

Date of Hearing: May 6, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

AB 2078 (Rogers) – As Introduced February 18, 2026

Policy Committee: Labor and Employment

Vote: 7 - 0

Urgency: No

State Mandated Local Program: No

Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill extends an existing exception from meal period requirements, applicable to certain employees covered by a valid collective bargaining agreement (CBA), to an employee who performs building maintenance work as a stationary engineer.

This bill defines “stationary engineer” as a skilled tradesperson located in a fixed facility who operates, maintains, monitors, and repairs stationary mechanical equipment and building systems, such as an air conditioning system or power generation equipment, among other items.

FISCAL EFFECT:

Minor and absorbable costs to the Department of Industrial Relations to update and provide related guidance.

COMMENTS:

1) **Purpose.** According to the author:

Currently, stationary engineers, who oversee important equipment and perform maintenance and oversight work, constantly get interrupted from their meal breaks during their shifts. After the working hours of their shift, they must stay to satisfy the statutory meal break requirement and avoid any employer related violations, which inconveniences the workers and creates inconsistency for employers.

AB 2078 adds stationary engineers to the list of employees whose meal breaks are governed by CBAs, ensuring that they can leave work at the scheduled time, providing more certainty for employers.

This bill is sponsored by the California-Nevada Conference of Operating Engineers and supported by engineering firms.

2) **Meal Period Exception.** Existing law generally prohibits an employer from requiring an employee to work for a certain period of time without providing the employee a 30-minute meal period. However, existing law provides an exception for certain employees covered by a valid CBA that expressly provides meal period provisions among other wage requirements. The exception applies to an employee employed: (a) in a construction occupation, (b) as a commercial driver, (c) in the security services industry, as specified, and (d) by an electrical

corporation, gas corporation, water corporation, or local publicly owned electric utility. This bill adds an employee who performs building maintenance work as a stationary engineer to this exception.

- 3) **Related Legislation.** AB 751 (Gipson), Chapter 42, Statutes of 2025, permanently exempted certain safety-sensitive positions at petroleum facilities from rest period requirements under certain conditions.

SB 693 (Cortese), Chapter 95, Statutes of 2025, extended the meal period exception to an employee of a water corporation.

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