

Date of Hearing: May 6, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

AB 1874 (Wilson) – As Amended March 26, 2026

Policy Committee:	Public Safety	Vote:	8 - 0
	Transportation		16 - 0

Urgency: No State Mandated Local Program: No Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill prohibits the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) from reinstating the driving privilege of a person convicted of certain vehicular crimes and imprisoned as a result of the conviction or convictions, until (a) three years after the person’s release from confinement and (b) the person gives proof of financial responsibility, pursuant to existing law.

The crimes to which this bill applies are:

- Manslaughter resulting from the operation of a motor vehicle, with some exceptions.
- Conviction of three or more violations, within 12 months of the first offense to the third or subsequent offense, or a combination of three or more convictions of violations within the same period, of any of the following: (1) hit and run resulting in injury or death, (2) hit and run resulting only in property damage, (3) reckless driving, (4) reckless driving causing bodily injury or great bodily injury, or (5) reckless driving that causes specified injuries.
- Violation of gross vehicular manslaughter while intoxicated or intoxicated vehicular manslaughter while operating a vessel with gross negligence, as specified, or of fleeing or attempting to elude a peace officer, causing death or serious bodily injury resulting in specified serious impairments of physical condition, as specified.

FISCAL EFFECT:

This bill creates significant new administrative work of the DMV and will require substantial changes to DMV’s IT system.

The DMV notes it tracks neither people’s incarceration in the state’s various jails and prisons, nor their release from those jails and prisons. DMV warns that its “core legacy” IT systems cannot accommodate modifications and that adding functionality to its legacy IT systems jeopardizes continuity of services, systems and data integrity, and would come at great cost. The DMV further notes it is undertaking a comprehensive modernization of its IT systems and accommodating the requirements of this bill into that modernization effort would delay overall implementation and increase costs.

The costs described above would likely be paid with funds in the Motor Vehicle Account (MVA), the main funding source of both the DMV and California Highway Patrol (CHP), which is facing insolvency. The Legislative Analyst’s Office (LAO) advises, “Until a plan is put in

place to address MVA's structural deficit, we recommend the Legislature set a high bar for considering approval of any proposals that create additional MVA cost pressures and accelerate the risk of insolvency."

COMMENTS:

Existing law requires DMV to suspend or revoke the license to drive of a person convicted of various driving-related and criminal offenses. DMV generally relies on the court to notify it of such a conviction and the law specifies that DMV's suspension or revocation of a person's driver license take affect upon conviction or, for some offenses, upon DMV's receipt of a duly certified abstract of the record of a court, though, for certain offenses, law allows the court to postpone the revocation or suspension of the person's driving privilege until the term of imprisonment is served.

It is, therefore, sometimes the case that the period of suspension or revocation of a person's license coincides with that person's period of incarceration for the offense that led to DVM to suspend or revoke the person's license in the first place. The author contends such a situation makes driver license suspension "meaningless." According to the author:

Allowing individuals convicted of serious driving offenses to return to the road immediately after incarceration puts everyone at risk...License suspensions should genuinely protect the public by keeping unsafe drivers off the road, not serve as empty gestures...AB 1874 closes a dangerous loophole by preventing license suspensions from being served while offenders are incarcerated. By prioritizing public safety, this bill keeps high-risk drivers off the road during a critical time upon reentry, helping more Californians get home safely.

The bill is supported by several law enforcement agencies and associations and, among others, the League of California cities, which asserts "dangerous and reckless drivers are not consistently held to standards that prevent traffic deaths in our cities" and that this bill will have the effect of "ensuring that license suspensions serve their intended purpose of both accountability and public protection."

The bill is opposed by Debt Free Justice California (DFJC), which describes itself as "a statewide coalition focused on ending the ways in which the criminal legal system extracts wealth and resources from people and communities." DFJC argues "a driver's license is crucial to successful community reentry" and that this bill "does not get at the root causes of unsafe driving in California." DFJC further notes "this legislative session there are numerous efforts to reform and update DUI laws in California" and suggests convening "key legislators and a wide array of stakeholders in order to possibly identify a more comprehensive and balanced approach to the larger policy issue."

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