes were made to VoteCal such that the relevant county elections official would be notified when a voter confirmed their registration record on the SOS' My Voter Status website. These changes were made to VoteCal in 2020 and the second version of the code section became operative.

COMMENTS

Author's Statement. State and federal law require election officials to follow specified procedures to confirm the residency of registered voters. These residency confirmation procedures are designed to keep voter registration rolls up-to-date by ensuring that voters' registrations are updated when voters move. If information from a residency confirmation process indicates that a voter has moved and not left a forwarding address, the voter's registration becomes inactive. A voter whose registration is inactive remains eligible to vote, but their registration eventually may be canceled if the voter does not vote or confirm their address with the elections official.

I authored AB 504 in 2019 to, among other changes, allow a voter to confirm their address by logging in to the SOS' My Voter Status website, which ensures that the voter's registration remains active, or makes the registration active again if it was inactive. Because some of the changes made by AB 504 necessitated technology upgrades, the bill contained two nearly identical provisions of law, with one taking effect following passage and the second taking effect once the upgrades were completed. I am authoring this bill to clean up the law and prevent any confusion as to which provision of code is in effect.

RELATED/PRIOR LEGISLATION

AB 1610 (Ransom) of 2026 creates uniform procedures for county election officials to follow when they receive notice that a voter has changed their mailing address but not their residence address.

AB 504 (Berman), Chapter 262, Statutes of 2019, made various changes to state laws related to the confirmation of voters' residence addresses.

PRIOR ACTION

Assembly Floor:	64 - 0
Assembly Elections Committee:	8 - 0

POSITIONS

Sponsor: Author

Support: California Association of Clerks and Election Officials

Oppose: None received

-- END --

SENATE COMMITTEE ON
ELECTIONS AND CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS
Senator Scott Wiener, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	AB 2281	**Hearing Date:**	6/30/26
Author:	Berman		
Version:	2/19/26		
Urgency:	No	**Fiscal:**	Yes
Consultant:	Scott Matsumoto		

Subject: Office of Elections Cybersecurity

DIGEST

This bill requires the Secretary of State (SOS) to assess whether additional state resources are needed to replace election cybersecurity resources previously provided by the federal government and permits the Office of Elections Cybersecurity (OEC) to consult with academic researchers to develop best practices for protecting against threats to election cybersecurity.

ANALYSIS

Existing law:

1) Establishes, under the SOS, the OEC and tasks the OEC with the following:

   a) Coordinating efforts between the SOS and local election officials to reduce the likelihood and severity of cyber incidents that could interfere with the security or integrity of elections in the state.

   b) Monitoring and counteracting false or misleading information regarding the electoral process that is published online or on other platforms and that may suppress voter participation or cause confusion and disruption of the orderly and secure administration of elections.

2) Requires the OEC to do all of the following:

   a) Coordinate between federal, state, and local agencies the sharing of information on threats to election cybersecurity, risk assessment, and threat mitigation in a timely manner and in a manner that protects sensitive information.

   b) In consultation with federal, state, and local agencies and private organizations, develop best practices for protecting against threats to election cybersecurity.

   c) In consultation with state and local agencies, develop and include best practices for cyber incident responses in emergency preparedness plans for elections.

   d) Identify resources, such as protective security tools, training, and other resources available to state and county election officials.

e) Advise the SOS on issues related to election cybersecurity, and make recommendations for changes to state laws, regulations, and policies to further protect election infrastructure.

f) Serve as a liaison between the SOS, other state agencies, federal agencies, and local election officials on election cybersecurity issues.

g) Coordinate efforts within the SOS to protect the security of internet-connected elections-related resources, including the state's online voter registration system, the statewide voter registration database (VoteCal), the SOS' election night results website, online campaign and lobbying filing and disclosure system developed by the SOS (CalAccess), and other parts of the SOS' website.

h) Assess the false or misleading information regarding the electoral process that is published online or other platforms, mitigate the false or misleading information, and educate voters, especially new and unregistered voters, with valid information from election officials or the SOS.

This bill:

1) Requires the SOS to assess whether additional state resources are needed to replace election cybersecurity resources previously provided by the federal government.

2) Permits the OEC to consult with academic researchers to develop best practices for protecting against threats to election cybersecurity.

3) Makes technical changes.

BACKGROUND

Office of Elections Cybersecurity. AB 3075 (Berman), Chapter 241, Statutes of 2018, established the OEC within the SOS' office. The OEC has two primary missions. First, it is responsible for coordinating efforts between the SOS and local election officials to reduce the likelihood and severity of cyber incidents that could interfere with the security or integrity of elections in California. The OEC is also tasked with monitoring and counteracting false or misleading information regarding the electoral process that is published online or on other platforms that may suppress voter participation, cause confusion, or disrupt the ability to ensure a secure election. According to the OEC's website, the office serves California with the sole purpose of keeping every Californian's vote safe from online interference, especially the spread of mis- and disinformation. The SOS also provides information on how to identify incorrect election information, information on where to find correct election information, and ways to report false or misleading information.

Additionally, the OEC, known as the Election Security Program, works with federal, state, and local partners to share election security information and best practices. This includes the Department of Homeland Security, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, California Department of Technology, California Office of Emergency Services, California Highway Patrol, and county election officials. Cybersecurity trainings with

federal and state partners, as well as organizing tabletop exercises and drills for county election officials are also hosted by the OEC.

Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency. The federal Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) works with partners at every level to coordinate efforts relating to information on critical infrastructure in the United States. This includes election security and cybersecurity. In 2025, 130 CISA positions were eliminated and funding for information-sharing programs under CISA were terminated. This led to new concerns with the agency's ability to provide information and combat domestic and foreign cyber threats.

COMMENTS

1) Author's Statement. I was proud to author legislation in 2018 to create the OEC, which is tasked with coordinating efforts between federal, state, and local officials to reduce the likelihood and severity of cyber incidents that threaten the integrity of California elections. Unfortunately, the Trump Administration has cut critical funding, coordination, and support that helped states guard against threats to our election systems. Given the loss of federal election cybersecurity infrastructure, this bill would direct OEC to assess if additional state resources are needed to ensure that California officials continue to have the information and tools necessary to defend our democracy from cyber-attacks. Additionally, this bill would strengthen OEC by authorizing them to consult with academic researchers, allowing them to utilize their expertise in support of OEC's mission.

2) Technical Amendment. This bill amends the existing framework of the OEC. One of the requirements of the OEC is to assess false or misleading information regarding the electoral process, mitigate false or misleading information, and educate voters, especially new and unregistered voters, with valid information from election officials or the SOS. The term, "unregistered," is ambiguous and potentially conflicting because a person is or is not a voter. The author notes this provision is aimed at educating voters, such as preregistered voters. Committee staff recommends the bill be amended to replace "unregistered" with "prospective" voters.

RELATED/PRIOR LEGISLATION

AB 3075 (Berman), Chapter 241, Statutes of 2018, to establish the OEC within the SOS' office.

PRIOR ACTION

Assembly Floor:	55 - 9
Assembly Appropriations Committee:	10 - 1
Assembly Elections Committee:	6 - 1

POSITIONS

Sponsor: Author

Support: None received

Oppose: None received

-- END --

SENATE COMMITTEE ON
ELECTIONS AND CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS
Senator Scott Wiener, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	AB 2604	**Hearing Date:**	6/30/26
Author:	Berman		
Version:	6/22/26		
Urgency:	No	**Fiscal:**	Yes
Consultant:	Scott Matsumoto		

Subject: Elections: ballot curing

DIGEST

This bill requires the Secretary of State (SOS) to implement and make available to county registrars a system that allows voters to access electronic signature curing.

ANALYSIS

Existing law:

1) Requires every active registered voter to receive a vote by mail (VBM) ballot for any election. A VBM ballot is timely cast if it is received by the voter's elections official by mail no later than seven days after Election Day and is postmarked or time/date stamped on or before Election Day.

2) Requires election officials to compare the voter's signature on the identification envelope with the voter's signatures on file upon receiving a VBM ballot. If the elections official determines the signature on a VBM ballot return envelope does not compare to the signatures in the voter's registration record or is missing, a voter is mailed a notice and a form detailing how to remedy the issue. This process is also known as "curing" a signature.

3) Provides a voter's VBM ballot is not rejected if the voter submits a signature cure form by 5 p.m. on the day of the applicable receipt deadline and the signature on that form compares to a signature in the voter's registration record.

4) Permits a voter to submit their completed statement by email, facsimile transmission, or by other electronic means made available by the local elections official.

5) Requires a local elections official offering other electronic means for submission of a signature verification or unsigned VBM envelope statement to establish appropriate privacy and security protocols that ensure the information transmitted is received directly and securely by the elections official and is only used for the stated purposes of verifying the signature on the voter's ballot.

This bill:

1) Requires the SOS to implement and make available to county election officials a system allowing voters to access electronic signature curing to mitigate issues related to a voter's missing or noncomparing signature on the voter's VBM ballot envelope.

2) Provides that any electronic signature curing service ensures data privacy and ballot security for voters.

3) Requires the SOS to publish electronic signature curing data on its website. This data includes, by county, the number of voters who cured missing or noncomparing signatures using electronic signature curing and the number of voters to whom text-message-based signature curing was offered.

4) Permits the SOS to combine an electronic signature curing system with existing ballot tracking notifications.

