GOVERNOR'S VETO
AB 2349 (Solache)
As Enrolled August 26, 2026
2/3 vote

SUMMARY

Requires the Air Resources Board (ARB), subject to appropriation, to expand its incident air monitoring program to provide support for a regional network of air quality incident response centers (AQIRCs) operated by local air districts in order to facilitate emergency air monitoring response at the local and regional level.

Senate Amendments

Add coauthors and make non-substantive changes.

Governor's Veto Message
This bill would require (ARB) to expand its incident air monitoring program.

While I share the author's goal of expanding emergency air monitoring, the proposed program requires significant resources not included in this year's budget.

In partnership with the Legislature this year, my administration has enacted a balanced budget that recognizes the challenging fiscal landscape our state faces while maintaining our commitment to working families and our most vulnerable communities. With significant fiscal pressures and the federal government's hostile economic policies, it is vital that we remain disciplined when considering bills with significant fiscal implications that are not included in the budget, such as this measure.

COMMENTS

The Palisades and Eaton Fires burned 23,700 and 14,000 acres, respectively. The University of California – Los Angeles' Anderson School of Management estimates that the economic impacts of the wildfires could range between $76 billion and $131 billion, with insured losses estimated up to $45 billion. The impact on local businesses and employees in the affected areas is an estimated $297 million.

On top of the economic impacts, wildfires are devastating to public health. Wildfire smoke poses a significant public health threat, particularly due to fine particulate matter (PM2.5), which can cause respiratory and cardiovascular problems and exacerbate existing health conditions. It can travel deep into the lungs and may even enter the bloodstream. For urban wildfires, air toxics are a concern as smoke and ash from homes and businesses can contain asbestos, metals, and other pollutants of concern.

Wildfires are not the only health-impacting events requiring localized air monitoring. In November 2023, a fire at a historic hangar at the former Tustin Air Base led to a public health emergency due to the presence of asbestos in debris and ash samples collected near the hangar. The smoke and debris also tested positive for heavy metals, including lead, arsenic and nickel. The city of Tustin declared a local state of emergency, and the Orange County Board of

Supervisors declared a county-wide state of emergency. The cleanup costs exceeded $54 million. A similar event also took place in January 2025, when a fire erupted at the Moss Landing Power Plant, a large battery storage facility, located south of San Francisco. The incident led to evacuation orders for about 1,200 nearby residents. About 80% of the structure and its batteries were destroyed in the fire. After burning through the night, emergency officials declared the fire a local emergency.

These events highlight the critical need for enhanced localized air monitoring response to emergency events. This bill is intended to provide timely information on existing levels of potentially dangerous air pollutants emitted as a result of wildfires and other disasters or emergencies to increase public awareness and inform health and emergency response agencies. This information will help improve emergency preparedness and response, protect public health, and strengthen statewide and local air quality management.

According to the Author
California has experienced numerous disasters in recent years that have threatened air quality and public health. Expanding California's emergency air monitoring capacity is essential to protect public health and ensure informed decision-making during disasters. AB 2349 would strengthen California's emergency air monitoring capacity and support coordinated state and local responses during air quality emergencies.

Arguments in Support
According to sponsor South Coast Air Quality Management District, California has experienced numerous disasters in recent years that have threatened air quality and public health, including the Eaton and Palisades Fires, Moss Landing and Central Coast Battery Fires, ExxonMobil explosion, Aliso Canyon gas leak, Tustin Hangar Fire, and other incidents. These incidents highlight the urgent need to expand and modernize emergency air monitoring and response capabilities, including providing timely information to the public. Further, there is a critical need for training of state and local air district staff on the Incident Command System (ICS) as well as advanced emergency preparedness and coordination with first responders, local government, and public health agencies. AB 2349 would improve California's ability to monitor and respond to air pollution during disasters by providing timely information on potentially dangerous air pollutants released during wildfires and other emergencies. The program would strengthen emergency preparedness and public health protection.

Arguments in Opposition
None received.

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee:

1) ARB estimates ongoing costs of approximately $8.8 million in fiscal year 2027-28 and $5.7 million annually thereafter (General Fund) to establish, equip, and maintain AQIRCs with portable equipment, rapid response trailers, and contracts for laboratory analysis; to create advanced data collection, interpretation, and visualization platforms to strengthen centralized emergency response systems; to purchase and maintain equipment; to conduct real-time prediction modeling and assessment of hazardous air pollutant dispersion during incidents; to coordinate with state and local agencies to provide unified command; to carry out various

enforcement-related tasks; to conduct rulemaking activities; to conduct community engagement; and to carry out other tasks.

2) By expanding the duties of an air district, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program. Costs incurred by an air district would potentially be reimbursable by the state, subject to a determination by the Commission on State Mandates (General Fund). However, the bill specifies that ARB and each air district is responsible for operating an AQIRC and performing other duties set forth in this bill only to the extent the Legislature provides funding for those purposes.

VOTES

ASM NATURAL RESOURCES: 14-0-0
YES: Bryan, Ellis, Alanis, Connolly, Garcia, Haney, Hoover, Kalra, Macedo, Boerner, Pellerin, Schultz, Wicks, 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

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 78-0-2
YES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Johnson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas
ABS, ABST OR NV: Muratsuchi, Celeste Rodriguez

SENATE FLOOR: 39-0-1
YES: Allen, Alvarado-Gil, Archuleta, Arreguín, Ashby, Becker, Blakespear, Cabaldon, Caballero, Cervantes, Choi, Cortese, Dahle, Durazo, Gonzalez, Grayson, Grove, Hurtado, Jones, Laird, Limón, McGuire, McNerney, Menjivar, Niello, Ochoa Bogh, Padilla, Pérez, Richardson, Rubio, Seyarto, Smallwood-Cuevas, Stern, Strickland, Umberg, Valladares, Wahab, Weber Pierson, Wiener
ABS, ABST OR NV: Reyes

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 77-0-2
YES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Johnson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

ABS, ABST OR NV: Ellis, McKinnor

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