

## ASSEMBLY THIRD READING

AB 2052 (Stefani)

As Amended April 16, 2026

Majority vote

**SUMMARY**

Expands the list of crimes for which a court must consider good cause for purposes of granting a prosecutor's request for continuance beyond a defendant's statutory speedy trial right to include any case pertaining to elder or dependent adult abuse and specifies that the prosecutor may only receive such a good cause continuance once per case.

**Major Provisions****COMMENTS****According to the Author**

"AB 2052 strengthens California's response to crimes against children, older adults, and adults with developmental or cognitive disabilities by ensuring greater continuity in prosecution for these vulnerable victims. Too often, cases involving vulnerable victims are handed from one prosecutor to another, forcing victims and their caregivers to repeatedly relive traumatic experiences while navigating an already difficult justice system without consistent support. AB 2052 allows prosecutors to use vertical prosecution, meaning the same attorney can handle a case from beginning to end, so prosecutors can develop the expertise and sensitivity needed to work effectively with vulnerable victims and build the trust necessary for children and older adults, particularly those with cognitive impairments, to fully participate in the justice process. It also provides victims and their caregivers with a single, consistent point of contact as they navigate complex court proceedings. As California's population ages and crimes against older adults, including abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation, continue to rise, it is critical that our justice system is equipped to support victims and hold perpetrators accountable. AB 2052 helps ensure prosecutors have the tools to deliver justice for those who need our protection most."

**Arguments in Support**

According to the *California District Attorneys Association*, "Currently, the law limits vertical prosecution to cases involving charges of homicide, sexual assault, and domestic violence, among others. And even though prosecutions with a vulnerable victim who is either a minor, dependent adult, or older adult are just as complex, the law does not recognize or allow for vertical prosecution."

"AB 2052 remedies this shortfall and allows one prosecutor to handle the case from arraignment to trial. Through vertical prosecution, prosecutors can hone their skills and better serve the most vulnerable in our community."

**Arguments in Opposition**

According to the *San Francisco Public Defender's Office*, "AB 2052 would expand the list of crimes primarily murder and domestic violence that may support a finding of good cause to continue a case overriding the defendant's right to a speedy trial to cases where a minor is

detained as a material witness, and any crime where an alleged victim is a minor, greater than sixty-five years of age, or a dependent adult as defined by Penal Code Section 368, subdivision. (h).

"In other words, if a prosecutor was in trial on a case expected to last two months and the defendant was in jail awaiting trial on a misdemeanor petty theft of a cell phone from a minor, the defendant's trial would be postponed two months until the prosecutor finished the first case. Additionally, AB 2052 would lead to unnecessarily prolonged incarceration for minors who are detained as material witnesses, and will cause more jail overcrowding, more expense to taxpayers, more court congestion, and more individuals being detained pretrial."

### **FISCAL COMMENTS**

Unknown. This bill is keyed non-fiscal by the Legislative Counsel.

### **VOTES**

**ASM PUBLIC SAFETY: 9-0-0**

**YES:** Schultz, Alanis, Mark González, Haney, Harabedian, Lackey, Nguyen, Ramos, Sharp-Collins

### **UPDATED**

VERSION: April 16, 2026

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