BACKGROUND

Curing Signatures Electronically. Under existing law, a voter may submit their signature cure form by mail, in person, via a ballot dropbox, a voting location, email, or fax. In addition to these methods, AB 1037 (Berman), Chapter 673, Statutes of 2023, allowed voters to return a completed signature cure form by electronic means if service was made available by the elections official.

Some counties have implemented an electronic signature cure process that allows a voter to cure using a text platform, also known as a text-to-cure system. Voters sign the screen of their phone or tablet and submit it using a secure platform.

The Contra Costa County Registrar of Voters (ROV) implemented a text message signature cure process during the 2024 primary election. In the 2025 statewide special election, the Contra Costa ROV sent 3,643 cure letters for noncomparing signatures and voters cured 971 signatures, including 284 using text-to-cure and 58 using email.

COMMENTS

1) Author's Statement. In the last general election in November 2024, over 69% of rejected VBM ballots were for either a missing signature or for a signature that did not compare to the signature associated with the voter's registration record. This amounted to nearly 85,000 ballots. Current law provides that if there is a missing or noncomparing signature on the VBM ballot envelope, our election officials notify the voter of the problem and how to correct the issue. In response to AB 1037, several counties have chosen to offer voters electronic curing as a secure, effective, and voter-friendly option to correct a missing or a signature that does not compare to the one on the voter's registration record. Unfortunately, far too many curable ballots are still not corrected. Accordingly, this bill simply provides for statewide adoption of electronic ballot curing, thereby making it more likely that eligible ballots are counted and less likely that voters are disenfranchised.

2) Electronic Signature Curing. Recent amendments modified the wording describing the methods of signature curing prescribed by this bill. Changing the wording from "text-message-based signature curing" to "electronic signature curing," allows for other methods, beyond text messaging, to be used for signature curing. For example, in Los Angeles County, a voter currently has the ability to return their signature cure form by mail, email, fax, text message, delivering the form in-person, or dropping off the form at a ballot dropbox or vote center. The change in wording does not limit a county to only text messages and allows for other electronic means.

   The expanded wording is also aligned with the author's intent. In the materials provided to this committee, the author sees this bill as a way to streamline the curing process and help get more ballots cured faster by facilitating statewide adoption of electronic ballot curing, in particular by having access to electronic ballot curing for all California voters.

   Alternatively, "electronic" could also be interpreted with a narrow meaning. For example, the SOS could implement these provisions to only apply to facsimile submissions. The author should continue to work with the SOS to avoid potential conflicts of interpretation should this bill become law.

3) Argument in Support. In a letter supporting this bill, Verified Voting stated, in part, the following:

   > Several counties have already demonstrated that mobile curing is an effective, secure, and voter-friendly tool. [This bill] would build on that success by enabling the SOS to implement or support a uniform statewide system, improving cure rates and reducing the number of ballots that go uncounted.
   >
   > [...]
   >
   > Providing a mobile ballot curing solution allows California voters to use technology that they are already familiar with to cure their ballot. Benefits of adopting a solution statewide, rather than the current county-by-county approach, also include significant cost savings.

4) Argument in Opposition. In a letter opposing this bill, SOS Shirley N. Weber, Ph.D., suggested amendments for the bill. Below is a summary of their proposed amendments:

   - Replace specific provisions in the bill and insert language that adopts and publishes signature curing technology standards and regulations governing the certification and use of signature verification and signature curing technology. This includes technology capable of capturing digital signatures.
   - Provide language that signature verification and/or signature curing technology must not be used unless it has been certified by the SOS. This includes a prohibition of certifying signature verification and signature curing technology by the SOS unless it meets the SOS' standards and regulations.
   - Require counties, instead of the SOS, to collect and publish data required by this bill.

- Removing the references to text message notifications because there is no direct relation to signature curing.

RELATED/PRIOR LEGISLATION

AB 1037 (Berman), Chapter 673, Statutes of 2023, permits a voter to return a completed signature cure form by electronic means, if such means are made available by the elections official.

PRIOR ACTION

Assembly Floor:	58 - 20
Assembly Appropriations Committee:	11 - 4
Assembly Elections Committee:	6 - 2

POSITIONS

Sponsor: California Voter Foundation
Protect Democracy United

Support: American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO
California Initiative for Technology & Democracy
California Common Cause
Campaign Legal Center
CFT – A Union of Educators and Classified Professionals, AFT, AFL-CIO
Disability Rights California
Human Rights First
League of Women Voters of California
NextGen California
Responsive Gov Action
SEIU California
Verified Voting

Oppose: Secretary of State Shirley N. Weber, Ph.D.
Democracy Live

-- END --

SENATE COMMITTEE ON
ELECTIONS AND CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS
Senator Scott Wiener, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	AB 1560	**Hearing Date:**	6/30/26
Author:	Tangipa		
Version:	6/22/26		
Urgency:	No	**Fiscal:**	Yes
Consultant:	Carrie Cornwell		

Subject: Lobbyist certification.

DIGEST

This bill prohibits a person from serving as a lobbyist for 12 years after a conviction for a crime of public corruption.

ANALYSIS

Existing law:

1) Regulates lobbyists through the Political Reform Act (PRA), including by requiring lobbying firms and lobbyist employers to register with the Secretary of State (SOS) and file periodic reports disclosing their activities.

2) Requires, as part of the registration process, that each lobbyist submit a lobbyist certification with the SOS. This certification shall include:

   a) A recent photograph;
   b) The full name, business address, and telephone number of the lobbyist;
   c) A statement that the lobbyist understands the statutory gift limit; and
   d) A statement that the lobbyist has or will complete an ethics course.

3) Specifies administrative, civil, and criminal penalties for violating provisions of the PRA, including making any person who knowingly or willingly violates the PRA guilty of a misdemeanor. Conviction of a misdemeanor under the PRA precludes a person from being a candidate for office or acting as a lobbyist for four years, unless the court at sentencing determines this provision is not applicable.

4) Prohibits a person from being a candidate for office or serving in elected office in California if the person has been convicted of a felony involving accepting, giving or offering to give any bribe, the embezzlement of public money, extortion or theft of public money, perjury, or conspiracy to commit any of these crimes.

This bill:

1) Prohibits a person from serving as a lobbyist for 12 years after a felony conviction for a crime of public corruption, defined in 4) of existing law. If a person is already a registered lobbyist and is convicted of such a crime, then the person's certification

as a lobbyist shall be void upon the conviction, and the lobbyist is required to terminate their registration immediately upon conviction.

2) Requires a lobbyist certification submitted to the SOS to include a statement that the lobbyist has not been convicted of a crime of public corruption within the previous 12 years.

3) Prohibits the SOS from accepting a lobbying certification from a person who has indicated on the lobbying certification that they have been convicted of a crime of public corruption within the previous 12 years.

BACKGROUND

Proposition 9, which appeared on the June 1974 ballot, created the PRA and established California's system of regulating lobbying activity, campaign finance, and conflicts of interest for public officials. Proposition 9 created the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) to implement, administer, and enforce the PRA. The PRA regulates lobbyists, including requiring lobbying firms and lobbyist employers to register with the SOS and file periodic reports disclosing their activities.

The PRA requires any person who qualifies as a lobbyist, and thus works for a lobbying firm or a lobbyist employer, to submit a lobbyist certification and include a recent photograph of the lobbyist. The SOS makes a list, with photographs, of all lobbyists publicly available on its website, which also provides lists of registered lobbying firms and lobbyist employers. The SOS publishes a directory of registered individual lobbyists, lobbying firms, and lobbyist employers.

COMMENTS

1) Author's Statement. Public trust in government depends on accountability and integrity in the policymaking process. California law already recognizes that certain crimes of public corruption, including offenses involving the misuse or theft of public funds, are serious enough to prevent someone from running for public office for life. Yet under current law, those same individuals can still register as lobbyists and be paid to influence the decisions of the Legislature. That double standard undermines public confidence in government. This bill closes this loophole by prohibiting individuals convicted of public corruption from serving as lobbyists in California.

   If someone has been convicted of corrupting the public process, they should not be allowed to profit from influencing it. This bill is a commonsense step to restore integrity, strengthen transparency, and ensure that Sacramento holds lobbyists to the same ethical standard expected of those who seek elected office.

2) Arguments in Support. Fresno County, the Fresno County District Attorney, the Fresno Chamber of Commerce, and the County of Inyo write in support of the bill:

   > Over the years, our state has seen several high-profile cases in which individuals found guilty of public corruption-related charges continue working in an industry where public trust is essential. Allowing those facing such serious charges to lobby only encourages the problem. California cannot afford to let individuals

with a record of unethical behavior influence policy and shape decisions that affect all Californians.

[This bill] is a straightforward, common-sense reform that protects the integrity of our government. By keeping those with corruption charges out of the lobbying process, this bill will help to restore public trust, promote fairness, and ensure that decisions are guided by the public interest, not what benefits individuals with questionable morals.

PRIOR ACTION

Assembly Floor:	65 - 0
Assembly Appropriations Committee:	13 - 0
Assembly Elections Committee:	8 - 0

POSITIONS

Sponsor: Author

Support: Jerry P. Dyer, Mayor, City of Fresno
Nick Richardson, Fresno City Councilmember, District 6
California Common Cause
City of Bishop
County of Fresno Board of Supervisors
County of Inyo Board of Supervisors
Fresno Chamber of Commerce
Fresno County District Attorney's Office

Oppose: None received

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON
ELECTIONS AND CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS
Senator Scott Wiener, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	AB 1610	**Hearing Date:**	6/30/26
Author:	Ransom		
Version:	4/16/26		
Urgency:	No	**Fiscal:**	Yes
Consultant:	Scott Matsumoto		

Subject: Elections: notice

DIGEST

This bill creates uniform procedures for updating a voter's registration record when the voter changes their mailing address but not their residence address.

