

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING

AB 1650 (Caloza)

As Amended May 20, 2026

Majority vote

SUMMARY

Requires a law enforcement agency that rents a vehicle for the purpose of detaining, arresting, or transporting persons who have violated, or are suspected of having violated, any law to display a decal on the side of the vehicle.

Major Provisions

- 1) Requires any privately owned vehicle rented by, or furnished to, any federal, state, or local law enforcement agency for the use of detaining, arresting, or transporting persons who have violated, or are suspected of having violated, any law, to have a temporary decal displaying the agency name and logo.
- 2) Requires the decal described in 1) to display in sharp contrast to the background on the front door panels and shall be of such size, shape, and color as to be readily legible during daylight hours from a distance of 50 feet the indica or name of the law enforcement entity.
- 3) Provides that the provisions of 1) do not apply to the following circumstances:
 - a) An officer engaged in plainclothes operations who is employed by the Business, Consumer Services, and Housing Agency, the Office of Law Enforcement Support, the California Health and Human Services Agency, the Labor and Workforce Development Agency, the Natural Resources Agency, the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, the Transportation Agency, the California Environmental Protection Agency, the Government Operations Agency, or by any department, board, commission, or other entity within those agencies or the federal equivalent of these state agencies;
 - b) Exigent circumstances involving an imminent danger to persons or property, the escape of a perpetrator, or the destruction of evidence, including if the officer is responding to one of these circumstances while off duty;
 - c) Privately owned vehicles rented to, or otherwise furnished or loaned to a Special Weapons and Tactics or tactical team unit that is actively performing their tactical team responsibilities;
 - d) Privately owned vehicles rented to, or otherwise furnished or loaned to, an officer engaged in protective operations involving elected officials, judicial officers, or other designated dignitaries if the display of identification would compromise the safety, anonymity, or tactical effectiveness of the protection detail;
 - e) An officer engaged in active undercover operations or investigative activities; *or*
 - f) *When the vehicle is used solely for the transport of a person who is already in lawful custody pursuant to an arrest conducted in accordance with a judicial warrant issued by a court of competent jurisdiction, as specified.*

- 4) Requires the terms and conditions of the rental car contract to specify compliance with the temporary decal requirement and permits the contract terms to require the law enforcement agency to indemnify the owner of the private vehicle.
- 5) Provides that a failure to display a decal in accordance with this section shall subject the entity renting the vehicle from the private owner to liability that shall be enforced by a civil action, brought in the name of the people of California by the Attorney General, a district attorney, county counsel, or a city attorney, who may seek injunctive or declaratory relief.
- 6) Provides that a prevailing plaintiff in an action brought pursuant to 5) is entitled to reasonable attorney's fees and costs.
- 7) Makes various findings and declarations.
- 8) Provides that the bill only applies to cars rented on or after January 1, 2027.

COMMENTS

Since returning to office in January of 2025, the Trump Administration has prioritized aggressive and unprecedented crackdowns against undocumented immigrants, immigrants with lawful status, and American citizens who stand-up to protect their neighbors. The U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's own website brags about arresting and commencing deportation proceedings against 26,000 people in 2025. Even more troubling than the arbitrary nature of the federal government's immigration crackdown are the reckless tactics utilized by many federal law enforcement officers.

One troubling tactic has been the use of unmarked rental vehicles for immigration enforcement. These unmarked vehicles stalk suspected immigrants and those who seek to protect them. Because these rental vehicles are unmarked, it is not at all apparent that a person is being followed by law enforcement. Accordingly, this bill would require all law enforcement agencies renting vehicles in California for the purpose of conducting law enforcement activity to display a temporary decal on the side of the vehicle denoting the vehicle as belonging to law enforcement.

