

CONCURRENCE IN SENATE AMENDMENTS

AB 1588 (Stefani)

As Amended August 21, 2026

Majority vote

SUMMARY

Establishes new criminal penalties for engaging in an exhibition of speed, where the violation occurred as part of a sideshow, and expands the definition of a sideshow.

Senate Amendments

Double-joints this bill with AB 1830 (Petrie-Norris) in order to avoid chaptering issues.

COMMENTS

As Passed by the Assembly, this bill: Established new criminal penalties for engaging in an exhibition of speed, where the violation occurred as part of a sideshow, and expanded the definition of a sideshow.

Major Provisions

- 1) Provided that if a person is convicted of a violation of engaging in an exhibition of speed on a highway or in an off-street parking facility, as specified, where the violation occurred as part of a sideshow, and the vehicle used in the violation is registered to that person, the vehicle may be impounded at the registered owner's expense for not less than one day nor more than 30 days.
- 2) Punished a person convicted of engaging in an exhibition of speed on a highway or in an off-street parking facility, as specified, where the violation occurred as part of a sideshow, as follows:
 - a) A conviction is punishable by imprisonment in a county jail for not less than 24 hours or more than 90 days or by a fine of not less than \$355 nor more than \$1,000, or by both that fine and imprisonment.
 - b) If the driver proximately causes bodily injury to a person other than the driver, the conviction is punishable by imprisonment in a county jail for not less than 30 days nor more than six months or by a fine of not less than \$500 nor more than \$1,000, or by both that fine and imprisonment.
 - c) If the driver proximately causes specified injuries, including loss of consciousness, a concussion, a bone fracture or a wound requiring extensive suturing to a person other than the driver, the conviction is punishable as an alternate felony-misdemeanor (wobbler) by imprisonment for 16 months or two or three years or by imprisonment in a county jail for not less than 30 days nor more than six months, or by a fine of not less than \$500 nor more than \$1,000, or by both that fine and imprisonment.
 - d) If the conviction is for an offense that occurred within five years of the date of a prior offense that resulted in a conviction for this same offense, that person shall be punished

by imprisonment in a county jail for not less than four days nor more than six months and by a fine of not less than \$500 nor more than one thousand dollars \$1,000.

- e) If the perpetration of the most recent offense within the five-year period proximately causes bodily injury to a person other than the driver, a person convicted of that second violation shall be imprisoned in a county jail for not less than 30 days nor more than six months and by a fine of not less than \$500 nor more than \$1,000.
- f) If the perpetration of the most recent offense within the five-year period proximately causes serious bodily injury, as defined, to a person other than the driver, a person convicted of that second violation shall be imprisoned in the state prison for sixteen months, or two or three years, or in a county jail for not less than 30 days nor more than one year, and by a fine of not less than \$500 nor more than \$1,000.

3) Expanded the definition of a "sideshow," as follows:

- a) Specifies that this means an event or gathering in which two or more persons barricade, block, impede, or otherwise obstruct traffic upon or access to a highway or off-street parking facility without the consent of the owner, operator, or agent thereof, for the purpose of performing motor vehicle stunts, motor vehicle speed contests, motor vehicle exhibitions of speed, or reckless driving.
- b) Removes the requirement that the event is for the purpose of performing certain vehicle crimes for spectators.
- c) States that a sideshow may involve the use or operation of any motor vehicle, including, but not limited to, motorcycles or off-highway motor vehicles, regardless of whether or not those vehicles display license plates or are registered.

According to the Author

"Illegal sideshows in California have grown into highly organized and increasingly dangerous events that threaten the safety of communities across the state. These sideshow events frequently involve blocked intersections, reckless stunts, and the presence of firearms. They endanger not only participants, but also innocent bystanders, other motorists, first responders, and in some cases have resulted in the deaths of spectators. AB 1588 closes important gaps in the law and increases penalties for repeat offenders and those who cause injury to spectators. By equipping law enforcement with stronger tools to identify, apprehend, and hold participants accountable, AB 1588 aims to deter dangerous behavior, curb sideshow activity, and enhance safety for communities, motorists, and first responders alike."

Arguments in Support

According to the *Office of the Mayor of San Francisco*, AB 1830 would "help address sideshows and street takeovers that place residents in danger.