ANALYSIS

Existing law:

1) Requires a person's affidavit of voter registration to include the person's residence and, if different from the place of residence, a mailing address.

2) Requires a county elections official to mail a voter notification form to a voter upon receipt of a completed voter registration and also upon notification that the voter's address has changed.

3) Requires each county elections official to conduct a pre-election residency confirmation of each registered voter prior to each primary election. This residency confirmation may be conducted, among other options, by a mailing to the registered voter through the USPS or by contracting with the USPS or its licensees to use postal service change-of-address data.

4) Requires a county elections official who receives change-of-address data for a voter from the USPS or its licensees to do the following:

   a) If a mailing is undeliverable and the voter has no forwarding address, or if change-of-address data indicates the voter has moved out of state, the elections official must update the voter's registration to inactive and mail a confirmation notice to the voter.

   b) If the change-of-address information indicates the voter has moved to another address in the state, the elections official must update the residence address for that voter's registration to the new address and mail the voter a confirmation notice.

5) Provides that any voter whose registration is inactive, who attempts to vote, who notifies the elections official of a continued residency, or who confirms the voter's

registration record on the website of the Secretary of State (SOS), must be removed from the inactive list and placed on the active voter list.

6) Provides the voter's registration is cancelled after the voter's registration is made inactive, the required notification is sent to the voter, and the voter does not attempt to vote or vote at any election between the date of the mailing and two federal general elections after the date of that mailing.

7) Requires, pursuant to federal law, every state to conduct a general program that makes a reasonable effort to remove the names of ineligible voters from the official lists of eligible voters by reason of death of the registrant or a change in the residence of the registrant.

This bill:

1) Requires a county elections official to do the following when the official receives postal service change of address data that indicates a voter's mailing address is no longer valid, and that mailing address was different than the voter's residence address:

   a) If a new mailing address is provided, update the mailing address in the voter's registration record to the new mailing address, then send a forwardable notice to the voter indicating that the voter's mailing address has been updated. If the update was incorrect, the voter should notify the elections official.

   b) If a new mailing address is not provided and the voter lives at a residence address that can receive mail, then update the voter's registration record to remove the invalid mailing address, and send a forwardable notice to the voter indicating that the voter's mailing address has been updated. If the update was incorrect, the voter should notify the elections official.

   c) If a new mailing address is not provided and the voter lives at a residence address that cannot receive mail, update the status of the voter's registration to inactive and mail a forwardable confirmation notice to the voter's prior mailing address.

2) Makes technical and conforming changes.

BACKGROUND

National Voter Registration Act. In 1993, the federal government enacted the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) and provided a number of reforms designed to facilitate voter participation through voter registration. Most notably, it established the framework for voter registration at the Department of Motor Vehicles, otherwise known as Motor Voter.

The NVRA also contains various provisions relating to maintaining the integrity of the voter rolls. Specifically, the NVRA provides voters must not be removed from the official list of eligible voters on the grounds that the registrant has changed residence unless (1) the registrant confirms in writing a change of residence outside the registrar's

jurisdiction, or (2) the registrant has failed to respond to a specified address confirmation notice and has not attempted or appeared to vote in any election within the next two federal general election cycles following the date of the address confirmation notice.

California law imposes its own requirements regarding notifications to persons who register to vote and for list maintenance activities. This includes provisions that require residence confirmation mailings and, depending on the responses of the initial mailing, multiple attempts to contact the voter. As previously mentioned, if the voter fails to respond and has not attempted or appeared to vote in any election within the next two federal general election cycles following the date of the address confirmation notice, then that voter's registration is cancelled.

COMMENTS

Author's Statement. As the most populous state in the U.S., California's elections officials work tirelessly to increase the civic engagement and turnout of voters, and to encourage voter registration. Our county election officials currently lack guidance on how to properly reach Californians who change their mailing address and are not able to receive mail at their home. As a result, there are some Californians at risk of losing their active voter registration status. As a state, it is critical for us to make the registration and change-of-address processes as streamlined as possible. This bill provides support and clarification for election officials and helps ensure voters receive the right election materials at the right address.

RELATED/PRIOR LEGISLATION

AB 2153 (Berman) of 2026 repeals an obsolete provision of law related to residency confirmation of registered voters.

PRIOR ACTION

Assembly Floor:	74 - 0
Assembly Appropriations Committee:	15 - 0
Assembly Elections Committee:	8 - 0

POSITIONS

Sponsor: Secretary of State Shirley N. Weber, Ph.D.

Support: California Association of Clerks and Election Officials
NAACP California-Hawaii State Conference

Oppose: None received

-- END --

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ELECTIONS AND CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Senator Scott Wiener, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	AB 2413	**Hearing Date:**	6/30/26
Author:	Ransom		
Version:	6/24/26		
Urgency:	No	**Fiscal:**	Yes
Consultant:	Carrie Cornwell		

Subject: Large-format public advertisements: public expense.

DIGEST

This bill prohibits "large-format public advertisements" from being published or displayed at public expense.

ANALYSIS

Existing law:

1) Prohibits newsletters or other mass mailings from being sent at public expense.

2) Defines a mass mailing as over 200 substantially similar pieces of mail, excluding responses to unsolicited inquiries or letters.

3) Provides some exceptions to the prohibition on mass mailings, including legally required notices, items sent to pay or collect funds, and informational items where an elected official's name appears only in the letterhead of the mailing.

This bill:

1) Defines a "large-format public advertisement" as:

   a) A billboard;
   b) A wrap on a public transportation vehicle;
   c) An advertisement affixed to a bus stop or other public infrastructure; or
   d) Other public advertisements that are 24 inches by 36 inches or more in size and are so designated by regulation.

2) Prohibits a large-format public advertisement from being published or displayed at public expense if:

   a) It includes the photograph of an elected officer affiliated with the agency that produces or purchases the advertisement; and

   b) Public money paid for either the distribution or the design, production, and printing of the advertisement.

3) Defines "elected officer affiliated with the agency," for purposes of the bill, to mean an elected officer who is a member, officer, or employee of the agency or who has supervisory control over the agency or appoints one or members of the agency.

4) Deems the agency and the elected officer jointly and severally liable for a violation that occurs when a large-format public advertisement is prepared in cooperation, consultation, coordination, or concert with the elected officer.

BACKGROUND

Proposition 9, which appeared on the June 1974 ballot, created the Political Reform Act (PRA) and established California's campaign finance and disclosure laws for state and local campaigns, candidates, officeholders, and ballot measures.

In 1988, Proposition 73 amended the PRA in several ways, including prohibiting the use of public moneys for campaign purposes. Among its provisions, Proposition 73 prohibits mass mailings by public officials. SB 45 (Mendoza), Chapter 827, Statutes of 2017, codified a Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) regulation regarding mass mailings sent at public expense, prohibiting these mass mailings from being sent within the 60 days preceding an election by or on behalf of a state or local candidate whose name will appear on the ballot.

COMMENTS

1) Author's Statement. California is a leader in providing strong protection to ensure fair elections that prohibit public dollars from being used for political advertising. Unfortunately, current law does not extend these protections to situations where publicly funded billboards prominently display elected officials' images. This bill would close this gap in current law by prohibiting public funds from being used to feature elected officials' images on costly billboards. In doing so, this bill would further protect the public's trust in responsible government spending.

2) Examples of Large-Format Public Ads. The author cites two main examples that warrant the need for this bill. The first is the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's billboard campaign, which included large photos of locally elected board members. Generally, the billboards are part of a public awareness and educational campaign to reach San Joaquin Valley residents, generate public interest in and support of air quality improvement projects, and effect meaningful changes in public behavior. The author argues public education campaigns are important and an appropriate use of public funds, but they become a problem when elected officials are being featured in a manner that could be seen as political advertising.

   The second example is physical and digital billboards along freeways and other major thoroughfares in Sacramento County that include a photograph of Sacramento County Sheriff Jim Cooper. Media articles state these billboards are part of a public awareness campaign to address retail theft and the Sacramento County Sheriff's Office has purchased approximately 20 billboards across the county to advertise efforts to stop theft from retail stores with many featuring the elected sheriff himself.

PRIOR ACTION

Assembly Floor:	71 - 0
Assembly Appropriations Committee:	14 - 0
Assembly Elections Committee:	8 - 0

POSITIONS

Sponsor: Author

Support: California Fair Political Practices Commission

Oppose: None received

-- END --

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ELECTIONS AND CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Senator Scott Wiener, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	AB 2255	**Hearing Date:**	6/30/26
Author:	Pellerin		
Version:	6/23/26		
Urgency:	No	**Fiscal:**	Yes
Consultant:	Carrie Cornwell		

Subject: Political Reform Act of 1974: candidate controlled committees: campaign statements.

DIGEST

This bill requires a candidate controlled campaign committee to report additional information, if the candidate is not on the ballot at the next election or for re-election and the committee makes expenditures to a single person of $20,000 or more.

ANALYSIS

Existing law:

1) Creates the Political Reform Act (PRA), which sets campaign finance and disclosure laws for state and local campaigns, candidates, officeholders, and ballot measures, and establishes the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) to implement, administer, and enforce the PRA.

