

Date of Hearing: March 25, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS AND CONVEYANCE

Tasha Boerner, Chair

AB 2041 (Carrillo) – As Amended March 16, 2026

SUBJECT: Emergency medical services

SUMMARY: This bill would require the Office of Emergency Services (OES) to include additional technical and operation standards, as provided, as part of an annual review of standards for public agency systems connecting to 911 public safety answering points.

Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Requires OES to include updates to “911” call processing services related to prearrival medical instructions, as described in Section 1797.161 of the Government Code.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Establishes the Warren-911 Emergency Assistance Act to require local public agencies to maintain an emergency communication system using “911” as the primary, universal emergency response number. (Government Code § 53100 et. seq.)
- 2) Establishes the Emergency Telephone Users Surcharge Act. (Revenue & Taxation Code § 41001 et. seq.)
- 3) Imposes a 911 surcharge on each telephone access line. (Revenue and Taxation Code § 41020)
- 4) Establishes a methodology for determining the 911 surcharge amount and limits the 911 surcharge to no greater than eighty cents (\$0.80) per access line per month. (Revenue & Taxation Code 41030)
- 5) Establishes the State Emergency Telephone Number Account, or SETNA. (Revenue and Taxation Code § 41135)

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown. This bill is keyed fiscal by the Legislative Counsel.

COMMENTS:

- 1) *Double referral and committee jurisdiction.* This bill will be referred to the Committee on Emergency Management should it pass this committee. Accordingly, this analysis will primarily focus on issues related to Communications & Conveyance Committee jurisdiction such as surcharges imposed on telephone access lines and associated considerations.
- 2) *Author’s Statement.* According to the author: “In medical emergencies such as cardiac arrest or choking, immediate bystander intervention before first responders arrive can mean the difference between life and death. The American Heart Association reports that prompt CPR can double or even triple a person’s chances of survival following cardiac arrest. Bystander intervention also significantly increases when individuals receive pre-arrival medical instructions and verbal guidance provided from 9-1-1 dispatchers at a public agency. AB

2041 strengthens this critical link by incentivizing public safety agencies to train dispatchers on how to provide lifesaving pre-arrival medical instructions by adding this action to the list of mandatory standards to qualify for State Emergency Telephone Number Account (SETNA) funding. By investing in these proven, lifesaving practices, we can equip everyday Californians with the guidance they need to act in those first critical moments of medical need.”

- 3) *911 System Background.* The Warren 911 Act authorizes cities and counties to form contracts regulating the implementation of a 911 system. The basic structure of the 911 system is designed to ensure that when a person dials 911, a law enforcement agency serving as a primary Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) receives 911 requests from the area where the person is calling. If a 911 caller requests emergency medical assistance, the primary PSAP may retain the caller if it directly provides emergency medical services (EMS) dispatch or may transfer the caller to a secondary PSAP for emergency medical response. The medical secondary PSAP can be a public agency, public/private partnership, or private EMS provider designated or recognized by the local EMS agency as serving the entire EMS area or portion of the EMS area.
- 4) *Impacts on State Emergency Telephone Number Account (SETNA).* This SETNA was created to fund the costs of planning and implementing a uniform three-digit telephone number through which emergency services can be obtained. This includes payments to service suppliers or communications equipment companies, for installation and ongoing communications services supplied to local agencies in connection with the "911" emergency phone system. The account is funded through surcharges on intrastate telephone communications pursuant to the Emergency Telephone Users Surcharge Act. Under existing law, the OES may impose a surcharge up to \$0.80 cents per access line, the current surcharge is only \$0.05 per access line. Given that this bill would impose new requirements on OES and in turn local agencies that utilize the funds, it may result in new reimbursements from the fund and therefore increased end-user surcharges. Notably, the current surcharge rate is only about 6% of the statutorily authorized cap. A fuller fiscal analysis will be provided in the fiscal committee.
- 5) *Leveraging SETNA funds as an incentive.* Recently enacted legislation (AB 645, Carrillo, Statutes of 2025) requires, by January 1, 2027, a public safety agency that provides 911 calls processing for emergency medical response to provide pre-arrival medical instructions to 911 callers requiring medical assistance. In other words, covered entities are not yet required to have implemented the new requirements. Nonetheless, the premise of this bill is that without clear incentives, or disincentives, local EMS agencies may not fully comply with the law thus creating potential harm to the public safety and welfare.

Accordingly, this bill directs OES to include the recently updated technical and operational standards as part of the requirements for public agency systems. As a potential result, for local agencies that may not comply, their access SETNA funding would be impacted. While this scheme would seem to establish a clear disincentive for local agencies not to comply – which is to risk the loss of funding – it’s contentious to leverage access to critical funding that supports public safety operations and emergency response as a suitable approach. Considering that part of the rationale for this bill is to save lives, it raises the question whether leveraging total or partial loss of funding for SETNA is aligned with that objective.

- 6) *Arguments in Support.* According to supporters of this bill, including the California Ambulance Association, this bill would strengthen the effectiveness of and compliance with recently enacted legislation related to pre-arrival instructions for 911 callers.
- 7) *Arguments in Opposition.* According to opposition, which includes the California Chapter of the National Emergency Number Association, the enforcement mechanism proposed in AB 2041 is overly punitive and would set a troubling precedent by restricting a PSAPs access to SETNA funding. The opposition argues this is an extreme and severe hammer that threatens the very existence of a PSAP.
- 8) *Similar/related legislation.*
 - a. AB 645 (Carrillo, Statutes of 2025) requires, by January 1, 2027, a public safety agency that provides 911 calls processing for emergency medical response to provide pre-arrival medical instructions to 911 callers requiring medical assistance.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Amwest Ambulance
California Ambulance Association
Del Norte Ambulance
Lifewest Ambulance
Medic Ambulance
Norcal Ambulance
Pro Transport-1 Ambulance
Royal Ambulance INC
Southern California Ambulance Association

Opposition

California Chapter National Emergency Number Association (CALNENA)

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