

Date of Hearing: April 15, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

AB 1604 (Stefani) – As Amended March 12, 2026

Policy Committee:	Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials	Vote:	7 - 0
	Judiciary		12 - 0

Urgency: No State Mandated Local Program: No Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill prohibits a receipt provided to a consumer by a business or created by a manufacturer from containing intentionally added bisphenols, authorizes the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) and public prosecutors to enforce the bill’s prohibitions, and requires a manufacturer to use the least toxic alternative when replacing any form of bisphenol in a receipt.

Specifically, this bill, among other things:

- 1) Prohibits a paper proof of purchase (receipt) provided to a consumer by a business or created by a manufacturer from containing intentionally added bisphenol A (BPA) on and after January 1, 2027, and any intentionally added bisphenols on and after January 1, 2028.
- 2) Authorizes DTSC to adopt regulations to implement, interpret, or make specific the provisions of this bill, and requires DTSC to post any violation or enforcement action of this bill on its website; provides that a violation of this bill is punishable by a civil penalty not to exceed \$5,000 for a first violation and not to exceed \$10,000 for each subsequent violation; and requires DTSC to deposit all penalties collected pursuant to this bill into the Toxic Substances Control Account (TSCA) to use upon appropriation by the Legislature to enforce this bill.
- 3) Authorizes DTSC, the Attorney General, a district attorney, a county counsel, or a city attorney to enforce this bill and provides that a prevailing plaintiff who establishes a violation of this bill shall be entitled to an award of reasonable attorney’s fees and costs.
- 4) Requires a manufacturer to use the least toxic alternative when replacing any form of bisphenol in a paper receipt, and prohibits a manufacturer from replacing any form of bisphenol pursuant to this bill with chemicals known to cause cancer or reproductive harm, or with any chemical identified by DTSC as a Candidate Chemical, as specified.

FISCAL EFFECT:

- 1) While DTSC’s authority in the bill (with the exception of the requirement to post any violation or enforcement action on its website) is discretionary, if the department elects to use the authority this bill grants it to adopt implementing regulations and enforce violations, it would incur both near-term and ongoing costs of an unknown amount, possibly in the hundreds of thousands to low millions of dollars (TSCA). Some of these costs may be offset by penalty revenue resulting from enforcement actions.

For its part, DTSC estimates ongoing annual costs of \$1.5 million (TSCA) to hire five staff and for equipment procurement and ongoing supply costs for its Environmental Chemistry Laboratory. Tasks include regulation and scientific method development, sample collection and testing, and enforcement-related workload. TSCA is supported by the Environmental Fee; DTSC estimates it would need to raise the fee by up to 2% to generate sufficient revenues to support implementation.

For context, as part of the Governor's fiscal year (FY) 2026-27 budget, DTSC is requesting \$3.1 million (various funds) and nine permanent positions in FY 2026-27 and \$2.5 million in FY 2027-28 and ongoing to implement and enforce various product ban bills, including SB 1266 (Limón), Chapter 790, Statutes of 2024, which prohibits the manufacture, sale, or distribution of any juvenile feeding, sucking, or teething product that contains bisphenol, and requires DTSC to enforce and establish specified standards for juvenile products. DTSC contends these resources – should the Legislature approve its BCP – would be insufficient to cover any costs incurred as a result of this bill.

- 2) Possible cost pressures (Trial Court Trust Fund (TCTF)) of an unknown amount to the courts in increased workload. Actual costs will depend on the number of cases filed and the amount of court time needed to resolve each case. It generally costs approximately \$1,000 to operate a courtroom for one hour. Although courts are not funded on the basis of workload, increased pressure on the TCTF may create a demand for increased funding for courts from the General Fund. The state budget provides annual General Fund backfills to the TCTF to offset revenue reductions, totaling approximately \$117.3 million in FY 2025-26.

The Legislative Analyst's Office recently warned of General Fund structural deficits of around \$35 billion per year in the 2027-28 FY and ongoing.

- 3) The Department of Justice anticipates minor and absorbable costs.

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Purpose.** According to the author:

AB 1604 will better protect public health and the environment in California by eliminating harmful bisphenol chemicals from paper receipts...These chemicals have been linked to detrimental health issues for women and children, which are known to cause reproductive, developmental, and behavioral harm. By removing bisphenols from receipts, this legislation helps reduce daily exposure to toxic substances and prevents contamination in recycling and composting systems – prioritizing health, safety, and environmental responsibility for all Californians.

- 2) **Background.** Point-of-sale receipts are generally printed on white thermal paper, which is coated with BPA or bisphenol S (BPS). Bisphenols are known to be endocrine disrupters and have been linked to cancer and reproductive risks. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency notes that exposure to BPA and BPS may occur during the manufacture and use of thermal paper and at its end-of-life. Both BPA and BPS are listed on the state's Proposition 65 list of chemicals known to the state to cause cancer, birth defects, or other reproductive harm. The risk of exposure is greatest for cashiers, over 70% of whom are women.

Supporters of this bill note that in a clear case of “regrettable substitution,” the more historical use of BPA in thermal receipt paper has almost completely been replaced by BPS:

The 2023 Ecology Center report Receipt Deceit found that nearly 80% of receipts tested contained BPS, even as BPA declined to about 1%, underscoring the need to regulate bisphenols as a class. Encouragingly, the same study found that non-bisphenol alternatives increased from 2% of receipts in 2017 to 20% in 2023, demonstrating that safer options are feasible.

To limit regrettable substitutions across chemicals, this bill requires a manufacturer to use the least toxic alternative when replacing any form of bisphenol in a paper receipt and to prohibit a manufacturer from replacing any form of bisphenol in a paper receipt with a chemical known to cause cancer or reproductive harm, or with any chemical identified by DTSC, through its Safer Consumer Products Program, as a Candidate Chemical.

Writing in an oppose-unless-amended position, the California Restaurant Association (CRA) argues that despite restaurants having no control over what receipt paper is sold, labeled, and manufactured, this bill holds restaurants liable for penalties – including in instances where a restaurant purchases receipt paper that was marketed or labeled as being bisphenol-free. CRA further argues this bill does not allow for the use of existing stock: “Allowing the use of manufactured stock before the effective date of the restriction would limit unnecessary waste and contribute to a smooth transition to bisphenol-free receipt products.”

- 3) **Prior Legislation.** AB 2244 (Ting), of the 2023-24 Legislative Session, was similar to this bill and was held on the Senate Appropriations Committee’s suspense file.

For a more comprehensive overview of prior legislation related to bisphenols in paper receipts and other consumer products, please see the Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials Committee analysis of this bill.

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