
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 1789 (Boerner) - Political Reform Act of 1974: candidate trainings

Version: June 8, 2026

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: June 29, 2026

Policy Vote: E. & C.A. 5 - 0

Mandate: Yes

Consultant: Robert Ingenito

Bill Summary: AB 1789 would require candidates and campaign treasurers, beginning in 2029, to take a training course on the requirements of the Political Reform Act provided by the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC).

Fiscal Impact: FPPC indicates that it would incur first-year costs of \$405,000, and \$391,000 annually thereafter, to implement the provisions of the bill (General Fund, see Staff Comments).

Background: The Political Reform Act (PRA), approved by voters in 1974 through Proposition 9, established California's framework for campaign finance disclosure and political transparency. The Act governs campaign activities involving candidates, elected officials, ballot measures, and political committees, and created FPPC to administer and enforce its provisions.

The Act requires candidates, political committees, slate mailer organizations, and other specified entities to periodically disclose campaign contributions, expenditures, and other financial activities. While current law does not require candidates or committee treasurers to complete formal training, FPPC provides a variety of educational resources and guidance materials to assist regulated entities in complying with campaign finance requirements.

Violations of the PRA may be subject to administrative, civil, or criminal penalties. In practice, however, enforcement is primarily carried out through the FPPC's administrative enforcement process, with civil and criminal actions occurring less frequently.

Proposed Law: This bill, among other things, would do the following:

- Require, starting in 2029, a candidate with a candidate-controlled committee to complete a training course on the requirements of the PRA for campaigns for the office for which they are running, as specified.
- Require, starting in 2029, a treasurer for a candidate controlled committee to complete a training course on the requirements of the PRA that apply to that committee, as specified.
- Direct the FPPC to develop, maintain, and offer the training courses, which shall be available via an online platform, the internet, or an application. The candidate training may not exceed 90 minutes, and the treasurer training may not exceed two hours.

- Exempt from the requirements of the bill anyone who has had to take a similar local government training, as determined by FPPC.

Related Legislation: AB 2592 (Pacheco) would direct FPPC, rather than the Legislature's ethics committees, to provide training required of lobbyists. The bill is currently pending in this Committee.

Staff Comments: FPPC would require two positions to perform the workload (developing the new training courses and providing enforcement for non-compliance) required by the bill. The resulting personnel costs would total \$311,000 annually. Additionally, FPPC would incur an annual cost of \$80,000 annually for a software license for the training programs.

Any local government costs resulting from the mandate in this measure are not state-reimbursable because the mandate only involves the definition of a crime or the penalty for conviction of a crime.

-- END --