Date of Hearing: May 6, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
Buffy Wicks, Chair
AB 2664 (Bauer-Kahan) – As Amended April 16, 2026

Policy Committee:	Public Safety	Vote:	8 - 0
	Judiciary		10 - 0

Urgency: No State Mandated Local Program: Yes Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill makes it unlawful for a person, within 100 feet of an entrance or exit of a place of religious worship, to intentionally approach within eight feet of any other person or occupant of a motor vehicle, without their consent, to (a) pass a leaflet or handbill, display a sign, or engage in oral protest or education, or (b) harass, obstruct, threaten, or intimidate that person or occupant.

Specifically, this bill:

1) Defines "place of religious worship" as any building, structure, or space primarily used for religious worship activities or to provide religious education or instruction, and includes the parking lot, parking lot entrances, driveway, and driveway entrances of any such building or space.

2) Makes a first violation a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not exceeding $1,000, imprisonment in a county jail not exceeding six months, or both. Makes a second or subsequent violation a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed $5,000, imprisonment in a county jail not exceeding one year, or both.

FISCAL EFFECT:

Workload costs (Trial Court Trust Fund, General Fund) of an unknown but likely moderate amount to the trial courts to adjudicate prosecutions for the new misdemeanor offense. One hour of court time has an estimated cost of approximately $1,000; even a small number of contested prosecutions reaching trial could generate court costs exceeding the $150,000 suspense threshold. 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.

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:

> Amidst rising antisemitism and hate, many Jewish People fear simply going to synagogue… AB 2664 establishes a zone around the

> entrances of houses of worship, within which protesters may not intentionally approach congregants without consent. These protections are designed to ensure that people can enter and exit religious institutions without being obstructed or intimidated… This bill takes a balanced approach that has existed for decades in other states and localities, carefully protecting both freedom of worship and freedom of speech.

2) **Background**. The bill creates a "floating bubble" buffer zone modeled on the Colorado statute upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Hill v. Colorado*, (2000) 530 U.S. 703, but applied to places of religious worship rather than reproductive health care facilities. Under existing California law, the FACE Act (Penal Code Section 423 *et seq*.) already prohibits the use of force, threat of force, or physical obstruction to interfere with a person's exercise of First Amendment religious freedom at a place of religious worship. Existing law also prohibits hate crimes, stalking and credible threats, and other forms of harassment, threats, and intimidation. The new conduct captured by this bill that is not already prohibited under existing law is principally the leafletting, sign-display, and oral protest or education provision in subdivision (c)(1).

   According to the policy committee analyses, the bill responds to recent protests at synagogues in Los Angeles, including incidents at Wilshire Boulevard Temple and Adas Torah, and to broader increases in antisemitic and other hate-motivated incidents reported by the Anti-Defamation League and American Jewish Committee. The Judiciary Committee's analysis notes that the U.S. Supreme Court's subsequent decision in *McCullen v. Coakley*, (2014) 573 U.S. 464 — which struck down a 35-foot fixed buffer zone around abortion clinics in Massachusetts on narrow-tailoring grounds — established a three-part inquiry that the government must satisfy when defending such a buffer zone: (1) a substantial record of the problem, (2) consideration of less restrictive alternatives, and (3) demonstration that those alternatives have failed. To the extent the bill is challenged in court, any defense costs would be borne by the Department of Justice.

Analysis Prepared by: Shiran Zohar / APPR. / (916) 319-2081