2) Defines a committee under the PRA as a person, or combination of persons, who receives contributions of more than $2,000 in a calendar year, makes independent expenditures totaling $1,000 or more in a calendar year, or makes contributions totaling $10,000 or more in a calendar year to or at the behest of candidates or committees.

3) Requires candidates for elective office, committees formed to support or oppose candidates for public office or ballot measures, slate mailer organizations, and other specified entities, to file periodic and activity-based campaign reports disclosing contributions, expenditures, and other related matters.

4) Requires candidate controlled committees to report the name and address of each person who receives an expenditure of $100 or more from the committee and to specify the date of the expenditure, disclose the amount, and provide a brief description of the consideration for which it was made.

This bill requires a candidate controlled committee to include additional information in its campaign report if the candidate is not on the ballot at the next election, the committee is not for re-election to the candidate's current office, and the committee makes expenditures to a single person of $20,000 or more, excluding payments for a credit card bill or a campaign contribution. This additional information must include:

- The full name and street address of the person to whom the expenditures were made.
- The amount of each expenditure.
- A description of any consideration for which the committee made each expenditure, including the specific political, legislative, or governmental purpose the payment satisfies.
- If applicable, the relationship to the candidate, campaign staff, or officeholder staff of the person or subvendor. A relationship must be reported if the person or reportable subvendor is:

  - Immediate family of the candidate.
  - A member of the candidate's campaign or officeholder staff.
  - An immediate family member of the candidate's campaign or officeholder staff.

COMMENTS

1) Author's Statement. While candidates may begin fundraising well in advance of an election to ensure they have sufficient resources to communicate with voters, most campaign spending by candidates usually occurs during the weeks leading up to the election. Large campaign expenditures made outside the typical campaign window warrant closer scrutiny to ensure compliance with state law. This bill requires additional detail about the purpose of large campaign expenditures made at times when a candidate is less likely to be engaged in significant campaign activity. This additional disclosure will improve transparency and ensure appropriate oversight of the state's campaign finance laws.

2) Expanded Reporting. While a campaign must report any payment it makes that is $100 or more, it must provide only a brief description of what the payment was for and typically would use one of 27 standardized FPPC-established expenditure codes. This bill requires expanded descriptions for payments of $20,000 or more in times when the candidate the committee supports is not actively running for office and therefore not under greater observation of an active campaign. Thus, the bill requires more detail on why the campaign made the payment. Further, the bill requires in specified instances a description of the relationship between the campaign and the recipient of the payment, which mirrors the requirements in FPPC regulations for reporting behested payments.

3) Arguments in Support. The FPPC, the bill's sponsor, writes in support that under this bill:

   > …a committee would be required to disclose a description of the consideration provided by a recipient of payments over the threshold amount, and, if applicable, the relationship of the recipient or reportable subvendor to the candidate or any individual with authority to approve the payments.
   >
   > We expect that the additional information disclosed will show that the vast majority of officials are following the law. By providing the public with the information necessary to confirm that fact, and, more importantly, identify any

bad actors, we believe this measure will help strengthen public trust in the integrity of the political process.

RELATED/PRIOR LEGISLATION

AB 808 (Addis), Chapter 278, Statutes of 2025, among other things, updated terms used in state law to reflect the electronic filing of required campaign-related reports that will occur when the Secretary of State certifies the new online reporting system.

PRIOR ACTION

Assembly Floor:	77 - 0
Assembly Appropriations Committee:	14 - 0
Assembly Elections Committee:	8 - 0

POSITIONS

Sponsor: California Fair Political Practices Commission

Support: California Common Cause
League of Women Voters of California

Oppose: None received

-- END --

SENATE COMMITTEE ON
ELECTIONS AND CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS
Senator Scott Wiener, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	AB 2573	**Hearing Date:**	6/30/26
Author:	Sharp-Collins		
Version:	5/19/26		
Urgency:	No	**Fiscal:**	Yes
Consultant:	Scott Matsumoto		

Subject: Voter registration information: elected officials and candidates

DIGEST

This bill modifies the program that makes confidential an elected official's or a candidate's residence address, telephone number, and email address from the individual's affidavit of registration.

ANALYSIS

Existing law:

1) Defines "elected official or candidate" as a federal, state, or local elected official or a candidate for an elected federal, state, or local office.

2) Requires an elected official or candidate to have their residence address, telephone number, and email address appearing on the affidavit of registration be made confidential, unless the elected official or candidate opts out.

3) Requires the Secretary of State (SOS) to provide to each county elections official a list identifying elected officials and candidates residing in each respective county when a person files nomination papers for an elected federal or state office.

4) Requires the county elections official to add the individual's name to a list identifying elected officials and candidates residing in that county when a person files nomination papers for an elected local office. The county elections official must periodically update the list for each election cycle. Within five business days of receipt of the list from the SOS or within five business days of the filing of nomination papers with the county elections official, the county elections official must make confidential that elected official or candidate's residence address, telephone number, and email address appearing on the affidavit of registration.

5) Requires the county elections official, in producing any list, roster, or index, to exclude voters with a confidential voter status. An elected official or candidate must apply for confidential voter status within 60 days of moving to a new county, if available in the new county. The elections official of the new county, upon notice of the confidential voter moving into the county, must do all of the following:

a) Contact the confidential voter and provide information regarding the application for confidential voter status in the new county.

b) Honor the confidential voter status from the former county for 60 days from the date of notice.

c) Exclude the confidential voter in any list, roster, or index during the 60-day period.

d) Remove the confidential voter status if the new voter has not obtained or cannot obtain confidential voter status in the new county during the 60-day period.

6) Requires an elected official or candidate to contact their county elections official to ensure their voter registration record has been made confidential. County election officials must make the elected official's information confidential when contacted by the elected official or candidate.

7) Provides an elected official or candidate's residence address, telephone number, and email address must remain confidential until the official no longer holds the office or, for a candidate, the winning candidate takes office.

8) Provides a county or county elections official is not liable for taking or failing to take the action when the county or county elections official has received erroneous information from the SOS.

9) Provides an action in negligence is not maintained against any government entity or officer or employee thereof as a result of the disclosure of specified information, except by a showing of gross negligence or willfulness.

10) Provides when a notification is received from an elected official or candidate about a request to opt-out of confidential voter status, the county elections official must remove the confidential designation from the individual's voter registration record within five business days and notify the SOS and any other relevant local election officials of the decision to opt out within five business days of processing the request.

11) Provides an elected official who opts out may reapply for confidential voter status at any time while serving in or running for office, and confidential voter status must be reinstated upon receipt of the request.

12) Provides, notwithstanding any other law, an elected official or candidate's residence address, telephone number, and email address made confidential may be disclosed only for bona fide journalistic or governmental purposes using a specified process. The county elections official must retain records of all requests for, and disclosures of, a local elected official or candidate's confidential residence address, telephone number, and email address for journalistic purposes. The county elections official may reject a request that does not clearly adhere to specified requirements.

This bill:

1) Changes the ability for an elected official or candidate to have their residence address, telephone number, and email address from the individual's affidavit of registration made confidential from an opt-out to an opt-in process. An elected official or candidate must submit a written request for confidential status to the county elections official.

2) Defines "election official or candidate" as a federal, state, or local elected official or candidate who has qualified to appear on the ballot for a federal, state, or local office. This definition does not include a member of a political party's county central committee or a candidate for that office.

3) Permits the residence address, telephone number, and email address of an elected official's immediate family member be included in a written request for confidentiality, if the immediate family member is named in the request and the request is accompanied by a statement from the immediate family member confirming they want confidential voter status and understand the ramifications of being made confidential.

    a) "Immediate family member" means an elected official's spouse, domestic partner, parent, or child who lives at the same residence.

4) Provides, upon a written request for confidentiality, the county elections official must make the information confidential. The elections official may provide written notice to the household of the election official or candidate that persons whose information would be confidential would lose their ability to vote a nonprovisional ballot in person at a polling location.

5) Provides that in addition to rosters, voter lists, or indexes, any other list created by an elections official must not include any confidential information of the elected official or candidate.

6) Requires an elected official's information remain confidential until two years after the official leaves office. For candidates, the information remains confidential until the completion of the canvass for which the candidate was listed on the ballot. Candidates in a local special election must remain confidential until the vote for the special election has been certified by the local elections official.

7) Provides that a candidate who opts into confidential status and is elected to the office automatically retains confidential status after being sworn into office.

8) Requires the county elections official to determine and identify the federal, state, and local elected officials residing in their county.

9) Removes the 60-day timeframe for when an elected official or candidate must apply for confidential voter status when moving to a new county and the requirement for an elections official to make an elected official's information confidential. Instead, the elections official must make the information confidential upon request by the elected official.

10) Permits an elected official to opt-out of and re-enroll in confidential voter status at any time while serving in the official's current office or while running for another office.

11) Requires county election officials to notify the SOS on a form prescribed by the SOS when a county elections official adds or removes the confidential designation to a federal or state elected official's voter registration record.

12) Requires the county elections official to notify an elected official at least 60 days before removing the confidential designation from a federal, state, or local elected official's voter registration record.

13) Provides an elected official or candidate who opts-out of confidential voter status consents to the placement of their residence address, telephone number, and email address in the roster of voters.

