
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Anna Caballero, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 1411 (Sharp-Collins) - Voter education and outreach plans

Version: July 16, 2025

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: August 18, 2025

Policy Vote: E. & C.A. 4 - 1

Mandate: Yes

Consultant: Robert Ingenito

Bill Summary: AB 1411 would require counties that do not conduct their elections using the Voter's Choice Act (VCA) to design a voter education and outreach plan.

Fiscal Impact:

- By requiring local elections officials to develop voter education and outreach plans, as specified, this bill creates a state-mandated local program. To the extent the Commission on State Mandates determines that the provisions of this bill create a new program or impose a higher level of service on local agencies, local agencies could claim reimbursement of those costs. The magnitude is unknown, but potentially in excess of \$50,000 annually (General Fund, see Staff Comments).
- The Secretary of State (SOS) indicates that this bill would result in negligible costs.

Background: SB 450 (Allen, 2016) enacted the VCA and established a new model for counties to administer elections where every registered voter is mailed a VBM ballot and may visit any voting location, known as vote centers, within the voter's county prior to and on Election Day to vote or seek assistance with voting.

As part of the VCA, county election officials are also required to create and submit to SOS a voter education and outreach plan for approval. SOS is then required to approve, approve with modifications, or reject the voter outreach and education plan within 14 days after the plan is submitted by the county elections official. The draft plan, the amended draft plan, and the adopted final plan for the administration of elections must be posted on the website of the county elections official in each language in which the county is required to provide voting materials and assistance under state and federal law and on the SOS's website in a format that is accessible for people with disabilities.

Counties using the VCA are also required to create three committees under the county elections official: a language accessibility advisory committee (LAAC), a voting accessibility advisory committee (VAAC), and a voter education and outreach advisory committee (VEOAC). Similar to the statewide LAAC and VAAC, a local LAAC is comprised of representatives of language minority communities, while a local VAAC is comprised of voters with disabilities. The local VEOAC is comprised of voter engagement, education, and community outreach advocates.

Following the enactment of SB 450, five counties elected to change their election model to the VCA for the 2018 elections. In 2020, 10 counties made the switch and in 2022, 12 more counties opted to conduct their elections using the VCA model. For the November 2024 statewide presidential general election, 29 counties conducted their elections using the VCA model. For upcoming elections, Imperial County has indicated it too will use the VCA model.

Proposed Law: This bill would do the following:

- Repeal provisions of current law that (1) require SOS to adopt regulations requiring all counties to design and implement programs intended to identify qualified electors who are not registered voters and to register those persons to vote, (2) require SOS to adopt regulations prescribing minimum requirements for those programs, and (3) provide that if the SOS finds a county has not designed and implemented a program meeting the prescribed minimum requirements, SOS shall design a program for the county and report the violation to the California Attorney General.
- Require a county that does not conduct its elections in accordance with the VCA, to design and implement a voter education and outreach plan to identify and register qualified electors who are not registered to vote and to encourage participation in the electoral process.
- Require each voter education and outreach plan, at a minimum, to provide information to the public about online voter registration, preregistration opportunities, VBM procedures, ballot tracking services, options for military and overseas voters, options for voters with disabilities, options for in-person voting opportunities, language accessibility, and key election dates and deadlines.
- Require the SOS to provide county election officials with a template for their voter education and outreach plans and to make the most current version of each voter education and outreach plan available on the SOS's website.
- Require county elections officials to make the most current version of its voter education and outreach plan available on the county elections internet website.
- Require county election officials to submit any amendment to their voter education and outreach plans to the SOS by October 1 of each odd-numbered year.

Related Legislation: AB 855 (Low, 2017) would have required SOS to adopt regulations to prescribe minimum requirements for county programs intended to identify qualified electors who are not registered voters, and to register those people to vote, and required counties to periodically update voter registration programs. The bill was never brought up for a vote on the Senate Floor.

Staff Comments: Current law requires SOS to adopt regulations requiring a county to design and implement a voter registration plan. However, following the adoption of related emergency regulations in 1976, few counties have continued to submit consistently updated plans to SOS, and the regulations are now outdated. This bill

would repeal that outdated voter registration plan requirement for all counties and instead require non-VCA counties to submit voter education and outreach plans to SOS.

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