The use of rental vehicles has become a hallmark of federal immigration enforcement. While the massive rollout of immigration enforcement is clearly being coordinated and managed through the White House to target cities that particularly displease the President, like many actions undertaken by the Trump Administration, some aspects of the current immigration enforcement scheme can be described as haphazard at best. Because federal officials likely lacked sufficient vehicles and other resources to meet the scale of President Trump's immigration enforcement demands, the agency has had to rely on rented vehicles. From agents jumping out of yellow Penske rental trucks in Los Angeles like wannabe commandos (*Border patrol agents use unmarked rental truck to ambush people at LA Home Depot – video*, The Guardian (Aug. 6, 2025) available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/video/2025/aug/06/border-patrol-agents-use-unmarked-rental-truck-to-ambush-people-at-la-home-depot-video>) to agents clearly driving around midwestern cities in rental cars procured from airport rental facilities, the almost comical nature of some federal law enforcement actions belies the dangers that these actions pose to impacted communities.

For example, the Illinois Secretary of State discovered that federal agents were swapping the license plates of rental vehicles to avoid detection during Operation Midway Blitz, a targeted

enforcement campaign aimed at predominantly Latino neighborhoods in Chicago. (Natasha Korecki, *Illinois officials warn rental car companies that it is illegal for immigration agents to swap license plates*, NBC News (Dec. 2, 2025) available at: <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/illinois-rental-car-license-plates-immigration-agents-illegal-rcna246115>.) Not only is swapping license plates a violation of Illinois law, the tacit made it harder for rental car companies to track their own vehicles. This is on top of the terror that unmarked vehicles plucking unsuspecting people from their streets inflicted on communities.

While many early efforts to stop this behavior, including those originally taken by the Illinois Secretary of State, targeted at rental car companies, the companies themselves note it is nearly impossible to stop federal law enforcement from utilizing their vehicles. For starters, even if a vehicle is booked through a corporate account, the desk staff at a rental agency may not know the car was rented by law enforcement. Furthermore, there is nothing to stop federal agents from renting cars in their personal capacity and then using them for federal law enforcement. Accordingly, safeguards must be aimed at the *renter* of the vehicle and not the *car rental company* who may not be aware of the purpose for renting a vehicle.

This bill requires all law enforcement, not just the federal government, to identify itself when using rental vehicles in enforcement actions. Existing California law, found in several sections of the Vehicle Code, establishes a statutory scheme whereby law enforcement vehicles operating in this state must be readily identifiable. This protects both law enforcement, as they are easily identifiable, and the public who know a vehicle represents a government official. However, when law enforcement utilizes unmarked rental vehicles for official law enforcement activities, this statutory scheme becomes frustrated and the danger to individual law enforcement officers and the general public grows.

Accordingly, this bill requires all law enforcement agencies, from the local level to the federal government, to apply a temporary decal to a rental vehicle with the law enforcement agency's insignia or name prominently displayed. This would apply only when the vehicle is being utilized to detain, arrest, or transport persons who have violated, or are suspected of having violated, any law. Thus, this bill would not apply to a police officer renting a vehicle to attend a conference or other non-enforcement related use. The bill provides carveouts for certain plain clothes and undercover operations as well as exigent circumstances when an officer has no choice but to detain a person to deter an imminent threat to public safety, *or uses a vehicle to transport a previously detained person so long as the detention was conducted pursuant to a valid judicial warrant.*

The bill makes the decal provisions enforceable by a civil action brought by the Attorney General, district attorneys, and local civil prosecutors. Finally, amendments require the rental car company to specify in rental agreements that the decal is mandatory and provides the rental car company with the ability to seek indemnity should they be inadvertently brought into litigation surrounding this bill.

According to the Author

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is terrorizing our communities—in our schools, businesses, places of worship, neighborhoods, and our own homes. The practice of using privately-owned rented vehicles in ICE raids creates confusion as to whether ICE agents are acting with lawful authority and places motorists and pedestrians in danger. AB 1650 enhances the safety of all persons present during an ICE raid. AB 1650 holds the Trump Administration

accountable and lets them know that if they come for one of us, they come for all of us. While ICE is tearing families apart and kidnapping children, Trump is building a multi-million dollar ballroom and is cutting billions of dollars in healthcare. As leaders and legislators, we should be working to fix our broken immigration system with humanity, not advancing policies that deny dignity, opportunity, and justice for all.

