

Date of Hearing: April 7, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY
Ash Kalra, Chair
AB 1724 (Ellis) – As Introduced February 5, 2026

PROPOSED CONSENT (As Proposed to be Amended)

SUBJECT: COURT OPERATIONS

KEY ISSUE: SHOULD THE JUDICIAL COUNCIL BE REQUIRED TO REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE ABOUT THE JUDICIARY’S COMPLIANCE WITH EXISTING LAW THAT REQUIRES THE COURTS TO TRANSMIT SPECIFIED CONVICTION INFORMATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES?

SYNOPSIS

In order to ensure that dangerous drivers are taken off of California streets, existing law requires the courts to transmit data regarding specified traffic-related convictions to the Department of Motor Vehicles within five days. The existing law is designed to permit the Department of Motor Vehicles to update driver records in a timely manner and initiate proceedings to suspend or revoke a defendant’s driving privileges when appropriate. However, a 2025 investigative series by Cal Matters discovered that in hundreds of cases over the last five years, the courts have failed to transmit conviction data to the Department of Motor Vehicles, thus permitting dangerous drivers to remain on California roadways.

This bill, as proposed to be amended, would require the Judicial Council to submit to the Legislature a report regarding the court’s compliance with the existing Department of Motor Vehicle notice laws. The report would be required to be produced every three years and focus on conviction data related to driving under the influence, street racing, and gross vehicular manslaughter.

This non-controversial measure is supported by a coalition of traffic safety and victims’ advocates. The supporters note that California has seen an unacceptable increase in arrests for driving under the influence in recent years and argue that the courts must assist the Department of Motor Vehicles in proactively removing dangerous drivers from California roadways. This bill has no registered opposition.

SUMMARY: Requires the Judicial Council, every three years, to report to the Legislature about compliance with transmitting specified conviction information to the Department of Motor Vehicles. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Requires, every three years, the Judicial Council report to the Legislature regarding superior court compliance with applicable deadlines for transmitting an abstract of the record to the Department of Motor Vehicles for when a person is convicted of a violation relating to:
 - a) Driving under the influence of alcohol;
 - b) Driving under the influence of alcohol and causing bodily injury;

- c) Engaging in a motor vehicle speed contest on a highway or in an offstreet parking facility;
- d) Engaging in a motor vehicle speed contest causing bodily injury; and
- e) Gross vehicular manslaughter while intoxicated.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Requires the clerk of a superior court to prepare an abstract of the record of the court covering a case within five days after conviction and immediately forward that abstract to the Department of Motor Vehicle's office in Sacramento if a person is convicted on any of the following vehicle-related offenses:
 - a) A violation of the Vehicle Code;
 - b) A violation of provisions of the Harbors and Navigation Code pertaining to a mechanically propelled vessel except for a water ski, an aquaplane, or similar device;
 - c) A violation of the Harbors and Navigation Code for any violation of operating a watercraft when underage;
 - d) Vehicular manslaughter;
 - e) Operating as a charter-party carrier of passengers without proper licensure from the Public Utilities Commission;
 - f) Operating a vehicle while under a controlled substance;
 - g) A felony offense committed when operating a commercial motor vehicle; and
 - h) Any other statute relating to the safe operation of vehicles. (Vehicle Code Section 1803 (a).)
- 2) Requires the clerk of the court, within five days of an order terminating or revoking probation for driving under the influence, to notify the Department of Motor Vehicles. (Vehicle Code Section 1803 (d).)
- 3) Requires the clerk of the court to notify the Department of Motor Vehicles of any reversal in a judgment within 30 days of the date the judgment of reversal becoming final. (Vehicle Code Section 1803.3.)
- 4) Provides that it is unlawful for a person who is under the influence of any alcoholic beverage to drive a vehicle. (Vehicle Code Section 23152.)
- 5) Provides that it is unlawful for a person, while under the influence of any alcoholic beverage, to drive a vehicle and concurrently do any act forbidden by law, or neglect any duty imposed by law in driving the vehicle, which act or neglect proximately causes bodily injury to any person other than the driver. (Vehicle Code Section 23153.)

- 6) Prohibits a person from engaging in a motor vehicle speed contest on a highway or in an offstreet parking facility. (Vehicle Code Section 23109.)
- 7) Specifies the punishment for a person convicted of violating 6) and causing bodily injury, as specified. (Vehicle Code Section 23109.1.)
- 8) Defines gross vehicular manslaughter while intoxicated as the unlawful killing of a human being without malice aforethought, in the driving of a vehicle, where the driving was in specified provisions of the Vehicle Code related to driving under the influence, and the killing was either the proximate result of the commission of an unlawful act, not amounting to a felony, and with gross negligence, or the proximate result of the commission of a lawful act that might produce death, in an unlawful manner, and with gross negligence. (Penal Code Section 191.5.)

FISCAL EFFECT: As currently in print this bill is keyed fiscal.

COMMENTS: Existing law requires the California courts to transmit to the Department of Motor Vehicles information regarding specific driving offenses that, upon conviction, may lead to the defendant losing their driving privileges in this state. However, media reports indicate that the courts have not consistently met the statutory deadline for informing the Department of Motor Vehicles about these offenses. Accordingly, the Department of Motor Vehicles is not revoking or suspending the licenses of persons convicted of vehicle-related crimes in a timely manner, as the Department is not aware of some convictions. In support of this bill to require the Judicial Council to report to the Legislature regarding its compliance with existing law, the author states:

For years, California has allowed drivers convicted of serious offenses continue to operate on the road, putting the lives of others at risk. Due to California courts failing to report convictions of vehicular manslaughter to DMV within 5 days of conviction as required by state law, several hundreds of drivers with convictions have been able to keep their driving privileges when they should have been revoked. AB 1724 would require the Judicial Council to review and report to the Legislature, superior court compliance with deadlines for transmitting records to the DMV when a person is convicted of vehicular manslaughter, DUI, or engaging in a speed contest, ensuring that California's courts are complying with state law.

