

CONCURRENCE IN SENATE AMENDMENTS

AB 2573 (Sharp-Collins)

As Amended August 21, 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.

Senate Amendments

- 1) Require elections officials to notify any family member of an elected official or candidate when making that person's voter registration confidential that confidential status means the voter will lose the ability to vote a nonprovisional ballot in person at the polls. The Assembly-approved version of the bill made this notification discretionary for elections officials.
- 2) Clarify that a candidate who opts out of voter registration confidentiality may subsequently opt back in, and make other clarifying changes.
- 3) Require the Secretary of State, in consultation with county elections officials, to develop and implement a process by September 30, 2027, that permits a person with confidential voter status to vote at a polling place or vote center and retain confidential status.
- 4) Provide that a voter's confidential voter status applies to their entire voter registration record, including records predating the voter's confidential status.
- 5) Codify the voter information that is made available for election, scholarly, journalistic, political, or governmental purposes.

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.

The Senate amendments make various clarifying changes and ensure that family members of candidates and elected officials who have their voter registration records made confidential are notified that they are unable to vote a nonprovisional ballot in person at the polls. Senate amendments also require the SOS to develop a procedure for voters with confidential voter registration status to vote at a polling place or vote center without giving up that status. This bill, as amended in the Senate, is generally consistent with prior Assembly actions.

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 Senate Appropriations Committee:

- 1) 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.
- 2) 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).

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

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

UPDATED

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