

Date of Hearing: May 6, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

AB 2683 (Ransom) – As Amended April 20, 2026

Policy Committee: Public Safety

Vote: 9 - 0

Urgency: No

State Mandated Local Program: Yes

Reimbursable: No

**SUMMARY:**

This bill provides that any adult who solicits or recruits a minor to commit a felony is guilty of child endangerment under Penal Code Section 273a(a), and shall, in addition and consecutive to any other punishment, be punished by an additional term in state prison of two, four, or six years.

**FISCAL EFFECT:**

- 1) Unknown but potentially significant ongoing costs (General Fund) to the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) for additional incarceration time resulting from the new offense in this bill. CDCR reports approximately 453 admissions to state prison in the current year for violations of existing Section 273a; the population subject to this bill is unknown, but would consist of adults charged with soliciting or recruiting a minor to commit a felony, which is a fact pattern not generally captured by existing Section 273a. The LAO estimates that CDCR's average annual per capita cost of incarceration was approximately \$127,800 in 2025-26, and the marginal cost of incarcerating an additional person — when the change in population does not require activating or deactivating facilities — is approximately \$21,500 per person per year. As an illustrative figure, 100 additional convictions at the middle term of four years would represent roughly \$8.6 million in marginal incarceration costs over the term, with significantly higher costs to the extent that population growth necessitates additional staffing or facility capacity.
- 2) Unknown but potentially minor costs to courts (Trial Court Trust Fund) for additional charging, plea, and sentencing proceedings on new charges arising under the bill.

The Legislative Analyst's Office has identified a General Fund structural deficit of approximately \$35 billion annually beginning in 2027-28.

**COMMENTS:**

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

Across California, about 8 percent of youth report gang involvement, and those most often targeted are young people in low income communities, including Black and Latino youth, as well as foster and homeless youth. Cities like Stockton continue to see high levels of gang activity, with organized groups responsible for violent crimes, highlighting the real and ongoing risks to children. Current law does

not clearly address this conduct for what it is: child endangerment, despite many of these young people being pressured, coerced, or manipulated rather than having acted on their own.

- 2) **Background.** Existing law makes it a felony for any person, under conditions likely to produce great bodily harm or death, to willfully cause or permit a child to suffer unjustifiable physical pain or mental suffering, or to place the child in a situation where the child's person or health is endangered. Felony child endangerment is punishable by two, four, or six years in state prison. The existing statute has generally been interpreted to require evidence of direct injury to or endangerment of a specific child. This bill creates a new subsection of Penal Code Section 273a defining a stand-alone form of child endangerment — solicitation or recruitment of a minor to commit a felony — punishable by an additional and consecutive term of two, four, or six years. As the policy committee analysis notes, an adult who recruits a minor to commit a felony may already be liable as a party to the underlying crime under Penal Code Section 31, including under aiding and abetting principles or, in cases involving children under 14, as a principal who has caused the child to commit the crime by threats, command, or coercion. This bill would establish a separate, independent basis for additional punishment regardless of the recruiter's status as a party to the underlying felony.
- 3) **Support and Opposition.** The California Police Chiefs Association supports the bill, arguing that organized criminal groups deliberately recruit minors to insulate adult organizers from accountability and that the bill closes a gap in the existing legal framework. Opposition includes the California Coalition for Women Prisoners, the California Public Defenders Association, the ACLU California Action, the San Francisco Public Defender, and others, who argue that California already has more than 100 sentence enhancements, that evidence indicates increased sentence length does not deter crime more effectively than the certainty of punishment, and that each additional year of incarceration carries substantial costs to the state.

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