

Date of Hearing: April 14, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Alex Lee, Chair

AB 1925 (Jeff Gonzalez) – As Amended March 16, 2026

**SUBJECT:** State permanent disability certification program: feasibility study

**SUMMARY:** Requires the California Health and Human Services Agency (CalHHS) to complete and report back to the Legislature a feasibility study for establishing a state permanent disability certification program. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Requires CalHHS, in consultation with relevant state departments within the agency, to complete a feasibility study that includes a comprehensive analysis of the challenges and opportunities related to establishing a state permanent disability certification program.
- 2) Requires, for purposes of completing the feasibility study, the agency to reasonably attempt to consult with local stakeholders, including, but not limited to, independent living centers, Aging and Disability Resource Connection programs, disability-led organizations, and county agencies.
- 3) Requires the analysis within the study to address, at a minimum, all of the following:
  - a) The ability to detect and prevent fraud within a state permanent disability certification program;
  - b) The ability of the state to protect individual privacy;
  - c) Technological limitations; and,
  - d) Compatibility of a permanent disability certification for use within existing federal, state, and local programs.
- 4) Requires by July 1, 2028, CalHHS to submit a legislative report and post the report on its website.
- 5) Makes the implementation of this bill contingent on an appropriation from the Legislature.
- 6) Sunsets this bill on January 1, 2032. For the purposes of this bill, defines the following:
  - a) “Agency” means the California Health and Human Services Agency, unless otherwise specified.
  - b) “Disability” has the same meaning as set forth in the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 United States Code [U.S.C.] § 12102) or the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 705).
  - c) “Permanent disability” means a medically determinable disability certified by a licensed medical professional as permanent or as one that continues, or can be expected to continue, indefinitely, and where significant functional improvement is not reasonably expected based on most updated medical evidence.

- d) “State permanent disability certification program” means a certification issued by a state department confirming that an individual has a permanent disability for the purpose of obtaining services.
- 7) Makes the following findings and declarations:
- a) Many disabilities are permanent in nature and are not subject to material change, yet Californians with permanent disabilities are repeatedly required to reverify the same condition across multiple government programs.
  - b) California lacks a coordinated disability verification framework across state, county, local, and utility programs, resulting in duplicative documentation requirements, inconsistent standards, and administrative inefficiencies.
  - c) Repeated disability verification imposes unnecessary costs on state and local agencies, increases administrative burdens on medical providers, and diverts public resources away from direct service delivery.
  - d) Individuals with permanent disabilities frequently experience avoidable interruptions in health care, housing, in-home services, transportation, and other essential supports due to missed or delayed recertification, despite no change in eligibility.
  - e) A comprehensive feasibility study is necessary to determine the challenges and opportunities related to establishing a state permanent disability certification program.

**EXISTING LAW:**

- 1) Requires an applicant for, or recipient of, In-Home Supportive Services to obtain a certification from a licensed health care professional, including, but not limited to, a physician, physician assistant, regional center clinician or clinician supervisor, occupational therapist, physical therapist, psychiatrist, psychologist, optometrist, ophthalmologist, or public health nurse, declaring that the applicant or recipient is unable to perform some activities of daily living independently, and that without services to assist the applicant or recipient with activities of daily living, the applicant or recipient is at risk of placement in out-of-home care. (Welfare and Institutions Code § 12309.1)
- 2) Requires certification, signed by a physician, substantiating the existence of a disability before the issuance of special license plates for a person with a disability. (Vehicle Code § 5007)
- 3) Requires a person with disability who requires a modified vehicle for mobility or assistive technology to obtain a certification by a physician or the Department of Rehabilitation to prove eligibility for the Rehabilitation Revolving Loan Guarantee Fund. (WIC § 19461)
- 4) Requires certification by a physician of the existence of a disability in order to qualify for a free sport fishing license. (Fish and Game Code § 7151)
- 5) Requires certification by a physician of the existence of a disability for a disabled veteran to qualify for an exemption from the vehicle license fee. (Revenue and Taxation Code § 10783)

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Unknown, this bill has not been analyzed by a fiscal committee.

**COMMENTS:**

**Background:** *Disability in California.* Disability is defined differently for different purposes, but generally refers to an individual who has a physical or mental impairment that limits a major life activity. According to the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC), in 2024, there were more than 1.8 million California adults aged 25 to 64 have at least one disability that impacted their daily life.<sup>1</sup>

California has a number of programs designed to benefit people with disabilities. These include medical, nutritional, financial and housing assistance, as well as benefits that allow people with disabilities to receive subsidized licenses or permits such as fishing or parking. These programs have different program requirements that align with the impairment. For example, a person must have a mobility impairment to qualify for services that provide mobility assistance. For program integrity, all of these programs require some certification to verify that the person is, in fact, impaired and meets the requirements set forth for program participation. The acceptable certifications vary by who is allowed to do the certifying. Many require a physician, but some allow for broader medical professionals to verify the existence of a disability. If someone does have a disability, then it is likely they will qualify for more than one program which means they will need to provide proof repeatedly in different forms. There is not one singular form that is accepted by all state entities to verify eligibility. *This bill* seeks to establish a feasibility study for such a form.

**Author’s Statement:** According to the Author, “Californians with permanent disabilities are too often forced to repeatedly prove the same lifelong condition just to access basic services. This duplicative system creates unnecessary burdens for individuals, families, providers, and government agencies. [This bill] takes a thoughtful approach by studying how a statewide permanent disability certification could streamline access and reduce inefficiencies. By exploring this solution, we can improve access to and continuity of care for those that need it most.”

**Equity Implications:** Individuals living with disabilities often rely on public programs for safety, livelihood, and other basic needs that able-bodied persons can independently do. Applying and re-applying to these vital programs can be difficult and time-consuming. Conducting a feasibility study may allow the state to consider ways to ease burdensome proof of disability requirements amongst state programs.

**Arguments in Support.** Area 12 Agency on Aging, Caring Across Generations, Disability Resources Agency for Independent Living (DRAIL), and Service Center for Independent Life, write in support that, “Millions of Californians with permanent disabilities rely on multiple public programs to meet their basic needs, including health care, housing, in-home services, transportation, and utilities. Each program operates with its own eligibility and disability verification requirements. California lacks a way for individuals to confirm the existence of a permanent disability for the purpose of accessing multiple programs. As a result, individuals are often required to repeatedly verify the same lifelong condition to access or maintain services. This process frequently involves submitting duplicative medical records, physician certifications, and functional assessments across multiple systems.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ppic.org/blog/working-helps-keep-californians-with-disabilities-out-of-poverty/>

“While a statewide permanent disability certification could reduce these burdens, significant implementation challenges must be carefully evaluated. Key considerations include ensuring safeguarding sensitive personal and medical information, and addressing technological limitations across state and local systems. A feasibility study would help stakeholders understand the benefits and challenges of a statewide permanent disability certification program.”

**Arguments in Opposition.** None on file.

**REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

**Support**

Disability Resources Agency for Independent Living (DRAIL) (Sponsor)

Area 12 Agency on Aging

California Foundation for Independent Living Centers

Caring Across Generations

Service Center for Independent Life

Two private citizens

**Opposition**

None on file.

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