14) Provides the SOS and county election officials implement the remaining provisions of existing law, as it relates to confidential voter statuses and the provisions of this bill, immediately once the statewide voter registration database and county election management systems have made conforming changes.

15) Provides, for elections through December 31, 2028, county election officials may make best efforts to manually implement the provisions of existing law as it related to confidential voter statuses and the provisions of this bill to the maximum degree possible before the completion of conforming changes to the statewide voter registration database and their own county election management systems. This is not to be construed to authorize any reduction in current, ongoing implementation efforts.

16) Provides that the confidential voter program does not override and cannot revoke confidentiality ordered by a county or confidentiality granted by another specified program.

BACKGROUND

Voter Registration Information. Under existing law, all voter registration information is confidential, except in specified circumstances. These circumstances include the release of voter registration records for approved election, scholarly, journalistic, political, or governmental purposes. A voter's driver's license number, ID number, partial Social Security number, and signature are not disclosed under these provisions.

To access permitted information, individuals or organizations must apply to the SOS or a county elections official, providing identifying information (name, address, phone number, and driver's license or approved ID number), the specific information requested, and a statement of the intended use of the information. The elections official must verify the applicant's identity before providing any information. Completed applications must be retained by the elections official for five years.

In certain situations, state law provides a higher level of confidentiality for voter registration records, prohibiting the release of a voter's residence address, phone

number, and email address even for election, scholarly, journalistic, political, or governmental purposes. Individuals enrolled in California's Safe at Home program, which includes two address confidentiality programs for those at higher risk of threats or violence, are eligible for these protections. Additionally, a voter may request a court to declare their address and contact information confidential, if they can show that a life-threatening circumstance exists for the voter or a household member. Similar protections are also available to public safety officers and individuals who perform election-related work for state or county election officials who attest to such threats affecting them or their families.

Assembly Bill 1392 (Sharp-Collins). In response to increasing threats against public officials, including the shooting of two Minnesota legislators and their spouses in June of 2025, the Legislature approved and Governor Newsom signed AB 1392 (Sharp-Collins), Chapter 300, Statutes of 2025, making the voter registration records of elected officials and candidates for elective office confidential. Unlike other voter registration confidentiality programs, an elected official or candidate's residence address, telephone number, and email address may still be disclosed for bona fide journalistic or governmental purposes if certain conditions are met. The bill was largely structured as an "opt-out" program and eligible individuals are added to the program automatically unless they opt-out.

COMMENTS

1) Author's Statement. As counties began administering the program, elections officials identified areas where additional statutory clarity was needed around eligibility, procedures, and timelines. At a time when threats and harassment against public officials are increasing nationwide, it is critical that the protections authorized by the Legislature work as intended.

2) Voting In-Person. An unforeseen consequence of AB 1392 that made elected officials' and candidates' voter registration information confidential also made them unable to vote in person at a polling location. Elected officials and candidates may wish to be able to have their voter registration information confidential but also be able to vote in person.

3) Discretion to Provide Written Notice – Suggested Amendment. Upon receipt of a written request for confidentiality, the county elections official must make the specific voter registration information confidential. Additionally, the county elections official may, at the official's discretion, provide written notice to the household of the elected official or candidate that persons whose information would be confidential would lose their ability to vote a nonprovisional ballot in person at the polls. In order to provide uniformity throughout California, committee staff recommends this bill be amended to make the delivery of this notice a requirement so that individuals enrolled in this confidential program are fully aware that they will not be able to vote in person at a polling location.

4) Opting-In, Opting-Out, Opting-In – Suggested Amendment. This bill changes the current confidential voter status program from an opt-out to an opt-in scheme. For elected officials, there is a process to opt-out of the confidential voter status program and reenter this program at a later date. This same option does not apply to

candidates. Candidates are allowed to opt-out once in the confidential voter status program, but not explicitly permitted to reenter the program. Committee staff recommends amending the bill to allow candidates the same options that exist for elected officials for being able to leave or re-enroll in the confidential voter status program.

5) Consistency in Wording – Suggested Amendment. The phrases, "confidential voter status" and "confidential status," are used interchangeably throughout the bill. Committee staff recommends amending references of "confidential status" to "confidential voter status" to maintain consistency in this bill and to avoid potential confusion.

6) Definition of Immediate Family Member. This bill defines "immediate family member" as an elected official's spouse, domestic partner, parent, or child who lives at the same residence. This bill permits an elected official's immediate family, with the consent from each immediate family member, living at the residence to have their voter registration made confidential. It is possible a family member outside of the definition prescribed by this bill lives at the elected official's residence, such as an in-law or grandparent. By having a family member outside of the definition of "immediate family member" who is registered to vote and lives at the same residence as the elected official, it may create a situation where someone could still find an elected official's residence. The committee should consider whether the definition of "immediate family member" is sufficient in protecting the elected official and the elected official's family.

7) Immediate Family Members for Candidates. As previously mentioned, this bill permits an elected official's immediate family, with the consent from each immediate family member, living at the residence to have their voter registration made confidential. It is unclear whether the same protections would apply to a candidate's immediate family.

8) Definition of "Elected Official or Candidate." This bill redefines "elected official or candidate" as a federal, state, or local elected official or a candidate *who has qualified to appear on the ballot* for an elected federal, state, or local office. While this includes the vast majority of candidates, write-in candidates would no longer be included because they do not appear on a ballot. There are circumstances where a write-in would appear on a future ballot, such as in a two-top election, where the candidate would receive confidential voter status, but that would only happen after the candidate qualifies to appear on a ballot instead of qualifying as a candidate. The committee and author should consider whether the point of entry for candidates to be in the confidential voter status program is when an individual becomes a candidate or when they qualify to appear on a ballot.

9) What Happens to the Current Program? Elected officials and candidates are currently enrolled in this confidential voter status program unless the individual opts out. This bill changes the system from an opt-out to an opt-in system. It is unclear what happens to the individuals currently enrolled in the program when this bill takes effect. The individuals currently in the program may not have affirmatively opted into the program, and it is not clear if they would remain in the program because they did not take the action required by this bill to opt-in. The author should consider how a

transition period would work for current enrollees and how the SOS and county election officials plan to notify elected officials and candidates currently enrolled in the confidential voter status of the changes prescribed by this bill.

RELATED/PRIOR LEGISLATION

AB 1392 (Sharp-Collins), Chapter 300, Statutes of 2025, made the voter registration records of elected officials and candidates for elective office confidential unless the elected official or candidate opts out.

PRIOR ACTION

Assembly Floor:	78 - 0
Assembly Appropriations Committee:	15 - 0
Assembly Elections Committee:	8 - 0

POSITIONS

Sponsor: Secretary of State Shirley N. Weber, Ph.D.

Support: California Special District Association
CFT – A Union of Educators and Classified Professionals, AFT, AFL-CIO

Oppose: None received

-- END --

SENATE COMMITTEE ON
ELECTIONS AND CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS
Senator Scott Wiener, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	AB 2691	**Hearing Date:**	6/30/16
Author:	Addis		
Version:	6/24/26		
Urgency:	No	**Fiscal:**	No
Consultant:	Carrie Cornwell		

Subject: Elections: elective office: felony conviction

DIGEST

This bill prohibits a person convicted of felony sexual assault or human trafficking from running for or being elected to state or local office in California.

ANALYSIS

Existing law prohibits a person from being a candidate for office or serving in elected office in California if the person has been convicted of a felony involving accepting, giving or offering to give any bribe, the embezzlement of public money, extortion or theft of public money, perjury, or conspiracy to commit any of these crimes.

This bill adds specified felony sexual assault and specified felony human trafficking to those felony convictions that make a person ineligible to be a candidate for or serve in state or local office.

BACKGROUND

The California Constitution states, “Laws shall be made to exclude persons convicted of bribery, perjury, forgery, malfeasance in office, or other high crimes from office or serving on juries.” To effectuate these constitutional prohibitions, the Legislature has enacted various state laws, including various Penal Code and Government Code sections that enumerate events and actions which cause certain crimes to result in an elected official being disqualified from holding public office in the state.

AB 2410 (Fuentes), Chapter 160, Statutes of 2012, expanded this prohibition for persons convicted of crimes of public corruption to include running for office. Before AB 2410 took effect, the prohibition was on holding office. AB 2410 deemed accepting, giving or offering to give any bribe, the embezzlement of public money, extortion or theft of public money, and perjury to be crimes of public corruption and subjected those who had felony convictions for those crimes or conspiracy to any of those crimes ineligible to run for state or local office. This created a prohibition on running for office consistent with the constitutional prohibition on holding office.

COMMENTS

1) Author's Statement. Elected office is a privileged position of influence and authority. People who commit the most serious crimes, those involving sexual violence and exploitation, must be barred from holding these powerful positions of public trust.

2) How Do We Know? When a candidate files a declaration of candidacy, they attest they meet the qualifications for the office, they have not been convicted of a crime of public corruption, and they will accept the nomination/election rather than withdraw. In some cases, such as for sheriff, county assessor, or district attorney, a candidate must submit documentation establishing they meet the qualifications for the office. The candidate files this documentation with a declaration, signed under penalty of perjury, certifying the information provided is true and correct. The committee or the author may wish to amend this bill to provide for documentation or attestation under penalty of perjury that the candidate has never been convicted of the crimes enumerated in this bill.