Arguments in Support

This bill is supported by several immigration advocates, labor organizations, and student groups. In support of the bill, Homies Unidos writes:

Since the summer of 2025, ICE agents have been raiding the streets, targeting immigrant communities, families, and innocent civilians. Starting with the raids in Los Angeles, suspect ICE enforcement activities have spread throughout California, including in San Diego, Sacramento, San Francisco, and other cities. Advocacy campaigns and public debates have exposed that rental companies provide vehicles for ICE operations, prompting protests and calls for corporate accountability.

Homies Unidos strongly support AB 1650 because in the Westlake, Koreatown and Pico Union, we have seen our community terrified by masked ICE agents coming out of rental trucks and snatching people like kidnappers in countries our immigrants are fleeing from. Our community has concerns that ICE, with the millions of dollars allocated should drive their own vehicles to be recognized.

Prohibiting rental vehicles from being used in activities that violate people's rights prevents the misuse of commercial services and enhances community trust.

Arguments in Opposition

This bill is opposed by the California Chamber of Commerce and the Peace Officers Research Association of California. In opposition the Chamber writes:

AB 1650 creates new requirements for rental cars such that, if they are used by law enforcement (including immigration detention) for "detaining, arresting, or transporting persons who have violated ... any law," then they must have decals that clearly delineate the agency using the vehicle. Then, AB 1650 creates limited exceptions for certain agencies and circumstances.

To enforce its provisions, AB 1650 then gives enforcement authority to the Attorney General, district attorneys, city attorneys, or county counsel to sue the renting company and allows the recovery of attorney's fees and costs.

Notably, AB 1650 makes no consideration for if a renting individual or agency rents a vehicle *with appropriate decals but then removes them*. In other words – AB 1650 is an attempt to prevent federal law enforcement from using rental vehicles – but places the burden on the rental car company to determine the purposes for which the vehicle will be used, and to potentially refuse service to such law enforcement. Obviously, this comes in the context of federal *immigration* enforcement – but the law is not limited to such specific activities or to this administration.

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee:

- 1) Possible costs (General Fund, special funds) to the Department of Justice (DOJ) of an unknown amount. Actual costs will depend on whether the Attorney General pursues enforcement actions, and, if so, the level of additional staffing needed by DOJ to handle the related workload. If DOJ hires staff to handle enforcement actions authorized by this bill, the department would incur significant workload costs, likely in the low hundreds of thousands of dollars annually at a minimum. If DOJ does not pursue enforcement as authorized by this bill, the department would likely not incur any costs.
- 2) Cost pressures (Trial Court Trust Fund, General Fund) of an unknown but potentially significant amount to the trial courts to adjudicate matters under the bill. One hour of court time has an estimated cost of approximately \$1,000; even a small number of contested matters could generate court costs exceeding the \$150,000 suspense threshold. Although courts are not funded on the basis of workload, increased pressure on the Trial Court Trust Fund may create a need for increased funding for courts from the General Fund. The state budget provides annual General Fund backfills to the Trial Court Trust Fund to offset revenue reductions, totaling approximately \$117.3 million in 2025-26.

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

VOTES**ASM JUDICIARY: 9-3-0**

YES: Kalra, Bauer-Kahan, Bryan, Connolly, Harabedian, Pacheco, Papan, Stefani, Zbur

NO: Macedo, Dixon, Sanchez

ASM PUBLIC SAFETY: 7-2-0

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

NO: Alanis, Lackey

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 11-4-0

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

NO: Hoover, Dixon, Ta, Tangipa

UPDATED

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