

CONCURRENCE IN SENATE AMENDMENTS

AB 1572 (Alanis)

As Amended August 13, 2026

Majority vote

SUMMARY

AB 1572 requires the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) to require its officials to annually register through a platform selected by the CIF to verify the official's eligibility to officiate CIF contests, which will, until July 1, 2028, include a statewide and standardized background screening and, commencing July 1, 2028, will include a record of a valid Activity Supervisor Clearance Certificate (ASCC) issued by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC).

Senate Amendments

Senate amendments made a minor change and added co-authors.

COMMENTS

Background. The CIF, founded in 1914, is a voluntary organization consisting of over 1,600 public, public charter, and private high schools and over 750,000 student-athletes, for the purpose of governing education-based athletics in grades 9 through 12. Almost all public and private high schools in California are CIF members. The CIF is organized under the California Department of Education (CDE), and CDE has allowed the CIF to regulate interscholastic athletics and be the rulemaking body for these programs.

The CIF consists of ten regional sections, each of which is divided into several local leagues, for purposes of developing sports, scheduling athletic contests, and assigning referees. Each league elects a representative to their respective CIF section's governing body, which is called a Board of Managers or Council. Each CIF section's governing body elects officers, establishes section policies, develops section playoff sports and schedules, and CIF members adhere to these rules and regulations adopted by their section.

This bill creates requirements for game officials for CIF contests, and game officials are not considered employees of CIF or schools. This bill requires officials to annually register for a platform selected by the CIF to verify the official's eligibility to officiate CIF contests, including having done fingerprinting and a criminal background check as well as that official having liability insurance coverage.

Existing law excludes sports officials from being considered employees of an entity sponsoring an interscholastic sports event, or any person performing services as a sports official for a public agency or public entity, and according to CIF, these sports officials are considered independent contractors. There are associations of officials and referees that are accredited by CIF and organized by region and sport, and as mentioned above, CIF consists of ten regional sections, which are divided into local leagues, and the local leagues assign referees and officials to CIF games. These officials are paid and generally have liability insurance coverage, either individually or through an officials' or referees' association.

CIF is rolling out a similar statewide eligibility program for officials. In July 2025, CIF launched a new statewide registration and eligibility process for all high schools called the CIF

Officials Registration Program. Officials can pay \$29 to register through a platform to begin the process of becoming CIF-eligible, and the system will streamline background checks, standardize qualifications, and simplify access to cost effective insurance coverage through a centralized structure. The program is voluntary in 2025-26 and will become mandatory beginning in 2026-27. This bill creates a very similar process, with the notable exception of requiring officials to obtain an ASCC from the CTC, which is considered a higher level of screening than a background check. According to CIF, other states have similar systems for game officials, including Massachusetts, Illinois, and New Jersey.

ASCC. When AB 1572 was introduced, the bill required CIF to require that its officials who have undergone a background screening would be deemed eligible to receive an assignment to officiate. The most recent version of this bill ensures a greater level of security screening for officials and requires CIF, starting July 1, 2028, to require that its officials have a record of a valid ASCC issued by the CTC before being deemed and marked as eligible to receive an assignment to officiate.

According to the CTC, an individual obtaining an ASCC from the CTC must obtain fingerprint clearance through a criminal background check completed by the DOJ and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. This is considered a higher level of screening than a background check. Existing law already requires non-certificated individuals, prior to starting a paid or volunteer position working with pupils in a student activity program sponsored by the school district or county office of education, to obtain an ASCC from the CTC.

The sole purpose of the ASCC is to provide verification that the holder has completed the professional fitness review before being placed in a position working with pupils in a pupil activity program, and a pupil activity program may include interscholastic programs.

According to the Author

"AB 1572 is necessary to ensure that California's student athletes compete in safe, fair, and well-regulated environments. By establishing a consistent standard for CIF officials, we can give schools and parents confidence that officials assigned to games are qualified and accountable. This measure will also promote greater transparency and consistency across leagues, reducing uneven enforcement of rules. Ultimately, it strengthens the integrity of high school athletics and reinforces a commitment to protecting the well-being of every student athlete."

Arguments in Support

According to the CIF in support, "This bill would require CIF to annually verify the eligibility of its officials to officiate CIF contests by requiring those officials to annually register through a platform selected by CIF for that purpose. The platform would comprise a standardized background screening (and, starting on July 1, 2028, a valid Activity Supervisor Clearance Certificate), a record of understanding of the game, and a record of liability insurance coverage. Under AB 1572, only officials who are deemed eligible in the platform may be assigned to officiate CIF contests. CIF would ensure that member schools can access the platform to verify eligibility but shall not have access to any sensitive information.

"CIF has voluntarily instituted a system that would meet the requirements of AB 1572, which will be updated to comply with the Activity Supervisor Clearance Certificate in 2028, and we believe the health and safety of all interscholastic athletics participants—students, parents, coaches, and officials—is worthy of being codified into law. Therefore, we support AB 1572 and urge committee members to vote "aye" on this measure."

Arguments in Opposition

None on file.

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee:

- 1) The CTC estimates General Fund costs of \$625,000 each year to hire additional analytical and legal staff to manage the additional screenings, case intake, and misconduct caseload.
- 2) The costs for the CIF to oversee the registration platform and verification process are expected to be minor and absorbable.
- 3) The Department of Justice does not anticipate a significant fiscal impact as a result of this bill.

VOTES:**ASM ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT, SPORTS, AND TOURISM: 9-0-0**

YES: Ward, Lackey, Elhawary, Jeff Gonzalez, McKinnor, Ortega, Quirk-Silva, Valencia, Zbur

ASM EDUCATION: 9-0-0

YES: Patel, Hoover, Alvarez, Bonta, Alanis, Garcia, Lowenthal, Pellerin, Zbur

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 15-0-0

YES: Wicks, Hoover, Aguiar-Curry, Calderon, Caloza, Dixon, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Ta, Tangipa

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 72-0-8

YES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Johnson, Kalra, Krell, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ransom, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

ABS, ABST OR NV: Arambula, Chen, Garcia, Jackson, Lackey, Lee, Ramos, Celeste Rodriguez

UPDATED

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