3) Other States. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, Florida and Utah have statutory and/or constitutional provisions related to candidate disqualification for conviction of a sex offense. In Florida, the right to hold office is revoked upon conviction of a felony and may be restored when a person is returned to their civil rights. This mirrors the process for voting rights revocation and restoration. Civil rights (including voting rights and office-holding rights) are restored automatically upon completion of a sentence, unless the person was convicted of a felony sexual offense or of murder, in which case they need to petition the governor for restoration of those rights. The governor can then choose to grant or deny those petitions for rights restoration on a case-by-case basis.

   In Utah, a person convicted of grievous sexual assault against a child is permanently barred from serving as a member on the state board of education or on any local school board (both are elected boards).

4) Arguments in Support. Writing in support of the bill, Child USA states:

   > Crimes of sexual violence and exploitation similarly reflect a profound abuse of power, coercion, and harm against vulnerable individuals. Such conduct demonstrates a willingness to misuse authority in ways that fundamentally undermine public safety and community well-being.
   >
   > Given the gravity of these offenses, it is essential that individuals convicted of them not be granted access to elected roles where they could again wield power in ways that endanger others. [This bill] provides an important safeguard by ensuring that those who have committed these serious crimes cannot hold positions intended to serve and protect the public.

5) Arguments in Opposition. Writing in opposition to this bill, Smart Justice says "the electorate should be responsible for making determinations about when and how a person's prior convictions should impact their ability to run for and be elected to public office." Specifically, Smart Justice notes:

California has a demonstrated commitment to providing opportunities for rehabilitation and second chances. This bill is fundamentally inconsistent with those values and fails to allow voters to consider important questions, including: whether a person seeking office has served their sentence, is meaningfully contributing to their community, and could honorably and productively serve in office. We believe it is the job of the voters and the democratic process to weigh these considerations - even if that means, as it frequently has, that the electorate chooses not to advance a candidate who has engaged in the behavior underlying the offenses addressed by this bill.

RELATED/PRIOR LEGISLATION

AB 2753 (Soria), also on today agenda, bars anyone who has ever been required to register as a sex offender from running for or being elected to state or local office in California.

AB 2410 (Fuentes), Chapter 160, Statutes of 2012, prohibits a person from being a candidate for office or serving in elected office in California if the person has been convicted of a felony involving accepting, giving or offering to give any bribe, the embezzlement of public money, extortion or theft of public money, perjury, or conspiracy to commit any of these crimes.

PRIOR ACTION

Assembly Floor:	67 - 0
Assembly Elections Committee:	7 - 0

POSITIONS

Sponsor: Author

Support: CFT – A Union of Educators and Classified Professionals, AFT, AFL-CIO
CHILD USA
County of Monterey
Peace Officers' Research Association of California
San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors
Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors
Victim Policy Institute

Oppose: Legue of Women Voters of California
Smart Justice California, a Project of Beyond Impact

-- END --

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ELECTIONS AND CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Senator Scott Wiener, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	AB 2753	**Hearing Date:**	6/30/26
Author:	Soria		
Version:	3/19/26		
Urgency:	No	**Fiscal:**	No
Consultant:	Carrie Cornwell		

Subject: Elective office: sex offenders

DIGEST

This bill prohibits a person who has ever had to register as a sex offender from running for or being elected to state or local office in California.

ANALYSIS

Existing law:

1) Requires persons convicted of specified sex offenses to register as sex offenders and have a continuing duty to register, even when the underlying conviction has been dismissed, unless that person obtains a certificate of rehabilitation or is exonerated. Willful violation of the duty to register is a misdemeanor, if the offense requiring registration was a misdemeanor, and is a felony if the offense requiring

2) Requires pursuant to the California Constitution that "[l]aws shall be made to exclude persons convicted of bribery, perjury, forgery, malfeasance in office, or other high crimes from office or serving on juries."

3) Prohibits a person from being a candidate for office or serving in elected office in California if the person has been convicted of a felony involving accepting, giving or offering to give any bribe, the embezzlement of public money, extortion or theft of public money, perjury, or conspiracy to commit any of these crimes.

This bill adds anyone who has ever had to register as a sex offender to the prohibition in 3) of existing law.

BACKGROUND

Existing Ban on Running for Office. The California Constitution states, "Laws shall be made to exclude persons convicted of bribery, perjury, forgery, malfeasance in office, or other high crimes from office or serving on juries." To effectuate these constitutional prohibitions, the Legislature has enacted various state laws, including various Penal Code and Government Code sections that enumerate events and actions which cause certain crimes to result in an elected official being disqualified from holding public office in the state.

AB 2410 (Fuentes), Chapter 160, Statutes of 2012, expanded this prohibition for persons convicted of crimes of public corruption to include running for office. Before AB 2410 took effect, the prohibition was on holding office. AB 2410 deemed accepting, giving or offering to give any bribe, the embezzlement of public money, extortion or theft of public money, and perjury to be crimes of public corruption and subjected those who had felony convictions for those crimes or conspiracy to any of those crimes ineligible to run for state or local office. This created a prohibition on running for office consistent with the constitutional prohibition on holding office.

Sex Offender Registry. California was the first state to require sex offender registration in 1947. The stated purpose for sex offender registration is to deter offenders from committing future crimes, provide law enforcement with an additional investigative tool, and increase public protection. California's sex offender registration law historically required lifetime registration by persons convicted of specified sex crimes.

Through AB 1562 (Alby), Chapter 908, Statutes of 1996, California enacted "Megan's Law" allowing the public to access an address list of registered sex offenders. AB 488 (Parra), Chapter 745, Statutes of 2004, required the California Department of Justice to put the Megan's Law list of offenders on a public access website with the offender's address, photo, and list of offenses. For some offenders with less serious offenses, only their ZIP code is listed. In addition, juvenile offenders do not appear on the Megan's Law website, nor do adult offenders who were convicted of crimes of incest.

SB 384 (Wiener), Chapter 541, Statutes of 2017, modified California's sex offender registry to a tiered registration system based on seriousness of the crime, risk of sexual reoffending, and criminal history. The recommendation to move to a tiered system came from the California Sex Offender Management Board's 2010 recommendations report. SB 384 established three tiers of registration for adult registrants for periods of 10 years (tier 1), 20 years (tier 2), and life (tier 3), and two tiers for registration for juvenile registrants for periods of 5 years and 10 years.

Rene Campos of Fresno. In February of 2026, Rene Campos, a tier 1 registered sex offender convicted of possession of child sex abuse material, announced his intention to run for a position on the Fresno City Council. Mr. Campos was originally charged with a felony but ultimately plead to a misdemeanor charge related to viewing child pornography. Mr. Campos was unable to successfully file the required documents to run for office because, according to press reports, he was unable to secure 20 signatures from registered voters required by state law on his nomination papers.

COMMENTS

1) Author's Statement. To ensure public trust in California's democratic institutions, California law prohibits those with certain criminal convictions from holding elected office. Despite this, current law has no restriction on registered sex offenders running for or holding elected positions. To ensure the safety of the public, this bill will prohibit all those who have ever been required to register as a sex offender from holding or being a candidate for any state or local elected position. This will reaffirm the public's trust in their democracy by preventing those guilty of these heinous crimes from holding an elected position of trust in their communities

2) Ever Is A Really Long Time. Unlike the sex offender registry itself, which is not necessarily a permanent listing, this bill makes permanent a person's ineligibility to run for office if they were ever registered. It does not make allowances for a person's conviction being overturned in a later court proceeding, a pardon, or the removal from either tier 1 or tier 2 of the registry through the process prescribed in existing law. The bill does not make allowances for changes in law over time, so things that may have been sex offenses in the past, such as consensual sex between two men, would preclude a person from running for office under this bill. The committee may question whether such a broad disqualification is appropriate and instead may wish to consider amending the bill to prohibit those currently required to register as tier 3 sex offenders from running for or holding office.

3) Concerns of the LGBTQ Community. California's sex offender registry dates from 1947, and over that time it has included those convicted of laws meant to marginalize and target sexual minorities, including those in the LGBTQ community. Leading civil rights organizations have worked over many decades to address the injustices embedded in the registry. As an example from its website, "Equality California has successfully worked to modernize California's outdated, ineffective and discriminatory laws … and to reform California's broken sex offender registry, which for decades treated LGBTQ+ people differently from their non-LGBTQ+ peers." By excluding from candidacy any person who has ever been on the registry, this bill dismisses those decades of work for greater justice in California's criminal justice laws and reopens the door to using those outdated laws to marginalize members of those communities.

4) Making Misdemeanors a Disqualification. This bill introduces the idea that being convicted of a misdemeanor can disqualify a person from ever being a candidate for office in California. Such misdemeanors would include any that result, or previously resulted in, having to register as a sex offender. An example of such a misdemeanor could be a 19-year-old possessing illicit photographs of their 17-year-old romantic partner for which they are convicted of a misdemeanor. The committee may question whether it is appropriate to make non-felonies a disqualification from running for office in California.

5) How Do We Know? When a candidate files a declaration of candidacy, they attest they meet the qualifications for the office, they have not been convicted of a crime of public corruption, and they will accept the nomination/election rather than withdraw. In some cases, such as for sheriff, county assessor, or district attorney, a candidate must submit documentation establishing they meet the qualifications for the office and files this documentation with a declaration, signed under penalty of perjury, certifying the information provided is true and correct. The committee or the author may wish to amend this bill to provide for documentation or attestation under penalty of perjury that the candidate has never been a registered sex offender. Something that could only be confirmed by an entity that has access to information about all those who have ever been on the registry, such as the Attorney General or the courts.

