

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING  
AB 1589 (Chen)  
As Introduced January 15, 2026  
Majority vote

## SUMMARY

Provides that the prohibition on the possession of silencers does not apply to level I reserve peace officers, as defined, who are deputized or appointed by a listed agency, when on duty and when the use of silencers is authorized by the agency and is within the course and scope of their duties.

## Major Provisions

## COMMENTS

### According to the Author

"AB 1589 will end the ban on suppressors for level I reserve Peace Officers, creating parity with other peace officers with the exact same training and qualifications. Authorization should be based on training, certification, and safety – not job title."

### Arguments in Support

According to AB 1589's sponsor, the *Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department*, "This bill would allow level 1 Reserve Peace Officers to possess and use a silencer if they are authorized by their agency to do so, while they are on duty, and when it is used within the course and scope of their duties."

"The patrol rifle has been a necessary part of modern policing for decades, and hearing loss has since been recognized as an associated consequence of using it."

"The characteristics and capabilities of the patrol rifle noise suppressor were evaluated by the Weapons Training Unit of our Department over a fourteen-month period between August 2022 and October 2023."

"We found that using a patrol rifle equipped with a suppressor not only mitigated the risk of hearing loss, but it also improved communication, preserved night Vision and reduced the recoil of the rifle which allowed it to be used in a safer and more effective manner."

"We determined that the suppressor was an important piece of safety equipment and began training our personnel to use it."

"It was then that a member of our Department, one of those responsible for training our personnel to use the suppressor, identified that the language contained in current law seemed to have unintentionally excluded reserve peace officers from possessing a suppressor, even when they were on duty."

"In California, there are three classifications of reserve law enforcement officers, which are based on the level of training and certification they receive by their respective departments and the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST)."

*"The highest classification of reserve officer is known as the 'Level I Reserve Peace Officer.' These officers are the only reserve officers who have the same police powers and responsibilities as a 'regular, salaried, full-time peace officer.' "*

"The availability of the reserve peace officer is critical to law enforcement operations across the country. Not only do these officers often fill critical staff shortages and supplement our forces in emergent situations, the voluntary nature of their commitment to public safety is a testament to their character and serves as an inspiration to everyone who works with them."

"It is important we allow our level I reserve peace officers access to the same safety equipment as their full-time partners."

### **Arguments in Opposition**

According to *La Defensa*, "On behalf of La Defensa, I write to oppose AB 1589 (Chen), which would exempt level I Reserve Peace Officers from the prohibition on possessing silencers."

"Under existing law, it is a felony to be in possession of a silencer. Current exemptions to this felony include full-time police officers employed by an agency listed in Penal Code Section 830.1, or by the military or naval forces of California or of the United States, when on duty and when the use of silencers is authorized by the agency and is within the scope of their duties."

"The California Reserve Peace Officer Program (RPOP) is composed of people who dedicate a portion of their time to community service by working as part-time employees or volunteers with law enforcement agencies. Approximately 600 law enforcement agencies currently employ nearly 6,200 reserve officers around the state. A level I reserve officer must meet specific requirements and be appointed and can be as young as 18 years old."

"We oppose any effort to more heavily arm law enforcement of any kind with dangerous weapons that can jeopardize the safety of our communities, as this can exacerbate the epidemic of unjustifiable police use of force in this nation. Furthermore, we oppose the spending of already scarce public funds on unsafe weapons while we are already facing significant budget deficits."

"If a device is so dangerous that its mere possession by a law-abiding citizen is a felony, it is logically inconsistent to claim that the same device becomes safe or necessary when held by a government employee. If silencers are truly dangerous, then their use by law enforcement contradicts the mandate to protect and serve."

"Expanding this problematic exemption to provide more law enforcement with specialized tactical gear further contributes to this push into militarizing our local law enforcement. This shift can lead to more aggressive policing tactics, endangering more of our community members."

### **FISCAL COMMENTS**

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

**VOTES**

**ASM PUBLIC SAFETY: 8-0-1**

**YES:** Schultz, Alanis, Mark González, Harabedian, Lackey, Nguyen, Ramos, Wilson

**ABS, ABST OR NV:** Haney

**UPDATED**

VERSION: January 15, 2026

CONSULTANT: Dustin Weber / PUB. S. / (916) 319-3744

FN: 0002295