

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING  
AB 2592 (Pacheco)  
As Amended April 16, 2026  
2/3 vote

## SUMMARY

Transfers responsibility for lobbyist ethics training from the Assembly and Senate Legislative Ethics Committees to the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC), beginning in 2029.

### Major Provisions

- 1) Requires the FPPC, beginning in 2029, to maintain a training course for registered lobbyists on ethical issues and laws relating to lobbying, and on the Legislature's policies against harassment, including sexual harassment, in connection with lobbying activities. Requires the FPPC to consult with the Assembly and Senate Legislative Ethics Committees in developing the course curriculum, and requires the Ethics Committees to have final approval over content relating to the Legislature's policies against harassment. Requires the course to be available on-demand through an online platform, internet webpage, or application.
- 2) Permits the FPPC to impose a \$50 fee per lobbyist for taking the training course. Requires the FPPC to adjust that fee for inflation in every odd-numbered year, rounded to the nearest \$10.
- 3) Repeals, effective 2029, a requirement for the Assembly and Senate Legislative Ethics Committees to conduct, at least semiannually, a training course for registered lobbyists on ethical issues and laws related to lobbying, in consultation with the FPPC, and to impose fees to fund that lobbyist training.
- 4) Requires funds collected by the Assembly and Senate Legislative Ethics Committees from lobbyist training that are unused before January 1, 2029, to be transferred to the FPPC for the purpose of developing its lobbyist training course.

## COMMENTS

SB 1738 (Roberti), Chapter 84, Statutes of 1990, also known as the "Ethics in Government Act of 1990," enacted a comprehensive ethics reform package. Among other provisions, SB 1738 required legislators, designated employees of the Legislature, and lobbyists to take periodic ethics orientation courses, conducted by the legislative ethics committees in the Assembly and Senate. According to prior legislative analyses, the FPPC supported the initial provision giving the legislative ethics committees, rather than the FPPC, responsibility for conducting lobbyist ethics training. State law requires that the training be offered at least semiannually, and the ethics committees generally have held the training with greater frequency. According to information from the Senate Committee on Legislative Ethics, the committees typically offer 16 lobbyist training sessions per two year legislative session, including 11 sessions prior to the June 30 deadline for lobbyists to renew their certification in the first year of the legislative session, 2 additional training sessions in the summer and fall of the first year of the session, and 3 dates in the second year of the legislative session. This bill requires the FPPC to offer the training on-demand, which should provide greater flexibility for lobbyists seeking to complete their training obligations. According to a legislative analysis from 1993, the legislative ethics committees were charging \$50 for the lobbyist ethics training at the time. The Senate Committee on Legislative

Ethics indicates that the committees charged \$25 for training between 2002-2008, and have charged \$50 from 2009 to the present. While the fee is intended to cover the costs of conducting the training, the fee revenue has exceeded those costs in recent years. As a result, a surplus has developed in the account that is set aside for paying for the costs of lobbyist ethics training. Under the provisions of this bill, any such surplus remaining as of January 1, 2029, would be transferred to the FPPC to fund its lobbyist training responsibilities.

According to information from the bill's author and sponsor, from the National Conference of State Legislatures, and from committee staff research, at least eight states—Alaska, Hawaii, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, New York, Oregon, and Washington—require mandatory training for state lobbyists. Five of these states (Alaska, Hawaii, Louisiana, Maryland, and New York) mandate training on ethics and/or lobbying laws, and that training is administered by the state's ethics agency. The remaining three states (Maine, Oregon, and Washington) instead focus their training exclusively on legislative codes of conduct or workplace harassment prevention, and in those cases, the training is administered by the state legislature.

California voters passed an initiative, Proposition 9, in 1974 that created the FPPC and codified significant restrictions and prohibitions on candidates, officeholders, and lobbyists. That initiative is commonly known as the PRA. Amendments to the PRA that are not submitted to the voters, such as those contained in this bill, must further the purposes of the initiative and require a two-thirds vote of both houses of the Legislature.

#### **According to the Author**

"Lobbyist training currently is handled by legislative ethics staff during one of the busiest times of year, creating an unnecessary strain on limited resources. AB 2592 transfers this responsibility to the California Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) – the state's primary authority on political ethics and the agency responsible for interpreting and enforcing the state's lobbying laws. Because the FPPC already advises lobbyists and maintains up-to-date guidance, it is best positioned to provide accurate, standardized training that reflects current law. This change will streamline the process, improve access through on-demand training, and allow legislative staff to focus on their core responsibilities."

#### **Arguments in Support**

The sponsor of this bill, the FPPC, writes in support, "Starting January 1, 2029, AB 2592 would transfer the lobbyist training duty to the FPPC. The bill would require that the course curriculum be developed in consultation with the Legislative Ethics Committees and that the course be available on-demand through an online platform, internet webpage, or application. The bill would provide that the fee for the training is \$50, subject to a biennial cost of living adjustment. The bill would also provide that any unused funds collected by the Legislative Ethics Committees from lobbyists for the course shall be transferred to the FPPC for the purpose of developing the course. While Assembly and Senate Ethics Counsel do an excellent job conducting the training, the FPPC is more appropriately suited to provide this training as the experts on the state's lobbying laws and the agency charged with advising on the lobbying rules outside of this training. Shifting to an on-demand model will also assist lobbyists in fulfilling their training duty."

#### **Arguments in Opposition**

None received.

**FISCAL COMMENTS**

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee, this bill creates significant new workload at the FPPC, largely by transferring lobbyist orientation to the FPPC from the Legislature. The FPPC estimates it will need one new analyst, at an annual cost of \$114,000, and annual software licensing costs of \$80,000 (General Fund). The FPPC also anticipates approximately \$60,000 in revenue from the fee the FPPC may charge to each lobbyist that takes the training course (General Fund). 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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