6) Other States. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, Florida and Utah have statutory and/or constitutional provisions related to candidate disqualification for conviction of a sex offense. In Florida, the right to hold office is

revoked upon conviction of a felony and may be restored when a person is returned to their civil rights. This mirrors the process for voting rights revocation and restoration. Civil rights (including voting rights and office-holding rights) are restored automatically upon completion of a sentence, unless the person was convicted of a felony sexual offense or of murder, in which case they need to petition the governor for restoration of those rights. The governor can then choose to grant or deny those petitions for rights restoration on a case-by-case basis.

In Utah, a person convicted of grievous sexual assault against a child is permanently barred from serving as a member on the state board of education or on any local school board (both are elected boards).

7) Arguments in Support. Noting its unanimous adoption of a resolution in support of the bill, the Fresno City Council writes:

> Currently, there is no prohibition preventing individuals required to register as sex offenders from seeking elected office. This undermines public confidence and raises serious concerns about the standards we set for those entrusted with leadership. Public office is built on trust, accountability, and the responsibility to protect the most vulnerable. Those who have committed crimes that violate that trust, particularly against children should not be eligible to serve in positions of public authority.
>
> [This bill] establishes a clear, consistent, and necessary standard across California.

8) Arguments in Opposition. Smart Justice opposes the bill because while supportive of "proportional and effective criminal accountability for people who have been convicted of sexual offenses against others, we believe the electorate should be responsible for making determinations about when and how a person's prior convictions should impact their ability to run for and be elected to public office." Smart Justice continues:

> California has a demonstrated commitment to providing opportunities for rehabilitation and second chances. This bill is fundamentally inconsistent with those values and fails to allow voters to consider important questions, including: whether a person seeking office has served their sentence, is meaningfully contributing to their community, and could honorably and productively serve in office. We believe it is the job of the voters and the democratic process to weigh these considerations - even if that means, as it frequently has, that the electorate chooses not to advance a candidate who has engaged in the behavior underlying the offenses addressed by this bill.

RELATED/PRIOR LEGISLATION

AB 2691 (Addis), also on today's agenda, prohibits a person convicted of specified felony sexual assault or human trafficking from running for or being elected to state or local office in California.

AB 2410 (Fuentes), Chapter 160, Statutes of 2012, prohibits a person from being a candidate for office or serving in elected office in California if the person has been convicted of a felony involving accepting, giving or offering to give any bribe, the embezzlement of public money, extortion or theft of public money, perjury, or conspiracy to commit any of these crimes.

PRIOR ACTION

Assembly Floor:	60 - 0
Assembly Elections Committee:	7 - 0

POSITIONS

Sponsor: Author

Support: City of Calimesa
City of Fresno

Oppose: League of Women Voters of California
Smart Justice California, a Project of Beyond Impact

-- END --

SENATE COMMITTEE ON
ELECTIONS AND CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS
Senator Scott Wiener, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	AB 2786	**Hearing Date:**	6/30/26
Author:	Committee on Elections		
Version:	3/12/26		
Urgency:	No	**Fiscal:**	Yes
Consultant:	Rida Shaikh		

Subject: Elections

DIGEST

This bill expands the coordination between a lead county and other counties on the deadlines for specified ballot measure materials and makes technical changes.

ANALYSIS

Existing law:

1) Defines "general election" as the following:

   a) The election held throughout the state on the first Tuesday after the first Monday of November in each even-numbered year.

   b) Any statewide election held on a *regular election date*, as specified.

2) Requires an election to be held on the next *regular election date*, not less than 113 nor more than 150 days after the date the board of supervisors calls and gives notice of the election.

3) Specifies various *established election dates*.

4) Requires all arguments and rebuttals related to a ballot measure in a district or school district that encompasses more than one county to be submitted to a lead county. The lead county, which is the county with the most voters within district bounds or whose superintendent of schools covers the district, must work with the other counties within the district boundaries to establish filing deadlines for the submissions.

5) Requires the Chairperson of the Senate Standing Committee on Elections and Constitutional Amendments and the Chairperson of the Assembly Standing Committee on Elections and Redistricting to meet with the Secretary of State (SOS) and assist the SOS to the extent that the participation is not incompatible with their positions as Members of the Legislature.

This bill:

1) Requires a lead county for multi-county ballot measures to coordinate with other counties to establish deadlines for the submission of the measure text, impartial analysis, and accompanying forms.

2) Requires a lead county to provide all ballot measure materials to the other counites within 24 hours of receipt.

3) Updates obsolete references from a *regular election date* to an *established election date*.

4) Removes a reference to the "Chairperson of the Senate Standing Committee on Elections and Constitutional Amendments and the Chairperson of the Assembly Standing Committee on Elections and Redistricting" and replaces it with "chairpersons of the elections committees of the Assembly and Senate."

COMMENTS

1) Author's Statement. This is one of the Assembly Elections Committee's annual omnibus bills, containing various minor and technical changes. This bill includes changes requested by the California Association of Clerks and Election Officials and recommendations by committee staff.

2) Lead counties. AB 773 (Pellerin), Chapter 664, Statutes of 2023, established a lead county for multi-county ballot measures. It was to help streamline the filing process for ballot measures and ensure consistent filing deadlines. AB 773 requires all arguments and rebuttals related to a ballot measure in a district or school district that encompasses more than one county to be submitted to a lead county. The lead county must work with the other counties within the district to establish filing deadlines for the submissions.

   This bill expands the requirement for a lead county to coordinate with other counties to establish deadlines for the submission of the measure text, impartial analysis, and accompanying forms. The lead county has to provide all ballot measure materials to the other counties within 24 hours of receipt. According to county election officials, this proposal will ensure all counties receive ballot measure documents in time to meet necessary printing deadlines and will safeguard that voters within the district receive the same materials.

3) Obsolete references. SB 1200 (Committee on Elections and Reapportionment), Chapter 1143, Statutes of 1996, made various technical changes to the Elections Code, one of which changing the phrase "regular election dates" to "established election dates."

   This bill updates the Elections Code and Health Safety Code by removing the obsolete references and changing it to "established election dates."

4) Non-existent committee. The Assembly Committee on Elections, prior to the 2021-2022 legislative session, was named the Assembly Committee on Elections and Redistricting.

   This bill removes references to the names of the Assembly and Senate election committees and replaces them with general terms. The change will avoid future issues with the law becoming outdated if the committee's change their name.

RELATED/PRIOR LEGISLATION

AB 773 (Pellerin), Chapter 664, Statutes of 2023, established a lead county for multi-county ballot measures to help streamline the filing process for ballot measures and ensure consistent filing deadlines.

PRIOR ACTION

Assembly Floor:	77 - 0
Assembly Appropriations Committee:	14 - 0
Assembly Elections Committee:	8 - 0

POSITIONS

Sponsor: Author

Support: California Association of Clerks and Election Officials

Oppose: None received

-- END --

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ELECTIONS AND CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Senator Scott Wiener, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	AJR 31	**Hearing Date:**	6/30/26
Author:	Bryan		
Version:	5/13/26		
Urgency:		**Fiscal:**	No
Consultant:	Scott Matsumoto		

Subject: Restoration of the Voting Rights Act of 1965

DIGEST

This resolution urges Congress to enact legislation to restore and strengthen the full protections of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (VRA).

ANALYSIS

Existing law:

1) Provides, pursuant to the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, that "[t]he right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude." The 15th Amendment authorizes Congress to enact legislation to enforce its provisions.

2) Prohibits, pursuant to Section 2 of the VRA, among other provisions, any "voting qualification or prerequisite to voting or standard, practice, or procedure" from being imposed by any "state or political subdivision in a manner which results in a denial or abridgement of the right of any citizen of the United States to vote on account of race or color." Section 5 of the VRA requires certain states and covered jurisdictions to receive approval for any changes to law and practices affecting voting practices and procedures.

This resolution:

1) Calls upon Congress to act with all deliberate speed to enact legislation to restore and strengthen the full protections of the VRA.

2) Urges Congress to restore a functional preclearance regime, including a modernized coverage formula grounded in contemporary evidence of discrimination, ensuring that jurisdictions with a record of discriminatory practices must obtain federal approval before implementing voting changes.

3) Urges Congress to codify a robust, results-based standard under Section 2 of the VRA to explicitly reject the intent-focused narrowing of the VRA created by the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Louisiana v. Callais* and provide meaningful remedies to prevent and redress racial vote dilution and discriminatory districting.

4) Calls on Congress to honor the bipartisan legacy of the VRA by ensuring its protections remain fully effective in the face of contemporary threats.

5) Urges the President to sign such legislation promptly upon its passage.

BACKGROUND

In 1965, Congress determined that state officials were failing to comply with the provisions of the 15th Amendment. As a result, Congress passed and President Johnson signed the VRA. The VRA, among other provisions, prohibits any "voting qualification or prerequisite to voting or standard, practice, or procedure" from being imposed by any "[s]tate or political subdivision in a manner which results in a denial or abridgement of the right of any citizen of the United States to vote on account of race or color."