"Sideshows have increasingly become high-risk events that disrupt neighborhoods and undermine public safety. In San Francisco, these incidents do more than block streets; they create unsafe conditions for families, small businesses, and emergency services who rely on clear access to roads and safe public spaces. While the City has taken meaningful steps to curb this behavior, existing tools are insufficient.

"AB 1588 (Stefani) responds directly to these challenges by changing state law to reflect the current realities regarding sideshows. By emphasizing accountability for repeat offenders and penalties for causing serious injury during a sideshow, this bill empowers law enforcement to intervene more effectively and deter future incidents. These measures are designed to enhance public safety, not through broad penalties, but rather through clear consequences where risk and harm are present."

Arguments in Opposition

According to the *Local 148 Los Angeles (LA) County Public Defenders Union*, "By expanding the definition of "sideshows," this legislation doubles down on a failed carceral approach rather than addressing root causes.

"Based on evidence, this proposal will be ineffective. Oakland, Alameda County, San Jose, and Fresno increased fines for sideshow participation and it did not lead to meaningful reduction in the number of sideshows. While Oakland increased its fines in 2023, sideshows in Oakland are still prevalent. In 2024, the Oakland Police Department (OPD) stated that crimes, such as sideshow incidents, had actually increased, and this year 1 hundreds of spectators still gathered at sideshows.

"Moreover, higher fines do not deter behavior that is social, impulsive, or collective. Instead, financial penalties of this scale fall most heavily on low-income residents, deepening cycles of poverty and punishment rather than improving public safety. Indeed, "fines, fees, and financial penalties can trap low-income residents in a maze of poverty and punishment and prevent people from succeeding."

"Rather than escalating ineffective punishments, California should focus on environmental and community-based prevention. Oakland's Department of Transportation has begun installing bollards, steel plates, and curb extensions to disrupt intersections commonly used for sideshows, and nearby residents have already reported a decrease in activity. Roadway design, youth engagement, and investment in community-based programming are evidence-based strategies that promote safety without exacerbating inequality and racial disparities in the criminal legal system."

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee:

- 1) *Court impacts:* Unknown court cost pressures to adjudicate additional criminal enforcement actions authorized by this bill. Actual costs would depend on the number of additional cases related to violations for engaging in an exhibition of speed as part of a sideshow and the amount of court time needed to resolve each case. Staff notes that it generally costs about \$10,500 to operate a courtroom for one eight-hour day. Although courts are not funded on the basis of workload, increased staff time and resources may create a need for additional support from the General Fund to support court operations. The 2026-27 Budget appropriated \$70 million from the General Fund to backfill the current fund imbalance in the Trial Court Trust Fund and help pay for court operations. (Trial Court Trust Fund, General Fund

- 2) *State prison*: Potential increase in incarceration costs (General Fund) for new commitments to state prison for persons convicted of engaging in an exhibition of speed as part of a sideshow for a second or subsequent time within 5 years of a prior conviction and proximately causing serious bodily injury. To the extent that the provisions of this measure lead to additional commitments to state prison, it would result in additional General Fund costs of approximately \$138,000 for each year of sentencing imposed on violators.
- 3) *County jail*: Potential increase in local incarceration costs (local funds) to the extent persons would be convicted of a crime created by this bill and sentenced to county jail time. The punishment for crimes specified in this bill range from optional jail time of 30 days to six months, to mandatory jail sentences ranging from four days to 16 months or two or three years, depending on the violation. The annual cost to incarcerate one person in county jail varies by county but can range from \$70,000 to \$90,000 per year. County incarceration costs are not subject to reimbursement by the state, but overcrowding in county jails creates cost pressure on the General Fund because the state has historically granted new funding to counties to offset overcrowding resulting from public safety realignment. (local funds, General Fund)

VOTES:

ASM PUBLIC SAFETY: 9-0-0

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

ASM TRANSPORTATION: 15-0-1

YES: Wilson, Davies, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Carrillo, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Jackson, Lackey, Macedo, Papan, Ransom, Rogers, Sharp-Collins

ABS, ABST OR NV: Ávila Farías

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: 75-0-5

YES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Johnson, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, 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: Bryan, Elhawary, Kalra, Muratsuchi, Celeste Rodriguez

UPDATED

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