

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING

AB 2242 (Davies)

As Amended March 26, 2026

Majority vote

SUMMARY

Requires local education agencies (LEAs) that serve students in grades 7 to 12 to display a poster that contains age-appropriate information and resources related to the practice of sextortion.

Major Provisions

- 1) Defines sextortion as the threat to use sexual or intimate images or videos, however obtained, to compel another person to produce sexual or intimate images or videos, engage in sexual acts, or provide anything of value.
- 2) Requires LEAs with students in grades 7 through 12 to display a poster on sextortion in at least one men's and one women's restroom used by students. Requires the poster to be printed in both English and any language spoken by 15% or more of enrolled students and be at least 12 by 18 inches in size.
- 3) Requires the content of the poster to include all of the following:
 - a) An age-appropriate description of sextortion;
 - b) Contact information for local, state, and federal law enforcement for the purpose of reporting or seeking assistance relating to sextortion;
 - c) Contact information for the 988 Suicide and Crises Lifeline; and
 - d) The internet address for the sextortion resources provided by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), or any federally funded successor entity, in either uniform resource locator (URL) quick response (QR), or another similar form.
- 4) Require the California Department of Education (CDE), on or before July 1, 2027, to develop and post on its website a model template of the described template than can be modified and used by LEAs.

COMMENTS

What is sextortion, and how does it happen? Sextortion is a form of online enticement or blackmail. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) maintains a webpage with information and resources about sextortion. It describes sextortion as follows:

Sextortion can start on any site, app, messaging platform, or game where people meet and communicate. In some cases, the first contact from the criminal will be a threat. The person may claim to already have a revealing picture or video of a child that will be shared if the victim does not send more pictures.

More often, however, this crime starts when young people believe they are communicating with someone their own age who is interested in a relationship or with someone who is offering something of value.

After the criminals have one or more videos or pictures, they threaten to publish that content, or they threaten violence, to get the victim to produce more images. The shame, fear, and confusion children feel when they are caught in this cycle often prevents them from asking for help or reporting the abuse. Caregivers and young people should understand how the crime occurs and openly discuss online safety.

The FBI further describes financial sextortion as follows:

In these cases, the offender receives sexually explicit material from the child and then threatens to release the compromising material unless the victim sends money and/or gift cards. The amount requested varies, and the offender often releases the victim's sexually explicit material regardless of whether or not they receive payment. This increasing threat has resulted in an alarming number of deaths by suicide.

Rates of online enticement, including sextortion, are rising. The NCMEC observed a 300% increase in reports of online enticement, which includes sextortion, between 2021 and 2023. In 2023, their online CyberTipline received 186,000 reports of online enticement; in 2024, that number rose to 456,000 reports. The extent to which this increase represents improved awareness of online enticement and how to report it, versus an increase in the actual crime, is unknown.

According to the Author

According to the author, "Our children are facing a digital crisis where 'sextortion' and technology-facilitated harassment are devastating lives in the shadows of our schools. While existing laws mandate that sexual harassment policies stay tucked away in administrative offices, AB 2242 meets students where they are by placing life-saving information and reporting resources in the private, high-traffic areas of restrooms and locker rooms. By requiring these notices to be printed in both English and Spanish, we are ensuring that every student, regardless of their background or primary language, has the tools to identify exploitation and the courage to come forward. We must act now to transform our schools from passive observers into proactive shields against the predators who weaponize technology to target our youth."

Arguments in Support

According to the San Diego District Attorney's Office, "Sextortion is a form of child sexual exploitation that disproportionately targets minors through online platforms. Perpetrators often obtain intimate images through deception and threaten to distribute those images unless victims provide money, additional content, or engage in sexual acts. Many victims are driven by fear of humiliation and exposure to comply rather than seek help. AB 2242 will empower students in prevention and intervention measures against sextortion before any further harm can be caused."

Arguments in Opposition

None on file.

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee, "One-time Proposition 98 General Fund costs for all LEAs serving students in grades seven through 12, to post a sextortion information poster in bathrooms within each schoolsite, as specified.

According to the CDE, there are more than 400 unified and high school districts in California, collectively representing approximately 3,000 individual schoolsites, in addition to several elementary school districts who may also serve grades seven and eight as well as charter schools. If every impacted LEA incurred costs of \$50 associated with designing, printing, and posting the required poster at each schoolsite, costs could be at least \$150,000 statewide."

One-time General Fund cost pressures of an unknown amount, likely minor and absorbable, for the CDE to develop and post a model poster template.

VOTES**ASM EDUCATION: 9-0-0**

YES: Patel, Hoover, Alvarez, Bonta, Alanis, Garcia, Lowenthal, Pellerin, 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

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