Section 2 of the VRA is a nationwide prohibition against voting practices and procedures, including redistricting plans and at-large election systems, poll worker hiring, and voting registration procedures, that discriminate on the basis of race, color, or membership in a language minority group. In *Louisiana v. Callais*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in April 2026 that Louisiana's congressional map was unconstitutional because race was used prominently used in its design. The Court held that complying with Section 2 of the VRA did not justify race-based redistricting unless it met strict constitutional limits. The ramifications of this decision are not fully known, but other states are evaluating how this decision affects a jurisdiction's current boundaries. Section 2 also allowed the U.S. Attorney General or affected private citizens to bring lawsuits in federal court to challenge practices that may violate the VRA. In 2021, in *Brnovich v. DNC*, the U.S. Supreme Court made it more difficult to bring voter suppression claims through the judicial process.

Section 4 of the VRA set the criteria for determining whether a jurisdiction is covered under certain provisions of the VRA, including the requirement for review of changes affecting voting under Section 5.

Section 5 of the VRA requires certain states and covered jurisdictions to receive approval for any changes to law and practices affecting voting from the U.S. Department of Justice or the U.S. District Court of the District of Columbia to ensure the changes do not have the purpose or effect of "denying or abridging the right to vote on account of race or color." This is also known as a "preclearance" requirement.

The U.S. Supreme Court, in *Shelby County v. Holder* in 2013, held that a coverage formula in Section 4 of the VRA is unconstitutional and can no longer be used as a basis for subjecting jurisdictions to preclearance under Section 5 of the VRA. The Court did not directly strike down Section 5, which contains the preclearance requirements, but without Section 4, no jurisdiction will be subject to Section 5 preclearance unless Congress enacts a new coverage formula.

COMMENTS

Author's Statement. The house is on fire. The systems that were erected to protect minority representation after the unconscionable actions of a nation that violently

subjugated its Black citizens, are now again being used as an apparatus of oppression, repression and suppression. The Constitution is not self-executing. A brief journey into the electoral history of much of the nation shows that violence and terror have gone hand in hand with regulatory and legislative restrictions to crush the dreams and steal the future of Black communities by ensuring their voices were ignored and their votes did not count.

If our voice is our power, and voting is the primary expression of that power, the protections of access to the ballot box are the foundations on which we secure a just and fair democratic society.

We have seen these hurdles before—poll taxes, literacy tests, and moral character exams—all facially race-neutral, but all with the clear intent and effect of suppressing the Black vote. Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere: California must not be silent. We are more than three-fifths of a human. We are not going back.

RELATED/PRIOR LEGISLATION

SB 1164 (Cervantes) of 2026, among other provisions, repeals and replaces the California Voting Rights Act of 2001 with a state voting rights act that seeks to protect voters from voter suppression and vote dilution. The bill also creates a procedure for preclearance based off of the federal VRA.

PRIOR ACTION

Assembly Floor: 60 - 11

POSITIONS

Sponsor: California Legislative Black Caucus

Support: None received

Oppose: None received

-- END --

SENATE COMMITTEE ON
ELECTIONS AND CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS
Senator Scott Wiener, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	SB 830	**Hearing Date:**	6/30/26
Author:	Arreguín and Wiener		
Version:	6/18/26		
Urgency:	Yes	**Fiscal:**	No
Consultant:	Scott Matsumoto		

Subject: Public Transit Revenue Measure District: revenue measure: election procedures.

DIGEST

This bill prescribes the measure designation and ballot position for a Public Transit Revenue Measure District (District) tax measure on the November 2026 general election ballot. This bill also provides a process for selecting the supporting and opposing arguments that appear in county voter guides.

ANALYSIS

Existing law:

1) Specifies the order in which offices and measures appear on the ballot with ballot measures generally appearing after elected offices.

2) Requires all local ballot measures to be designated on the ballot by a letter (e.g. "Measure A"). Election officials may agree to use letter designations for ballot measures that will not conflict or confuse voters in situations where two or more nearby counties or cities are placing measures on the ballot at the same time.

3) Establishes the District to include Alameda, Contra Costa, San Mateo, and Santa Clara counties, and the City and County of San Francisco. The District is governed by the same board that governs the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), and to be staffed by the existing staff of the MTC or any successor agency.

4) Permits the District to place a ballot measure on the ballot for the November 3, 2026, statewide general election, either by an action of the District's governing board or by initiative. The election officials of the counties where the measure will appear on the ballot must mutually agree on the letter designation for the ballot measure.

5) Provides, for the purposes of a ballot measure in a special district or school district that includes more than one county, that ballot arguments be submitted to the elections official for the lead county, as specified, and that elections official must select the arguments that are printed in the voter information guides for all voters in the district. The lead county must transmit copies of the selected arguments, along with any accompanying forms, to each other county in the district. In a special

district, the lead county is the county with the most voters within the district boundaries. Santa Clara County is the lead county for a District measure.

This bill:

1) Requires a District ballot measure that would impose a transaction and use tax (TUT) to appear on the ballot immediately after statewide ballot measures and before all local ballot measures.

2) Requires the District's TUT ballot measure to be designated on the ballot by the designation "Regional Transit Measure" rather than by a letter designation (e.g., "Measure A") that would otherwise apply.

3) Requires the arguments in favor of and in opposition to the proposed ballot measure to be selected by the county elections official in which the authors want the arguments printed in the county voter information guide. Each county elections official must select, using a specified process, from the submissions for or against the measure to be included in their respective county voter information guide.

4) Requires the lead county of the District to perform the duties imposed on a lead county under existing law other than selecting the arguments for and against the measure that will appear in voter information guides.

BACKGROUND

Bay Area Transit Measure. SB 63 (Wiener), Chapter 740, Statutes of 2025, created the District and authorized a proposed TUT in the District to be placed on the November 2026 ballot to fund transportation operations in Alameda, Contra Costa, San Mateo, and Santa Clara counties, and the City and County of San Francisco. In October 2025, a coalition of labor, business, and public transit supporters launched the Connect Bay Area Transit Committee to qualify an initiative under SB 63 for the November 2026 ballot. The proponents of that measure began collecting signatures in January and submitted more than 305,000 signatures to qualify the measure for the November 2026 ballot. Based on the number of registered voters in the counties that are part of the District, approximately 187,000 valid signatures are required for the measure to qualify for the ballot.

SB 63 included procedures governing an election on the TUT measure in the District. Those procedures generally are consistent with existing law governing ballot measures in special districts, with the following exceptions:

- Counsel for the District prepares the impartial analysis of the measure to appear in county voter information guides. Under existing law, the county counsel in Santa Clara County, the lead county, would be required to prepare that analysis.

- Counties must use uniform translations of ballot materials into languages other than English and use the same letter designation for the ballot measure. Existing law does not require this type of uniformity for multi-county district ballot measures, but it also does not prevent elections officials from different counties from coordinating and agreeing to uniform translations and letter designations.

- The District must reimburse counties only for the incremental costs incurred by county election officials related to submitting the measure to the voters. Existing law generally requires districts to reimburse counties for actual costs incurred. SB 63 requires any reimbursement of election expenses to come from revenues generated from the approved ballot measure.

COMMENTS

Author's Statement. SB 63 authorized a 14-year regional public transit sales tax measure on the November 2026 ballot. If approved by voters, revenue from the tax would provide critically needed transit operations funding and save BART, Caltrain, Muni, and AC Transit from collapse, while also providing new revenues for local transit priorities and institute new accountability and financial efficiency requirements.

This bill makes minor, targeted changes to SB 63 to improve transparency across the five Bay Area counties placing this measure on the ballot by allowing different arguments to be filed at each county to consider the different expenditures across the region. The bill would also clarify election duties and standardize how and where this multi-county public transit measure will appear on voters' November 2026 general election ballots.

This bill does not change these accountability measures, nor does it change SB 63's ironclad requirements on how funding from the regional funding measure shall be distributed.

RELATED/PRIOR LEGISLATION

SB 63 (Wiener), Chapter 740, Statutes of 2025, created the District, and authorized a proposed TUT in the District to be placed on the November 2026 ballot to fund transportation operations in Alameda, Contra Costa, San Mateo, and Santa Clara counties, and the City and County of San Francisco.

AB 773 (Pellerin), Chapter 664, Statutes of 2021, established the concept of a "lead county" for multi-county district ballot measures, and made the lead county responsible for receiving and selecting the ballot arguments for and against the ballot measure.

PRIOR ACTION

Assembly Elections Committee: 6 - 0

POSITIONS

Sponsor: Bay Area Council
San Mateo County Economic Development Association
SEIU 1021
South Bay Labor Council AFL-CIO
San Francisco Planning and Urban Research

Support: 350 Bay Area Action
Abundance Network
AFSCME Council 57
Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District (AC Transit)
All Home
Amalgamated Transit Union
American EV Jobs Alliance
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, Local 3916
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, Local 3993
Boma San Francisco
California State Legislative Board of the Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers - Transportation Division (SMART-TD)
Climate Action California
Coalition for Clean Air
East Bay for Everyone
East Bay Housing Organizations
East Bay Leadership Council
El Cerrito Richmond Annex Walk & Roll
Elders Climate Action
Greenbelt Alliance
National Union of Healthcare Workers
NRDC
Public Advocates
San Francisco Bicycle Coalition
San Francisco Chamber of Commerce
San Francisco Transit Riders
Seamless Bay Area
SEIU California
Senior & Disability Action
Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition
St Forward
Streets for All
Sunflower Alliance
Sustainable San Mateo County
Sv@home Action Fund
Transbay Coalition
Transform
Transport Workers Union of America, AFL-CIO
Walk Bike Berkeley
Walk San Francisco
Westside Family Democratic Club of San Francisco

Oppose: None received

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