

CONCURRENCE IN SENATE AMENDMENTS

AB 1789 (Boerner)

As Amended June 8, 2026

2/3 vote

SUMMARY

Requires candidates and committee treasurers to take training classes related to their obligations under the Political Reform Act (PRA), beginning in 2029.

Senate Amendments

Provide that this bill's training requirement for candidates applies once the candidate has registered a candidate-controlled committee.

COMMENTS

Although existing law does not require candidates or committee treasurers to complete any training, the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) has prepared many informational and educational resources, including campaign manuals, fact sheets, and online webinars, to help educate the regulated community about their obligations under the PRA. Among other online videos, the FPPC's YouTube channel includes a Tutorial for Candidates and Treasurers that is approximately 34 minutes long and has been available since late 2018. According to the YouTube page for that video, it has been viewed approximately 11,500 times. The FPPC's YouTube channel also includes a 32-minute-long training video for campaign filing officers that has been viewed approximately 3,000 times since being uploaded in 2016.

While the use of these publicly available resources seems to suggest that the FPPC's training resources have been well received, the total number of views on these videos represents a small fraction of the number of candidates for public office that have appeared on the ballot in California over that time. Requiring candidates and committee treasurers to complete training could considerably expand awareness of the FPPC's informational materials and of those individuals' obligations under the PRA.

According to information provided by the author and sponsor of the bill, over the last three years, the FPPC has prosecuted approximately 90 cases involving campaign violations by candidate-controlled committees (not including cases resolved without fines or penalties). The author argues that because candidates are the most visible actors in the electoral process, campaign violations by candidates are particularly harmful to public trust, even when those violations are unintentional. Requiring candidates and treasurers to complete training about their obligations under the PRA may help reduce the number of violations caused by lack of knowledge or understanding of relevant legal requirements.

As approved by the Assembly, this bill required any individual who filed a statement of intention to be a candidate for elective office to complete the required training unless that statement indicated that the candidate did not intend to qualify a campaign committee. The Senate amendments instead make the training requirement apply once a candidate has registered a candidate-controlled committee. This bill, as amended in the Senate, is generally consistent with prior Assembly actions.

California voters passed an initiative, Proposition 9, in 1974 that created the FPPC and codified significant restrictions and prohibitions on candidates, officeholders, and lobbyists. That initiative is commonly known as the PRA. Amendments to the PRA that are not submitted to the voters, such as those contained in this bill, must further the purposes of the initiative and require a two-thirds vote of both houses of the Legislature.

According to the Author

"Government transparency is important to maintain the public's trust. AB 1789 would require candidates and treasurers to take a training course with the California Fair Political Practices Commission to ensure that they understand and are prepared to comply with the Political Reform Act."

Arguments in Support

The sponsor of this bill, the FPPC, wrote in support of a prior version of the bill, "AB 1789 would, starting January 1, 2029, require candidates and treasurers to complete a training course on their duties under the PRA, subject to specific deadlines. The consequences for failure to complete the training are designed to compel timely compliance, to ensure that candidates and treasurers receive this training when it is most pertinent and beneficial. Devoting time to education will not only assist candidates but also improve compliance and timely transparency."

Arguments in Opposition

None received.

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee, 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). 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.

VOTES:

ASM ELECTIONS: 8-0-0

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

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 11-0-4

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

ABS, ABST OR NV: Hoover, Dixon, Ta, Tangipa

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 78-0-2

YES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia,

Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Johnson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

ABS, ABST OR NV: Muratsuchi, Celeste Rodriguez

SENATE FLOOR: 39-0-1

YES: Allen, Alvarado-Gil, Archuleta, Arreguín, Ashby, Becker, Blakespear, Cabaldon, Caballero, Cervantes, Choi, Cortese, Dahle, Durazo, Gonzalez, Grayson, Grove, Hurtado, Jones, Laird, Limón, McGuire, McNerney, Menjivar, Niello, Ochoa Bogh, Padilla, Pérez, Richardson, Rubio, Seyarto, Smallwood-Cuevas, Stern, Strickland, Umberg, Valladares, Wahab, Weber Pierson, Wiener

ABS, ABST OR NV: Reyes

UPDATED

VERSION: June 8, 2026

CONSULTANT: Ethan Jones / ELECTIONS / (916) 319-2094

FN: 0003690