

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING

AB 1610 (Ransom)

As Amended April 16, 2026

Majority vote

SUMMARY

Creates uniform procedures for updating a voter's registration record when the voter changes their mailing address but not their residence address.

Major Provisions

Requires a county elections official to do the following when the official receives postal service change of address data that indicates that a voter's mailing address is no longer valid, and that mailing address was different than the voter's residence address:

- 1) If a new mailing address is provided, update the mailing address in the voter's registration record to the new mailing address, and send a forwardable notice to the voter indicating that the voter's mailing address has been updated and that if the update was incorrect, the voter should notify the elections official, as specified.
- 2) If a new mailing address is not provided and the voter lives at a residence address that can receive mail, update the voter's registration record to remove the invalid mailing address, and send a forwardable notice to the voter indicating that the voter's mailing address has been updated and that if the update was incorrect, the voter should notify the elections official, as specified.
- 3) If a new mailing address is not provided and the voter lives at a residence address that cannot receive mail, update the status of the voter's registration to inactive and mail a forwardable confirmation notice to the voter's prior mailing address, as specified.

COMMENTS

Voter registration lists—the official records of eligible, registered voters—are essential tools for administering elections, and maintaining them is critical to both accessibility and integrity. Elections officials continuously update these lists by adding new voters, revising existing records, and removing ineligible individuals. This process, known as voter list maintenance, is governed by both federal and state law.

One key source of information used in list maintenance is data from the United States Postal Service (USPS). The Secretary of State (SOS) receives monthly change-of-address data from the USPS through the California Employment Development Department and uploads it into the statewide voter registration database. The system then identifies potential matches between this data and registered voters, flagging those records for review by the appropriate counties. Counties also rely on returned or undeliverable mail, including vote by mail (VBM) ballots, as an additional tool for maintaining accurate voter records.

State law contains detailed and uniform procedures for updating voter registration records when USPS data indicates that a voter has changed their residence address. However, it does not address situations in which USPS data suggests a change to a voter's mailing address without any indication that the voter's residence has changed. According to the SOS, this gap has led counties

to adopt varying approaches, resulting in inconsistent practices across the state. This bill would establish uniform procedures for processing mailing address updates received from the USPS, promoting greater consistency in voter list maintenance statewide.

Please see the policy committee analysis for a full discussion of this bill.

According to the Author

"As the most populous state in the United States, California's elections officials work tirelessly to increase the civic engagement and turnout of voters, and to encourage voter registration.

However, our county elections officials currently lack guidance on how to properly reach Californians who change their mailing address and aren't able to receive mail at their home. As a result, there are some Californians at risk of losing their active voter registration status. As a state, it is critical for us to make the registration and change-of-address processes as streamlined as possible. This bill provides supports and clarifications for elections officials, and helps ensure voters receive the right election materials at the right address."

Arguments in Support

The sponsor of this bill, Secretary of State Shirley N. Weber, Ph.D., writes in support, "Current law provides clear guidance to our 58 counties when [National Change of Address] data indicates a voter's residence address has changed, but is silent on how to handle changes to mailing addresses. Many voters, including rural residents, military personnel, college students, and others, rely on separate mailing addresses to receive their ballots and election materials. The absence of statutory direction has resulted in inconsistent practices across counties, with some updating mailing addresses, others declining to do so, and no uniform notice being provided to affected voters. AB 1610 addresses this deficiency in current law by amending Section 2225 to...create[] three distinct procedures based on the specific circumstances... By filling this gap in Section 2225, AB 1610 will reduce confusion, improve voter communication, and ensure that all Californians can reliably receive their election materials regardless of which county they live in."

Arguments in Opposition

None received.

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee, possible aggregate costs in excess of \$150,000 annually across the state's 58 county elections officials to update voter list maintenance procedures and mail additional notices to voters. The magnitude of costs depends on the number of voters who change their mailing address without changing their residence address each year. For example, some counties report negligible costs, but other counties report costs of approximately \$10,000 annually. If the Commission on State Mandates determines this bill's requirements to be a reimbursable state mandate, the state would need to reimburse these costs to counties (General Fund (GF)).

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

VOTES

ASM ELECTIONS: 8-0-0

YES: Pellerin, Gallagher, Bennett, Berman, Elhawary, Johnson, Solache, Stefani

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 15-0-0

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

UPDATED

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