

Date of Hearing: May 6, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

AB 1764 (Sanchez) – As Amended April 16, 2026

Policy Committee: Elections

Vote: 8 - 0

Urgency: No

State Mandated Local Program: Yes

Reimbursable: Yes

**SUMMARY:**

This bill authorizes the Secretary of State (SOS) to enter into an agreement with the federal Social Security Administration (SSA) to facilitate the availability of death statistics.

Specifically, this bill:

- 1) Authorizes, until January 1, 2028, the SOS to enter into an agreement with the SSA to facilitate the availability of death statistics.
- 2) If the SOS enters into such an agreement, requires the SOS to adopt regulations governing the electronic transfer of death statistics from the SSA.
- 3) Requires the SOS or applicable county elections official to use SSA data to cancel the affidavit of registration for a deceased person.

**FISCAL EFFECT:**

- 1) Costs of approximately \$455,000 in the first year and \$100,000 ongoing to the SOS to modify the statewide voter registration database system (VoteCal) to receive SSA records, match SSA records to California voter records, and initiate the pre-cancellation process for affidavits of registration specified in the Elections Code (General Fund (GF)). The SOS notes that \$55,000 of the first-year costs will be used to promulgate regulations.
- 2) Minor and absorbable ongoing costs across the state's 58 county elections officials to use SSA data to cancel the affidavits of registration for deceased persons. 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 (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.

**COMMENTS:**

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

Election experts agree that maintenance of voter rolls is crucial to preserving integrity and security in our elections. I introduced AB 1764 to provide our state's election officials with more tools to ensure

that our voter registration lists are updated and properly maintained. This will help elections run smoother, save taxpayer money, and reduce the likelihood of fraud.

This bill is supported by the California Association of Clerks and Elections Officials.

- 2) **Voter File Maintenance.** VoteCal is the statewide voter registration database system that connects the SOS and all 58 counties. County elections officials can use VoteCal to check for duplicate registrations, move a voter's record from one county to another when a voter moves, and check to ensure a voter has not been convicted of a felony, among other uses. Voter registration is also cross-checked with information from federal and state agencies, such as the Office of Vital Records at the Department of Public Health (CDPH), to ensure voter rolls are accurate. With regard to deceased voters, county elections officials receive death data from their local public health departments and also utilize obituaries, notifications from family members, and returned mail marked "Deceased."

Although some counties may also purchase third-party data that includes SSA death records for voter file maintenance, existing law only requires the SOS obtain death records from the State Department of Health Services (currently reorganized as the Department of Health Care Services and CDPH) for this purpose. However, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures, 10 other states use SSA death records for voter file verification. This bill authorizes the SOS to enter into an agreement with the SSA to facilitate the availability of death records and requires use of the data to cancel a deceased voter's registration.

- 3) **Prior Legislation.** AB 1688 (Sanchez), of the 2023-24 Legislative Session, was similar to this bill. AB 1688 was held on the Senate Appropriations Committee's suspense file.

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