

Date of Hearing: May 6, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
Buffy Wicks, Chair
AB 1925 (Jeff Gonzalez) – As Amended March 16, 2026

Policy Committee: Human Services

Vote: 7 - 0

Urgency: No

State Mandated Local Program: No

Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill requires the California Health and Human Services Agency (CalHHS) to complete a feasibility study for establishing a state permanent disability certification program. The bill relies on a General Fund appropriation to fund the study.

Specifically, this bill:

- 1) Requires CalHHS, upon appropriation by the Legislature and 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, the ability to detect and prevent fraud within a state permanent disability certification program, the ability of the state to protect individual privacy, technological limitations, and compatibility of a permanent disability certification for use within existing federal, state, and local programs.
- 4) Requires CalHHS to submit a report to the Legislature by July 1, 2028, and to post the report on its website.

FISCAL EFFECT:

The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) within CalHHS estimates total costs of approximately \$1 million annually until the report is produced and the bill sunsets on January 1, 2032. These costs include approximately three additional positions and any necessary contract to support the completion of a feasibility study and comprehensive analysis, as specified.

The author has requested \$2 million in the 2026-27 budget to fund the study proposed in this bill.

According to the Legislative Analyst's Office, the General Fund faces a structural deficit in the tens of billions of dollars over the next several fiscal years.

COMMENTS:1) **Purpose.** 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.

2) **Background.** Existing law establishes various programs for the delivery of services or benefits to individuals with disabilities, including, among others, the State Supplementary Program (SSP) for the Aged, Blind, and Disabled, regional center services and supports under the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act, the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Program, and certain benefits within the Medi-Cal program. These programs have differing program eligibility and disability verification requirements. Some certifications require a physician to verify a disability, while others allow a broader array of medical professions to verify.

Many disabled individuals qualify for more than one assistance program and often must verify their disability separately for each program using different forms or certification processes. This can be especially burdensome for someone with a permanent disability who must recertify their eligibility each year.

According to the bill's sponsor, Disability Resources for Independent Living, and other supporters:

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. 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.

While a statewide permanent disability certification could reduce these burdens, significant implementation challenges must be carefully evaluated. A feasibility study would help stakeholders understand the benefits and challenges of a statewide permanent disability certification program.

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