

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING  
AB 2235 (Pacheco)  
As Amended April 9, 2026  
Majority vote

## SUMMARY

Establishes the Judicial Home Security Act.

### Major Provisions

- 1) Enacts the Judicial Home Security Act (Act).
- 2) Defines the following for the purpose of this Act, unless the context clearly requires otherwise:
  - a) "Home address" includes any reference to all of the following, as specified on the individual's application to be a program participant:
    - i) A property address;
    - ii) A common street address;
    - iii) An assessor's parcel number;
    - iv) A property legal description.
- 3) Authorizes an adult person who is domiciled in California to apply to the Attorney General to have a designated alternate mailing address substituted for any reference to the person's home address in records that are made public.
- 4) Provides standards and procedures for the Attorney General related to administering the program.
- 5) Requires state and local agencies, when disclosing or releasing records or information that would otherwise contain the home address of a program participant in any format or medium, to substitute the program participant's alternate mailing address for any reference to the program participant's home address.
- 6) Requires County Assessor and Recorder offices, when disclosing or releasing records or information that would otherwise contain the situs of the home address of a program participant in any format or medium, to substitute the program participants alternate mailing address for the situs address on real property deeds, real estate records, and any other records containing the home address of the program participant.
- 7) Prohibits the Attorney General and state and local agencies from allowing disclosure or release of a program participant's home address except as specified.
- 8) Prohibits a person or organization from publicly posting or displaying the home address of a program participant who has made a written demand of that person or organization, including on the internet.

- 9) Prohibits a third-party data broker or aggregator from selling, licensing, trading, purchasing, transferring, releasing, or otherwise sharing in any format or medium the home address of a program participant, including on the internet.
- 10) Requires the Attorney General to commence accepting applications under this program on April 1, 2027.

## COMMENTS

On March 23, 2026, in her speech before both houses of the Legislature for the annual State of the Judiciary, Chief Justice of the California Supreme Court Patricia Guerrero called the Legislature to action on the issue of judicial security. The Chief Justice made a plea for "resources to protect 'personnel, the public and court systems from physical, online, and cyber threats.'" Her statements further called for legislation "designed to protect the privacy of judges – an issue that is fundamentally intertwined with judicial security." These comments come after several years of increased violence targeted at judicial officers.

*Existing law relating to public disclosure of personal information.* Individual property records, including the full name of the owner, are publicly accessible through local agencies, county assessor and recorders offices. The availability of that information makes it fairly easy for someone trying to find a specific person to do so, as long as they own property in California. Additionally, the California Public Records Act (CPRA) requires public records to be open to inspection by the public at all times during the office hours of a public agency, unless otherwise exempted. (California Government Code Section 7922.525.) One of the CPRA's numerous exceptions includes the home address or telephone number, along with other personally identifiable information, and the home address or telephone number of an elected or appointed official absent prior written permission. (Government Code Section 7928.300 (a), 7928.205.) In 2024, the Legislature enacted AB 1785 (Pacheco) Chapter 551, Statutes of 2024. That measure clarified that in addition to the previous two exceptions, public agencies are prohibited from posting the name and assessor's parcel number associated with the home address of any elected or appointed official without first obtaining written consent. (Government Code Section 7928.205.)

This bill proposes another expansion of the concept initially introduced by the Safe at Home program, this time available to the state's judicial officers. The Judicial Home Security Act would authorize a judicial officer to apply to the Attorney General (AG) to have an alternate mailing address substituted for their home address in public records. In order to qualify, the judicial officer would be required to 1) demonstrate that they are currently or were formerly employed as a judicial officer, and 2) submit a sworn statement that they fear for their safety or the safety of their family because of their employment as a judicial officer.

In addition to numerous guidelines for processing applications and general procedures for administering the program, the bill requires local and state agencies to use the participant's alternate address when releasing any public record that would otherwise reflect their home address, prohibit anyone from publicly posting a participant's home address, and would prohibit third party data brokers from sharing or selling a participant's address. Acknowledging the numerous legitimate business reasons why certain professionals may need access to a participant's home address, the bill also provides a list of circumstances and related professionals that may access the participant's full address upon request. Finally, the bill mirrors the existing

SAH program and prohibits a person or organization from publicly sharing a participant's home address if the participant has made a written demand of that person or organization.

### **According to the Author**

Violence and threats against judges have risen sharply, with thousands of incidents reported in recent years and a dramatic increase since 2015, leaving many judges and their families fearing for their safety. At the same time, judicial officers' home addresses remain easily accessible through public records and online databases, creating a direct pathway for bad actors to locate them and their families. Existing privacy protections in California are insufficient, as they do not effectively prevent the widespread dissemination of this sensitive information, especially when it originates from government sources. This gap leaves judges uniquely exposed to targeted harassment, intimidation, and potential violence at their homes.

AB 2235, the Judicial Home Security Act, addresses this urgent risk by allowing judges to use an alternate mailing address in public records while preserving legitimate access for business, legal, and law enforcement purposes. By replacing home addresses, the bill strikes a careful balance between transparency and safety, ensuring public records remain functional without compromising personal security. In light of the escalating threats and clear vulnerabilities, AB 2235 is a necessary and measured step to protect the judiciary and uphold the integrity of the justice system.

### **Arguments in Support**

This bill is sponsored by the California Judges Association. It is supported by the Association of African American California Judicial Officers, California Women Judges, and Kiesel Law LLP. In support of the bill the sponsors submit:

Judicial officers routinely preside over high-conflict criminal, civil, and family law matters, and their work can expose them and their families to threats of violence or even death. As public officials responsible for the functioning of the justice system, judges face a heightened risk of threats or violence stemming from decisions they are required to make in the course of their duties.

