

Date of Hearing: August 18, 2020

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
Lorena Gonzalez, Chair
SB 480 (Archuleta) – As Amended August 10, 2020

Policy Committee: Public Safety Vote: 7 - 1

Urgency: No State Mandated Local Program: No Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill prohibits a state or local law enforcement agency from allowing its employees to wear camouflage, or any uniform that is substantially similar to a uniform worn by the United States Armed Forces or state active militia.

FISCAL EFFECT:

Likely minor costs to state law enforcement agencies to update policies regarding uniforms, specifically prohibiting camouflage.

COMMENTS:

1) **Purpose.** According to the author:

SB 480 would ensure there are identifying features on law enforcement uniforms to prevent any further confusion between our United States military and police departments in order to protect the public, our police officers, and our men and women in uniform.

2) **Background.** Existing law prohibits any other law enforcement agency from wearing a uniform that is substantially similar to a California Highway Patrol (CHP) uniform. During the recent protests over the murder of George Floyd, members of the National Guard were deployed to several California cities. Protesters in California cities reported seeing police officers dressed in military-style uniforms, including camouflage vests and masks. This bill would prohibit the use of camouflage fatigues by state and local law enforcement officers, and also uniforms that appear substantially similar to military uniforms, in responding to events and protests.

3) **Argument in Support.** According to the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department:

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department does not allow the use of uniforms substantially similar to the armed forces to be used by our members of uniformed patrol, crime suppression, or uniformed duty at an event or disturbance.