
THIRD READING

Bill No: AB 2592
Author: Pacheco (D) and Addis (D), et al.
Amended: 8/20/26 in Senate
Vote: 27

SENATE ELECTIONS & C.A. COMMITTEE: 5-0, 6/16/26

AYES: Wiener, Choi, Allen, Cervantes, Umberg

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 7-0, 8/13/26

AYES: Cervantes, Seyarto, Cabaldon, Dahle, Grayson, Richardson, Wahab

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 78-0, 5/26/26 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Lobbyist ethics

SOURCE: California Fair Political Practices Commission

DIGEST: This bill transfers from the Legislature to the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) the duty to provide statutorily required training to lobbyists and prohibits a person from serving as a lobbyist for 12 years after a conviction for a crime of public corruption.

Senate Floor Amendments of 8/20/26 add the contents of AB 1560 (Tangipa) of 2026 to this bill to prohibit a person from serving as a lobbyist for 12 years following conviction of specified crimes.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) Regulates lobbyists through the Political Reform Act (PRA), including by requiring lobbying firms and lobbyist employers to register with the Secretary of State (SOS) and file periodic reports disclosing their activities.

- 2) Requires, as part of the registration process, that each lobbyist submit a lobbyist certification with the SOS. This certification shall include:
 - a) A recent photograph;
 - b) The full name, business address, and telephone number of the lobbyist;
 - c) A statement that the lobbyist understands the statutory gift limit; and
 - d) A statement that the lobbyist has or will complete an ethics course.
- 3) Prohibits a person from being a candidate for office or serving in elected office in California if the person has been convicted of a felony involving accepting, giving or offering to give any bribe, the embezzlement of public money, extortion or theft of public money, perjury, or conspiracy to commit any of these crimes.
- 4) Requires the appropriate legislative ethics committees of each house of the Legislature to conduct, at least semiannually, an orientation course on the relevant ethical issues and laws related to lobbying, in consultation with the FPPC to satisfy the ethics course requirement. This course must include information on each house of the Legislature's policies against harassment, including sexual harassment, in connection with lobbying activities.
- 5) Requires the committees to impose fees on lobbyists for attending the course in 4) of existing law and requires the fees to be set at an amount to enable the lobbyist's participation to be funded from those fees, to the fullest extent possible.
- 6) Requires lobbyists to attend an ethics training course at least once during each two-year legislative session as a condition of registering as a lobbyist.
- 7) Specifies administrative, civil, and criminal penalties for violating provisions of the PRA, including making any person who knowingly or willingly violates the PRA guilty of a misdemeanor. Conviction of a misdemeanor under the PRA precludes a person from being a candidate for office or acting as a lobbyist for four years, unless the court at sentencing determines this provision is not applicable.

This bill:

- 1) Prohibits a person from serving as a lobbyist for 12 years after a felony conviction for a crime of public corruption, defined in 3) of existing law. If a person is already a registered lobbyist and is convicted of such a crime, then the person's certification as a lobbyist shall be void upon the conviction, and the lobbyist is required to terminate their registration immediately upon conviction.
- 2) Requires a lobbyist certification submitted to the SOS to include a statement that the lobbyist has not been convicted of a crime of public corruption within the previous 12 years.
- 3) Prohibits the SOS from accepting a lobbying certification from a person who has indicated on the lobbying certification that they have been convicted of a crime of public corruption within the previous 12 years.
- 4) Repeals, effective January 1, 2029, the requirements in existing law for the legislative ethics committees to conduct training for registered lobbyists and to impose fees to fund that lobbyist training.
- 5) Requires the FPPC, beginning in 2029, to develop, maintain and offer 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.
- 6) Requires the FPPC to consult with the appropriate legislative ethics committees in developing the training course curriculum and gives the legislative ethics committees final approval over content relating to the Legislature's policies against harassment.
- 7) Requires the FPPC-provided training course to be available on-demand through an online platform, internet webpage, or application.
- 8) Permits the FPPC to impose beginning in 2029 a \$50 fee per lobbyist for taking the training course and to adjust that fee for inflation in every odd-numbered year, rounded to the nearest \$10.
- 9) 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 purposes of developing the lobbyist training.

