
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 2573 (Sharp-Collins) - Voter registration information: elected officials and candidates

Version: July 1, 2026

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: August 3, 2026

Policy Vote: E. & C.A. 5 - 0

Mandate: Yes

Consultant: Robert Ingenito

Bill Summary: AB 2573 would modify the program that makes confidential an elected official's or a candidate's residence address, telephone number, and email address from the individual's affidavit of registration.

Fiscal Impact:

- The Secretary of State (SOS) would incur one-time General Fund costs of \$134,000 modify (1) VoteCal, the statewide voter registration database system, and (2) the Election Management System (EMS), to ensure data synchronization between the two platforms needed to implement this bill's information sharing procedures with counties.
- By requiring counties to comply with this bill's information sharing procedures, this bill creates a state-mandated local program. To the extent the Commission on State Mandates determines that the provisions of this bill create a new program or impose a higher level of service on local agencies, counties could claim reimbursement of those costs. The magnitude is unknown, but could exceed \$50,000 per year (General Fund).

Background: Current law generally protects the confidentiality of voter registration records while allowing limited disclosure for specified election, governmental, political, scholarly, and journalistic purposes. Even when disclosure is authorized, certain sensitive information—including a voter's signature, driver's license or identification number, and partial Social Security number—remains confidential. Individuals seeking access to voter registration records must submit an application to SOS or a county elections official identifying the requested information, the intended use, and sufficient identifying information to verify their identity. Elections officials are required to retain these applications for five years.

State law provides enhanced confidentiality protections for individuals facing heightened safety risks. Participants in California's Safe at Home program, individuals who obtain a court order based on life-threatening circumstances, certain public safety officers, and election workers who attest to credible threats may have their residence address, telephone number, and email address withheld from disclosure, including for otherwise permissible election-related purposes.

Following a rise in threats directed at public officials, including the June 2025 shootings of two Minnesota legislators and their spouses, the Legislature enacted AB 1392 (Sharp-Collins, 2025), to extend voter registration confidentiality protections to elected officials and candidates for elective office. The measure generally shields their voter registration information from public disclosure through an automatic, opt-out process, while preserving limited access to residence address, telephone number, and email address for bona fide governmental or journalistic purposes under specified conditions.

Proposed Law: This bill, among other things, would do the following:

- Change the ability for an elected official or candidate (as defined) to have their residence address, telephone number, and email address from the individual's affidavit of registration made confidential from an opt-out to an opt-in process. An elected official or candidate must submit a written request for confidential voter status to the county elections official.
- Permit the residence address, telephone number, and email address of an elected official's immediate family member (as defined) be included in a written request for confidentiality, if the immediate family member is named in the request and the request is accompanied by a statement from the immediate family member confirming they want confidential voter status and understand the ramifications of being made confidential.
- Provide, upon a written request for confidentiality, the county elections official must make the information confidential. The elections official may provide written notice to the household of the election official or candidate that persons whose information would be confidential would lose their ability to vote a nonprovisional ballot in person at a polling location.
- Provide that in addition to rosters, voter lists, or indexes, any other list created by an elections official must not include any confidential information of the elected official or candidate.
- Require an elected official's information remain confidential until two years after the official leaves office. For candidates, the information remains confidential until the completion of the canvass for which the candidate was listed on the ballot. Candidates in a local special election must remain confidential until the vote for the special election has been certified by the local elections official.
- Provide that a candidate who opts into confidential voter status and is elected to the office automatically retains confidential voter status after being sworn into office.
- Require the county elections official to determine and identify the federal, state, and local elected officials residing in their county.
- Remove the 60-day timeframe for when an elected official or candidate must apply for confidential voter status when moving to a new county and the requirement for an elections official to make an elected official's information

confidential. Instead, the elections official must make the information confidential upon request by the elected official.

- Permit an elected official to opt-out of and re-enroll in confidential voter status at any time while serving in the official's current office or while running for another office.
- Require county election officials to notify the SOS on a form prescribed by the SOS when a county elections official adds or removes the confidential designation to a federal or state elected official's voter registration record.
- Require the county elections official to notify an elected official at least 60 days before removing the confidential designation from a federal, state, or local elected official's voter registration record.
- Provide an elected official or candidate who opts-out of confidential voter status consents to the placement of their residence address, telephone number, and email address in the roster of voters.
- Provide that a candidate who opts out may subsequently request confidential voter status by submitting a written request at any time during the candidate's eligibility period for confidential voter status, and confidential voter status shall be reinstated in accordance with this section upon receipt of the request.
- Provide SOS and county election officials implement the remaining provisions of existing law, as it relates to confidential voter statuses and the provisions of this bill, immediately once the statewide voter registration database and county election management systems have made conforming changes.
- Provide, for elections through December 31, 2028, county election officials may make best efforts to manually implement the provisions of existing law as it related to confidential voter statuses and the provisions of this bill to the maximum degree possible before the completion of conforming changes to the statewide voter registration database and their own county election management systems. This is not to be construed to authorize any reduction in current, ongoing implementation efforts.
- Provide that the confidential voter program does not override and cannot revoke confidentiality ordered by a county or confidentiality granted by another specified program.

Related Legislation: AB 1392 (Sharp-Collins, Chapter 300, Statutes of 2025) made the voter registration records of elected officials and candidates for elective office confidential unless the elected official or candidate opts out.

Staff Comments: This bill would make various changes to clarify and resolve ambiguities in AB 1392, including granting confidentiality only upon affirmative written request from the candidate or elected official and allowing for phased implementation.

As noted above, this bill could result in a state-reimbursable mandate. A survey of counties identifies average annual costs in the mid-tens of thousands of dollars per county.

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