

Date of Hearing: April 15, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
Buffy Wicks, Chair
AB 2593 (Elhawary) – As Introduced February 20, 2026

Policy Committee: Public Safety

Vote: 8 - 0

Urgency: No

State Mandated Local Program: No

Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill prohibits the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) from denying medically necessary health care to treat substantial emotional distress or serious bodily injury, as prescribed by a licensed health care provider.

FISCAL EFFECT:

- 1) Unknown, but likely minor costs, to CDCR (General Fund) to comply with the requirements of this bill.
- 2) Possible unknown, significant costs to the Department of Justice (General Fund) to defend litigation over the scope of the bill, including the undefined term “substantial emotional distress.”
- 3) Cost pressures (Trial Court Trust Fund, General Fund) of an unknown but potentially significant amount to the courts to adjudicate any additional filings. Actual costs will depend on the number of cases filed and the amount of court time needed to resolve each case. It generally costs approximately \$1,000 to operate a courtroom for one hour. Although courts are not funded on the basis of workload, increased pressure on the Trial Court Trust Fund may create a demand for increased funding for courts from the General Fund. The state budget provides an annual General Fund backfill to the Trial Court Trust Fund to offset ongoing declining revenue. This backfill was \$37.3 million in 2024-25.

The Legislative Analyst’s Office recently warned of General Fund structural deficits of around \$35 billion per year beginning in the 2027-28 fiscal year.

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Purpose.** According to the author,

For far too long, the voices of our incarcerated patients and the medical professionals who care for them have been pushed aside....AB 2593 is about fixing that. It’s about making sure the people trained to provide care can actually do their jobs and make decisions based on current medical standards.

- 2) **Background.** According to information provided by the author, physicians who have been providing high quality community standard of care to our most disenfranchised populations

have historically been undermined and stymied by management or leadership to the detriment of the patients. This bill would prohibit a supervisor, administrator, or employee of CDCR from knowingly interfering with or refusing to implement health care prescribed or determined to be medically necessary by a licensed health care provider acting within the scope of their licensure if that interference or refusal results in substantial emotional distress or serious bodily injury. The bill defines “serious bodily injury” as a serious impairment of physical condition, including, but not limited to, the following: loss of consciousness; concussion; bone fracture; protracted loss or impairment of function of any bodily member or organ; a wound requiring extensive suturing; and serious disfigurement. The bill does not define “substantial emotional distress.”

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