Background

Proposition 9, which appeared on the June 1974 ballot, created the California Political Reform Act (PRA) and established California's system of regulating lobbying activity, campaign finance, and conflicts of interest for public officials. Proposition 9 created the FPPC to implement, administer, and enforce the PRA. The PRA regulates lobbyists, including requiring lobbyists, lobbying firms, and lobbyist employers to register with the SOS and to file periodic reports disclosing their activities.

The PRA requires any person who qualifies as a lobbyist, and thus works for a lobbying firm or a lobbyist employer, to submit a lobbyist certification and include a recent photograph of the lobbyist. The SOS makes a list, with photographs, of all lobbyists publicly available on its website, which also provides lists of registered lobbying firms and lobbyist employers. The SOS publishes a directory of registered individual lobbyists, lobbying firms, and lobbyist employers.

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.

Comments

Author's Statement. This bill strengthens ethics and accountability in California's lobbying process. Transferring lobbyist training to the FPPC will ensure consistent, standardized instruction from the state's primary authority on political ethics and campaign finance. The bill also reinforces the integrity of the lobbying profession by prohibiting individuals convicted of crimes of public corruption from serving as lobbyists for 12 years. Together, these reforms promote compliance, accountability, and public trust in California's governmental processes.

Crimes of Public Corruption. Existing law in Elections Code Section 20 prohibits a person from being a candidate for office or serving in elected office in California if the person has been convicted of a felony involving accepting, giving or offering to give any bribe, the embezzlement of public money, extortion or theft of public money, perjury, or conspiracy to commit any of these crimes. This bill refers to those crimes and that code section to define "crimes of public corruption" that make a person ineligible to lobby for 12 years conviction.

AB 2691 (Addis) of 2026 amends Elections Code Section 20 to expand the crimes that prohibit a person from running for office to include sexual assault and human trafficking. Thus, if both bills pass and become law, then a lobbyist would be ineligible to lobby for 12 years following the conviction of a crime of public corruption or specified sexual assault and human trafficking crimes.

Related/Prior Legislation

AB 1560 (Tangipa) of 2026 prohibits a person from serving as a lobbyist for 12 years after a conviction for a crime of public corruption.

AB 1789 (Boerner) of 2026 requires candidates and campaign treasurers beginning in 2029 to take an FPPC-provided training course on the requirements of the PRA.

AB 2055 (Levine, Chapter 964, Statutes of 2018) requires that lobbying ethics courses include information on the policies against harassment, including sexual harassment, established by each house of the Legislature.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: Yes

According to the Senate Committee on Appropriations:

FPPC indicates that it would require (1) one new analyst, at an ongoing annual cost of \$107,000, and (2) annual software licensing costs of \$80,000, to implement the provisions of the bill (General Fund). FPPC estimates \$60,000 in revenue from the fee it may charge to each lobbyist that takes the training course (General Fund).

SUPPORT: (Verified 8/20/26)

California Fair Political Practices Commission (source)
California Common Cause

OPPOSITION: (Verified 8/20/26)

None received

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT: Writing in support, the FPPC, this bill's source, states:

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.

California Common Cause says shifting lobbyist training to the FPPC “makes a practical and important update to California’s ethics framework” and represents a thoughtful and well-calibrated improvement to California’s ethics infrastructure.

In addition, Common Cause writes of the prohibition on lobbying after a conviction for specified crimes:

California Common Cause strongly supports efforts to protect the integrity of governmental decision-making and ensure that individuals who seek to influence public policy are held to appropriate ethical standards. Individuals convicted of serious public corruption offenses, such as bribery, embezzlement of public funds, extortion, and perjury, have engaged in conduct that undermines public trust in government and the democratic process. (This bill) addresses these concerns by establishing meaningful restrictions on lobbying activity for individuals convicted of such offenses.

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 78-0, 5/26/26

AYES: 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

NO VOTE RECORDED: Muratsuchi, Celeste Rodriguez

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**** END ****

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