Unfortunately, under current law it can be relatively easy for individuals to locate a judge's home address through publicly available property and government records. These records are often accessible through county assessors and recorder offices and, in some jurisdictions, through online databases. The ease with which this information can be obtained creates significant safety concerns for judicial officers and their families and increases the risk that individuals with malicious intent could use these records to locate a judge's residence.

In recent years, violence and threats against judges have increased significantly nationwide. According to the U.S. Marshals Service, which is responsible for protecting federal judges, there were 5,873 threats and inappropriate communications directed at members of the judiciary between 2021 and 2022; overall there has been an alarming 400 percent increase since 2015. Courts and judicial officers have also been targeted through bomb threats to state court facilities and intimidation directed at judges handling controversial cases. Tragically, several violent incidents have underscored these risks, including the assassination of an Indiana judge and his wife earlier this year, the attempted murder of a Nevada district judge, and the murder of the son of a federal judge at her home in New Jersey. These incidents highlight the continuing need to strengthen safeguards that prevent the improper disclosure of the home addresses which can be used to target judges and their families.

AB 2235 addresses this concern by allowing judicial officers to designate an alternate mailing address, such as a post office box or private mailbox, to be substituted wherever their home address would otherwise appear in public records. State and local agencies, including county assessors and recorder offices, would use the alternate mailing address when disclosing records that would otherwise reveal a judge's home address.

Importantly, the bill maintains appropriate transparency and legitimate access to records. Law enforcement agencies and certain regulated entities with a bona fide need for information, such as financial institutions, title companies, and attorneys involved in real estate transactions, may still access the home address when necessary for lawful purposes.

By protecting the home addresses of judicial officers and their families, AB 2235 helps reduce the risk of harassment, intimidation, and violence directed at judges outside the courthouse. Ensuring that judicial officers can carry out their duties without fear of retaliation in their homes strengthens judicial independence and promotes public confidence in the fair and impartial administration of justice.

### **Arguments in Opposition**

There is no formal opposition. However, the California Assessors' Association and the California Land Title Association (CLTA) have submitted a position of oppose unless amended. The California Assessors' Association cites implementation concerns and the preservation of constructive notice that may be frustrated by the definition of "home address," and the California Land Title Association cites additional implementation concerns, including uncertainty in real property records, and deviations from the original Safe at Home Program. CLTA submits:

CLTA appreciates having had the opportunity to discuss alternatives to AB 2235 with the author and sponsor that avoid the issues pertaining to constructive notice described above, including restrictions to online access to documents, combined with the bill's existing data broker prohibitions and Attorney General certification program. Such an alternative would effectively remove judicial officers' address information from the online space while preserving the integrity of the recording system and the constructive notice doctrine.

### **FISCAL COMMENTS**

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee:

- 1) Costs (General Fund) of an unknown but potentially significant amount, likely in the low millions of dollars one-time and several hundred thousand to over one million dollars annually ongoing, to the Department of Justice (DOJ) to stand up and administer a new judicial home security address confidentiality program. The Secretary of State estimated approximately \$330,000 in year one and \$255,000 ongoing for an analogous expansion of the existing Safe at Home program to a new applicant type under AB 82 (Ward), Chapter 679, Statutes of 2025; standing up an entirely new program at DOJ, which has no existing address confidentiality program infrastructure, would likely entail substantially higher startup costs. DOJ was unable to provide an estimate at the time this analysis was written.
- 2) The bill creates the Judicial Home Security Program Fund within the General Fund, supported by application and annual fees set by DOJ at amounts not to exceed actual program costs. Fee revenue is likely to lag program startup costs, requiring General Fund support in the early years until the participant base stabilizes and fees can be set to recover

ongoing costs. The actual costs and fee structure depend on the size of the participant universe — California has roughly 1,750 sitting Superior Court judges, 110 Court of Appeal justices, seven Supreme Court justices, plus unknown numbers of court commissioners and magistrates, federal judges, state and local agency administrative law judges, tribal judges, and former judicial officers (who are eligible for lifetime certification under the bill).

- 3) Costs (local funds) of an unknown but potentially significant amount to county assessor and recorder offices to modify records systems to support alternate-address substitution on real property deeds, real estate records, and other county records containing participant home addresses. Workload includes identifying parcels owned by program participants, modifying records to substitute alternate addresses, and maintaining records ongoing as participants enter and exit the program. These costs are potentially reimbursable by the state, subject to a determination by the Commission on State Mandates.
- 4) Costs (Trial Court Trust Fund) of an unknown but likely minor amount to the trial courts to issue court orders authorizing disclosure and to adjudicate civil enforcement actions for unauthorized disclosure or data broker violations.

The Legislative Analyst's Office recently warned of General Fund structural deficits of around \$35 billion per year beginning in the 2027-28 fiscal year.

## VOTES

### ASM JUDICIARY: 12-0-0

**YES:** Kalra, Macedo, Lee, Bryan, Connolly, Dixon, Harabedian, Pacheco, Papan, Sanchez, Stefani, Zbur

### ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 15-0-0

**YES:** Wicks, Hoover, Aguiar-Curry, Calderon, Caloza, Dixon, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Ta, Tangipa

## UPDATED

VERSION: April 9, 2026

CONSULTANT: Manuela Boucher / JUD. / (916) 319-2334

FN: 0002636