

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING

AB 2624 (Bonta)

As Amended April 23, 2026

Majority vote

SUMMARY

This bill establishes a new address confidentiality program within the Secretary of State's (SOS) Safe at Home program for designated immigration support services providers, employees, volunteers, or recipients who fear for their safety because of their affiliation with a designated immigration support services facility and establishes online privacy protections enforceable through civil causes of action and criminal penalties.

Major Provisions

- 1) Authorizes a designated immigration support services provider, employee, or volunteer who is domiciled in California to apply to the SOS for a substitute address to serve as the person's address in public records, with applications filed in person at a community-based assistance program designated by the Secretary of State.
- 2) Requires the SOS to commence accepting applications by July 1, 2027.
- 3) Authorizes the Secretary of State to charge an application fee not to exceed the reasonable costs of enrollment and to assess annual fees to defray maintenance costs and reimburse the General Fund.
- 4) Creates the Address Confidentiality for Immigration Support Services Fund in the General Fund, with monies available upon appropriation.
- 5) Requires state and local agencies to accept the SOS-designated address as the program participant's substitute address when creating, modifying, or maintaining public records, subject to specified exceptions.
- 6) Designates the SOS as the participant's agent for service of process and requires the Secretary to forward first-class mail and governmental mail to participants.
- 7) Prohibits a person, business, or association from publicly posting, displaying, disclosing, or distributing on the internet a program participant's home address or a designated immigration support services provider, employee, or volunteer's personal information or image, with civil causes of action for injunctive and declarative relief and damages of up to three times actual damages or a minimum of \$4,000 per violation, plus attorney's fees and court costs.
- 8) Establishes a misdemeanor for falsely attesting on a program application or willfully certifying false material in supporting documentation.
- 9) Establishes criminal penalties of up to \$10,000 and three years imprisonment (or up to \$50,000 and three years if the violation results in bodily injury) for posting personal information or images on the internet with the intent that another person imminently use that information to commit a crime involving violence or a threat of violence.

COMMENTS

California's recent history has been one of inclusion, respect, and sanctuary for our immigrant communities. While Congress has failed to pass comprehensive immigration reform over the last decade, California has exercised its state power to protect immigrants who are caught in limbo due to Washington's inaction. The Legislature continues to act year after year by passing significant legislation to both protect people from harm who have immigrated to California and to provide them with many of the supports and services provided to all California residents.

Unfortunately, with the current federal administration's stated goal of removing immigrants, regardless of whether or not they are in the country without the appropriate paperwork, coupled with the President's directive to focus efforts on sanctuary states and cities, the need to protect Californians regardless of their country of origin, ethnicity, or immigration status has become even more critical if California is to remain a state that is committed to providing sanctuary. Importantly, to continue to provide the support services that immigrant communities need, the people providing those services find that they, too, need to be protected from increasingly violent, xenophobic actions by those seeking to rid the country of non-white immigrants.¹

According to the author, individuals who support immigrant populations, including public-facing service workers who face heightened risks because of their roles.

In 2025, following a series of immigration raids, there has been a surge in misinformation and harmful rhetoric disseminated by right-wing media outlets and some elected officials. This has contributed to the spread of false and damaging content on social media, often targeting organizations and individuals working in immigrant services. In one instance, an organization had sensitive personal information about its senior staff publicly posted online. Additionally, staff members at various levels have reported being followed when arriving at or leaving their workplaces.

At the same time, current federal policies and rhetoric have created a climate of fear and uncertainty across many immigrant communities. In this environment, immigrant-serving organizations are indispensable. They amplify immigrant voices, help individuals understand and exercise their constitutional rights, guide families through complex legal systems, and provide essential resources such as food assistance and educational support.

Integrating these protections into the Safe at Home Program would reduce the public exposure of sensitive personal information, deter malicious online behavior, and provide meaningful legal tools to prevent and address doxxing before it escalates into physical harm. Ultimately, this bill will enable immigrant-serving organizations to carry out their work safely.

From a more specific perspective, the TransLatina Resource Center (TLRC) in San Francisco provides essential services to immigrant communities, including legal assistance for asylum cases. The organization has faced ongoing threats to data privacy, personal safety, and operational security due to coordinated doxxing efforts. As a result, TLRC has spent

¹ In February 2025, the President signed an executive order offering refugee status to white Afrikaners living in South Africa, while at the same time cancelling refugee status for people from most non-white countries. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/02/addressing-egregious-actions-of-the-republic-of-south-africa/>.

approximately \$10,000 on data protection services, hired front-door security during business hours, and removed employee information and its address from its website—actions that have also made it more difficult for clients to access services. Attorneys at TLRC face the risk of having their personal information weaponized each time they file a case. Expanding access to the Safe at Home Program would provide critical privacy protections, allowing them to continue their work without compromising their safety. These protections are essential not only for service providers, but also for the communities that depend on them. At its core, this issue is about ensuring that people can both provide and access vital immigration services without fear for their personal or family safety.

According to the Author

AB 2624 strengthens protections for individuals working in immigrant service roles, including nonprofit staff, volunteers, and legal services providers, who may face risks such as doxxing, harassment, or threats due to the nature of their work. By extending Safe at Home Program protections, the bill allows eligible participants to keep their personal information confidential in public records, helping reduce exposure to harm while supporting the continued delivery of legal, social, and humanitarian services. This proposal promotes safety, privacy, and continuity of essential services, reinforcing public confidence and ensuring that those serving communities across California can carry out their responsibilities effectively and securely.

