

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING

AB 1549 (Krell)

As Introduced January 7, 2026

2/3 vote. Urgency

SUMMARY

SUMMARY: Extends the sunset date of the pilot program authorizing specified counties to offer an alternative batterer's intervention program (BIP) to individuals convicted of domestic violence.

Major Provisions

- 1) Extends the sunset date on the authorization for the Counties of Napa, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz, and Yolo to offer alternative BIPs for domestic violence offenders from July 1, 2026, to July 1, 2030.
- 2) Adds Sacramento County as one of the authorized counties that can participate in the pilot program.
- 3) Contains an urgency clause.

COMMENTS**According to the Author**

"AB 1549 is a step toward breaking the cycles of abuse that all too often entrap victims for months or years. More than two decades ago, the state made completion of a Batterers Intervention Program (BIP) mandatory for all domestic violence offenders sentenced to probation – an important step to help prevent repeated abuse. Since then, multiple reports have documented serious shortcomings in the state's BIPs, including high absentee and dropout rates among offenders. This is driven in no small part by an outdated curriculum that fails to take advantage of modern best practices.

A May 2025 grand jury report highlighted specific, urgent shortcomings in Sacramento County's BIP. AB 1549 will allow selected counties to continue to study promising improvements to BIPs by extending the sunset date of an existing pilot program until July 2030. At the same time, it proposes a measured expansion of the pilot into Sacramento County, where stakeholders have asked for flexibility to make much-needed changes to the way BIPs operate here."

Arguments in Support

According to *the California State Association of Counties (CSAC)*, one of the bill's co-sponsors, "Existing law established in the early 1990s requires that individuals placed on probation for domestic violence battery must complete a 52-week batterer intervention program, which current statute offers minimal opportunities to explore other programming options that could more effectively meet the individualized, criminogenic needs of those who have committed domestic violence. To help address this considerable public health and safety concern, in 2017, CSAC, along with the *Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC)* and other county affiliates, set out to further assess domestic violence programming by co-sponsoring AB 372. This bill was aimed at advancing batterer intervention programming, authorizing six counties (Napa, San Luis

Obispo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, and Yolo) to pilot innovative, alternative, evidence-based, approaches with the long-term goal of improving outcomes.

"To date, the work under AB 372 has led to local batterer intervention program modifications, curriculum advancements, briefs on California's domestic violence system, recidivism research, and annual reporting. After the first five years of implementation, over 6,900 individuals have entered programs across the six counties. While progress has been made in this area, there remains work to be done to expand evidence-based practices that will change thinking patterns, reduce anti-social behavior, and better understand the complex relationship between the risk of reoffending and treatment needs."

"Simply put, AB 1549 would allow seven counties, program participants, survivors of intimate partner violence, service providers, and experts in this field to continue to engage in the work to develop more effective alternative treatment programs that reduce domestic violence."

Arguments in Opposition

None submitted.

FISCAL COMMENTS

Unknown. This bill is keyed non-fiscal by the Legislative Counsel.

VOTES

ASM PUBLIC SAFETY: 9-0-0

YES: Schultz, Alanis, Mark González, Haney, Harabedian, Lackey, Nguyen, Ramos, Sharp-Collins

UPDATED

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