

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING
AB 2573 (Sharp-Collins)
As Amended May 19, 2026
Majority vote

SUMMARY

Changes a program that makes the voter registration records of elected officials and candidates for elective office confidential from an opt-out to an opt-in program. Allows immediate family members of an elected official who opts-in to the program to have their registration records made confidential.

Major Provisions

- 1) Requires a candidate or elected official to make an affirmative written request to the county elections official to receive confidential voter registration status.
- 2) Permits an immediate family member of an elected official who lives at the same residence as the official to receive confidentiality upon request if that family member is named in the written request by the elected official and the family member confirms in writing that they want confidential voter status. Defines "immediate family member," for the purpose of this bill, as the spouse, domestic partner, parent, or child of an elected official who lives at the same residence.
- 3) Provides for an elected official's confidentiality to remain in effect until two years after the official leaves office.
- 4) Specifies, for an unsuccessful candidate, that the confidentiality granted by the law ends upon the completion of the official canvass of election results for the election at which the candidate was defeated, as specified.
- 5) Requires each county elections official to exclude confidential information for candidates and elected officials from any list created by the official. Requires each county elections official to notify the Secretary of State (SOS) and any other relevant county elections official when the official adds or removes the confidential designation from a federal or state elected official's or candidate's voter registration record.
- 6) Establishes a process for an elected official who has received confidential voter registration status to opt out of that status.
- 7) Requires the SOS and county elections officials to implement the law allowing candidates and election officials to receive confidential voter registration status immediately once the statewide voter registration database and county election management systems have made conforming changes. Permits county elections officials to make best efforts to manually implement the law to the maximum degree possible before the completion of those changes and provides that this shall not be construed to authorize any reduction in ongoing implementation efforts.

COMMENTS

Last year, in response to increasing threats against public officials, including the shooting of two Minnesota legislators and their spouses in June 2025, the Legislature approved and Governor Newsom signed AB 1392 (Sharp-Collins), Chapter 300, Statutes of 2025. That bill made the voter registration records of elected officials and candidates for elective office confidential, thereby making information from those records unavailable for election, scholarly, or political purposes. Unlike other voter registration confidentiality programs, however, an elected official or candidate's residence address, telephone number, and email address may still be disclosed for bona fide journalistic or governmental purposes, as specified. Also unlike other such programs, AB 1392 largely was structured in an "opt-out" fashion; instead of applying to be in the confidentiality program, eligible candidates generally are added to the program automatically unless they opt-out.

Since the adoption of AB 1392, elections officials have raised several questions and concerns regarding its provisions and implementation. Among other issues, officials have identified ambiguities about whether the confidentiality protections must be affirmatively requested or are automatically granted to certain individuals. They have also questioned which specific elective offices are covered by the bill.

In addition, officials have expressed concern that implementing the bill may be burdensome—particularly until state and local systems are updated to reduce the amount of manual processing needed for confidential voter registration records. There is also concern that candidates and elected officials may not fully understand that opting into the bill's confidentiality protections would prevent them from casting a nonprovisional ballot at an in-person voting location.

This bill makes several changes to the confidentiality process established by AB 1392 to support effective implementation and resolve ambiguities in the original legislation. Most notably, it clarifies that confidentiality is granted only upon an affirmative written request from the candidate or elected official. It also allows for a phased implementation of the program as necessary updates are made to state and local election systems, provided that elections officials continue ongoing implementation efforts.

According to the Author

"AB 2573 is a technical clean-up bill that ensures counties can properly and consistently implement the confidential voter registration protections enacted through AB 1392. As counties began administering the program, elections officials identified areas where additional statutory clarity was needed around eligibility, procedures, and timelines. At a time when threats and harassment against public officials are increasing nationwide, it is critical that the protections authorized by the Legislature work as intended."

Arguments in Support

The sponsor of this bill, Secretary of State Shirley N. Weber, Ph.D., writes in support, "AB 2573 is a targeted cleanup of AB 1392 (2025), strengthening the privacy and helping protect the safety of elected officials and their families by safeguarding sensitive voter registration information. AB 1392 was developed through thoughtful collaboration with counties, journalists, and elections officials across the state. AB 2573 is a refinement addressing counties' needs to facilitate implementation. It clarifies the definition of "immediate family member," strengthens the request process ensuring confidential status is affirmatively sought by the elected official or candidate themselves, and addresses extent of coverage issues. The result is an improved

framework that will protect the personal information of elected officials, candidates, and their families while ensuring that our elections officials can administer the program efficiently. In an era of heightened threats and harassment of public officials, this legislation is both timely and necessary.."

Arguments in Opposition

None received.

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee:

- 1) One-time costs of approximately \$135,000 to the SOS to make modifications to VoteCal, the statewide voter registration database system, and the Election Management System to ensure data synchronization between the two platforms needed to implement this bill's information sharing procedures with counties (General Fund (GF)).
- 2) Costs in excess of \$150,000 annually across the state's 58 county elections officials to comply with this bill's information sharing procedures. For reference, a survey of counties identifies average annual costs in the mid-tens of thousands of dollars per county. If the Commission on State Mandates determines this bill's requirements to be a reimbursable state mandate, the state would need to reimburse these costs to counties (GF).

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.

VOTES

ASM ELECTIONS: 8-0-0

YES: Pellerin, Gallagher, Bennett, Berman, Elhawary, Johnson, Solache, Stefani

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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