Arguments in Support

Women's Foundation California, Solis Policy Institute, co-sponsors of the bill, write in support:

AB 2624 is a critical measure that advances California's commitments to privacy, the fair administration of justice, and public safety by protecting immigration support service providers and the individuals they serve. By safeguarding sensitive personal information—such as home addresses—the bill reduces the risk of harassment, intimidation, and targeted harm, while preventing the misuse of data against vulnerable communities. These protections reinforce core legal principles of privacy and due process, ensure equitable access to essential services, and promote community trust in institutions. In doing so, AB 2624 helps prevent escalation into violence, strengthens community stability, and supports safer, more secure communities across California.

Co-sponsors, the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA) also note:

Immigrant support providers, whether working in legal assistance, advocacy, education or community support, are operating under heightened risk in the current political climate. Many have experienced harassment, threats, doxxing, and targeted intimidation due to their work. These incidents have escalated significantly in recent years and are likely to continue given the current climate surrounding immigration policy. Such threats jeopardize the safety of advocates and staff and disrupt the vital services they provide to immigrant communities. Advocates and staff should not have to fear that sensitive personal information, such as their home addresses, can be weaponized against them by anti-immigrant vigilantes.

Currently, the law does not offer these individuals the same confidentiality protection that exists for other groups under the Safe at Home Program, leaving them at risk of danger. AB 2624 addresses this gap by allowing those serving immigrant populations to access the critical privacy safeguards, helping them work without fear for their safety. The Safe at Home Program has a long history of protecting people in vulnerable situations. Originally designed for survivors of domestic violence, it has been expanded over the years to include

victims of stalking, reproductive health workers, and gender-affirming health care providers. AB 2624 extends these protections to the immigration services sector, ensuring that personal information remains confidential and that threats of harassment can be legally addressed under existing civil and criminal frameworks.

The expansion of these protections strengthens the broader support ecosystem, preserving the integrity and continuity of services offered by immigrant support organizations. By shielding staff and volunteers from exposure to online harassment and physical threats, AB 2624 allows organizations to continue providing legal guidance, advocacy, and community resources safely and effectively. Protecting those who serve immigrants ultimately helps immigrant communities live with dignity and access the support they need in California.

Arguments in Opposition

The California Baptists for Biblical Values writes in opposition:

This bill would establish a broad address confidentiality program that protects immigration support service providers, staff, and volunteers from public exposure. It would also introduce civil and criminal penalties for anyone sharing their personal information online. Although presented as a safety measure, AB 2624 would serve as a powerful tool for organizations to hide their activities from public scrutiny, including from investigative journalists exposing fraud and abuse in California's immigration sector. The First Amendment guarantees free speech and a free press — essential rights that allow citizens and journalists to reveal misconduct, hold institutions accountable, and speak truth to power. The sweeping ban on publicly sharing the personal details of any immigration worker, under threat of criminal and civil penalties, would deter legitimate reporting and accountability efforts. No one should be beyond public oversight by legislative action. As people of faith, we believe that truth and transparency are the foundations of justice. Proverbs 12:17 (KJV) states: "An honest witness delivereth souls: but a deceitful witness speaketh lies." California's communities deserve honest witnesses — reporters, watchdogs, and citizens — who must be free to investigate and expose deception without fear of prosecution. AB 2624 would silence these witnesses and protect wrongdoers from accountability

FISCAL COMMENTS

- 1) Ongoing General Fund costs to the Secretary of State (SOS) of approximately \$290,000 in the first year and \$154,000 ongoing to expand the Safe at Home program to immigration support services workers and recipients. According to SOS, costs include staffing to establish new partnerships, deliver training and outreach, develop forms and procedures, update internal systems, and manage an anticipated increase in applications, mail volume, and service requests; modifications to the Safe at Home Salesforce system to add a new applicant category; expansion of the enrollment portal, including purchase and ongoing maintenance of additional user licenses; and printing, translation, postage for mail forwarding and regulatory updates.
- 2) Cost pressures (Trial Court Trust Fund, General Fund) of an unknown but potentially significant amount to the courts to adjudicate civil cases and criminal charges resulting from this bill. Actual costs will depend on the number of cases filed and the amount of court time needed to resolve each case. A defendant charged with a misdemeanor or felony is entitled to a jury trial and, if the defendant is indigent, legal representation provided by the government. 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 annual General Fund backfills to the Trial Court Trust Fund to offset revenue reductions, totaling approximately \$117.3 million in 2025-26.

- 3) Incarceration costs (local funds, General Fund) to the counties and the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. Actual incarceration costs will depend on the number of convictions, the length of each sentence, and whether each sentence must be served in county jail or state prison. The average annual cost to incarcerate one person in county jail is approximately \$29,000, though costs are higher in larger counties. The Legislative Analyst's Office estimates the average annual cost to incarcerate one person in state prison is \$128,000; CDCR estimates \$135,921. County incarceration costs are not subject to reimbursement by the state. However, overcrowding in county jails creates cost pressure on the General Fund because the state has historically granted new funding to counties to offset overcrowding resulting from public safety realignment.

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.

VOTES

ASM PRIVACY AND CONSUMER PROTECTION: 11-2-2

YES: Lowenthal, Bryan, Hart, Irwin, McKinnor, Ortega, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Ward, Wicks, Wilson

NO: Macedo, DeMaio

ABS, ABST OR NV: Hoover, Patterson

ASM JUDICIARY: 9-3-0

YES: Kalra, Bauer-Kahan, Bryan, Connolly, Harabedian, Pacheco, Papan, Stefani, Zbur

NO: Macedo, Dixon, Sanchez

ASM PUBLIC SAFETY: 7-2-0

YES: Schultz, Mark González, Haney, Harabedian, Nguyen, Ramos, Sharp-Collins

NO: Alanis, Lackey

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 11-4-0

YES: Wicks, Aguiar-Curry, Calderon, Caloza, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache

NO: Hoover, Dixon, Ta, Tangipa

UPDATED

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