

Date of Hearing: May 6, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

AB 2495 (Kalra) – As Amended April 20, 2026

Policy Committee:	Labor and Employment	Vote:	5 - 1
	Judiciary		9 - 3

Urgency: No                      State Mandated Local Program: No                      Reimbursable: No

**SUMMARY:**

This bill expands an existing law that prohibits an employer from making an immigration-related threat against a worker.

Specifically, this bill:

- 1) Expands the existing prohibition against an employer engaging in unfair-immigration related practices against a person in retaliation for the person exercising a right protected under state or local labor laws to include such retaliation against a person for exercising a right under any local, state, or federal statute or regulation applicable to an employee, and additionally prohibits an employer from preventing a person from exercising this expanded right.
- 2) Prohibits an employer from engaging in conduct related to a person’s actual or perceived immigration status that would dissuade a reasonable person from engaging in conduct in which the person has a legal right to engage, or from inducing a reasonable person to engage in conduct from which the person has a legal right to abstain.
- 3) Makes an employer who violates these provisions and existing provisions liable for a civil penalty, which may not exceed \$10,000 per person for each violation.

**FISCAL EFFECT:**

Ongoing cost pressures of an unknown amount to the courts in additional workload by expanding an existing prohibition for which a civil action may be filed to recover equitable relief, damages, or penalties, and enacting a new employer penalty for a violation of the existing and new prohibitions (General Fund (GF) or Trial Court Trust Fund (TCTF)). It is unclear how many civil actions may be filed statewide and how much court time may be needed to resolve each case, but it generally costs approximately \$1,000 to operate a courtroom for one hour. Although courts are not funded on the basis of workload, increased pressure on staff and the TCTF may create a demand for increased court funding from the GF. The state budget provides annual GF backfills to the TCTF to offset revenue reductions, totaling approximately \$117.3 million in fiscal year 2025-26.

The Legislative Analyst’s Office recently warned of GF structural deficits of around \$35 billion per year in the 2027-28 fiscal year and ongoing.

**COMMENTS:**

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

Current law offers protections against immigration-related threats after a worker engages in protected activities but does not explicitly prohibit employers from using threats to deter workers from exercising their rights in the first place. Additionally, there are no worker protections comparable to Penal Code § 519, which criminalizes extortion based on coercive threats, such as threats to deport or “call ICE.”

AB 2495 amends existing labor protections to make it explicit that all immigration-related threats are unlawful. California must make it clear – employers cannot create a climate of fear with immigration-related threats to prevent workers from reporting violations of workplace rights.

This bill is sponsored by the California Employment Lawyers Association, Legal Aid at Work, Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights, AAPIs for Civic Empowerment, and Equal Rights Advocates and supported by other labor, civil rights, and social justice groups.

- 2) **Unfair Immigration-related Practices.** Existing law prohibits an employer from engaging in unfair immigration-related practices to retaliate against an employee for reporting workplace violations or exercising any other right guaranteed under the Labor Code or local ordinance. Existing law defines such an unfair practice to include threatening to report someone to immigration authorities, demanding more documents than are required by federal law, or making a false police report. However, existing law is triggered only after the employee has exercised the right and the employer engages in the unfair practice as a form of retaliation. This bill extends the prohibition to apply to an employer threat designed to prevent or dissuade an employee from ever reporting a violation or exercising a labor-related right in the first place. As noted in the Assembly Judiciary Committee’s analysis of this bill, “Indeed, an unscrupulous employer has more interest in using threats to prevent an employee from reporting a workplace violation before it occurs, rather than in retaliating against someone after it has been disclosed.”

**Analysis Prepared by:** Irene Ho / APPR. / (916) 319-2081