In order to protect the driving public, California courts are required to inform the Department of Motor Vehicles regarding driving related convictions. Dangerous driving can pose a serious risk to the health and safety of all Californians. Accordingly, existing law requires the California courts to quickly transmit information regarding persons convicted of specified crimes involving vehicles to the Department of Motor Vehicles. The Department must then take steps to suspend or revoke the license of the convicted driver, if necessary. For example, Vehicle Code Section 1803 requires courts to transmit conviction information for various vehicle and boating offenses to the Department of Motor Vehicles within five days of the conviction. Not only does this information help the Department determine if a driver's license should be suspended or revoked but it also serves as the means by which insurers can obtain information about a driver's record. The failure to transmit this information in a timely manner may result in dangerous drivers remaining on the streets and insurers unable to properly set rates in California.

While one would assume the judicial branch would fulfill its legal obligations, a 2025 series by Cal Matters highlights that, far too often, the court is failing to transmit critical conviction data to the Department of Motor Vehicles. For example, in 2023, a Los Angeles man was convicted of “gunn[ing]his car, los[ing] control and slam[ing] into a tree,” which resulted in the death of the vehicle’s passenger. (Lauren Helper & Robert Lewis, *They were convicted of killing with their cars. No one told the California DMV*, CalMatters (June 25, 2025) available at: <https://calmatters.org/investigation/2025/06/california-courts-dmv/?series=license-to-kill>.) Despite their legal obligation to do so, records indicated that the Los Angeles County Superior Court failed to transmit the conviction data to the Department of Motor Vehicles which would have been legally obligated to immediately suspend the defendant’s license for three years. As a result of the defendant maintaining their license, in the two months following their conviction, the same defendant was issued two speeding tickets and was involved in another vehicle collision. (*Ibid.*)

The Cal Matters investigation noted this was not an isolated incident. In fact, between 2019 and 2024, reporting discovered at least 400 driving related convictions that were not posted to the defendant’s Department of Motor Vehicle records. (*Ibid.*) However, due to system inoperability and the fact that not all driving related offenses are vehicle code violations, case data does not always get transferred from a court clerk to the Department of Motor Vehicles, resulting too many dangerous drivers retaining their licenses.

Recognizing that some conviction data appears not to have been transferred to the Department of Motor Vehicles in a timely manner, this bill would require the Judicial Council to report to the Legislature regarding its compliance with existing law. The aforementioned Cal Matters report also highlighted that some courts have no or incomplete data regarding what information is transferred to the Department of Motor Vehicles. Without a more complete picture of court operations, it is impossible for the Legislature to know how widespread the court’s failure to transmit conviction data to the Department of Motor Vehicles is in reality. To that end, as proposed to be amended, this bill would mandate that the Judicial Council report to the Legislature information regarding court compliance with transmitting conviction data to the Department of Motor Vehicle for offenses related to driving under the influence, street racing, and gross vehicular manslaughter. The bill proposes for this report to be produced every three years.

Proposed authors amendments revise and recast this bill to move away from an audit to a reporting requirement. As currently in print this bill would have required the courts, when conducting financial audits, to also audit the effectiveness of their programs for transmitting conviction data to the Department of Motor Vehicles. Indeed, the audit provisions were drafted into a code section that made the audit both voluntary for the courts and appeared to be linked to outdated provisions of law. Accordingly, in order to make this bill more effective, the author is proposing to strike the bill in print and replace the current language with the reporting requirement described above. Accordingly, the bill now will create a new Government Code Section 72404 to read as follows:

- (a) Every three years, the Judicial Council shall, in compliance with Section 9795, report to the Legislature regarding superior court compliance with applicable deadlines for transmitting an abstract of the record to the Department of Motor Vehicles for when a person is convicted of a violation relating to:***
- (1) Section 23152 of the Vehicle Code***

- (2) Section 23153 of the Vehicle Code*
- (3) Section 23109 of the Vehicle Code*
- (4) Section 23109.1 of the Vehicle Code*
- (5) Section 191.5 of the Penal Code*

Although no formal position has been expressed to the Committee regarding this bill, the above amendments should make this bill relatively easy for the Judicial Council to implement.

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT: This bill is supported by several traffic safety and victim's advocacy organizations. Writing in support of the bill, Mothers Against Drunk Driving notes:

AB 1723 ensures drivers convicted of vehicular manslaughter do not have a reduced revocation period of their driving privileges due to administrative delays. AB 1723 clarifies that the "date of revocation" refers to the date the DMV revokes a person's driving privileges, not the date of conviction.

AB 1724 ensures courts are complying with state law. AB 1724 requires Judicial Council to report on superior court operations including a review of transmittal of records to the DMV when a person is convicted of a violation relating to the safe operation of a vehicle

Drunk driving is a problem in California and AB 1723 and AB 1724 will help to ensure justice in the system. Since the pandemic, drunk driving deaths spiked. Since 2019, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), drunk driving deaths in California have increased 40% resulting in 1,355 preventable deaths in 2023.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Conor Lynch Foundation
Mothers Against Drunk Driving
SoCal Families for Safe Streets

Opposition

None on file

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