
SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

Senator Jesse Arreguín, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No: AB 2761 **Hearing Date:** June 30, 2026
Author: Petrie-Norris
Version: March 19, 2026
Urgency: No **Fiscal:** Yes
Consultant: SJ

Subject: *Vehicles: crash data*

HISTORY

Source: Author

Prior Legislation: SB 925 (Bates), Ch. 223, Stats. of 2022

Support: AAA Northern California, Nevada & Utah; Auto Club of Southern California

Opposition: None known

Assembly Floor Vote: 77 - 0

PURPOSE

The purpose of this bill is to require the California Highway Patrol (CHP) to develop and make available to all law enforcement agencies an electronic reporting system for reporting vehicle crashes.

Existing law requires drivers involved in certain accidents that result in severe property damage, bodily injury, or death to report the accident within 10 days. (Veh. Code, § 16000-16005.)

Existing law requires CHP to prepare and supply to police departments, coroners, sheriffs, and other suitable agencies or individuals, forms for accident reports. (Veh. Code, § 2407.)

Existing law requires CHP to tabulate and analyze all accident reports and publish annually or at more frequent intervals statistical information on the number and location of traffic accidents and traffic accident prevention data. (Veh. Code, § 2408.)

Existing law requires police departments which receive accident reports during the previous month to forward a copy of the report to CHP on or before the fifth day of each month. (Veh. Code, § 20008.)

Existing law requires a coroner or medical examiner, on or before the 10th day of each month, to report in writing to CHP the death of any person during the preceding calendar month as the result of a motor vehicle accident, the circumstances of the accident, and when available, blood alcohol content and blood drug concentrations. (Veh. Code, § 20011.)

Existing law governs the contents of accident reports and makes them available “to any person who may have a proper interest,” including, but not limited to, the driver, injured parties, owner of the vehicle, and representatives of the owner. (Veh. Code, § 20012.)

Existing law provides that accident reports required to be provided to CHP must be made available for immediate and confidential use by any CHP division, the Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and, with respect to accidents occurring on non-state highways, the local authority with jurisdiction. (Veh. Code, § 20012.)

Existing law imposes a fee, not to exceed the cost of production, on anyone requesting a copy of an accident report. (Veh. Code, § 20012.)

Existing law prohibits an accident report from being used as evidence in any trial, civil or criminal, arising out of an accident, except that the CHP must furnish upon demand of any person who has, or claims to have, made such a report or upon demand of any court, a certificate showing that a specified accident report has or has not been made to the department solely to prove a compliance or failure to comply with the requirement that such a report be made to the department. (Veh. Code, § 20013.)

Existing law requires that all required accident reports and supplemental reports and all reports made to the CHP by any peace officer, member of the CHP, or other employee of the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and the CHP, be immediately available for the confidential use of any division in the department needing the same, for confidential use of the Caltrans, and, with respect to accidents occurring on highways other than state highways, for the confidential use of the local authority having jurisdiction over the highway. (Veh. Code, § 20014.)

This bill repeals the requirement that CHP provide accident reporting forms to police departments, coroners, sheriffs, and other suitable agencies or individuals.

This bill requires CHP to prescribe minimum traffic crash reporting requirements, determine the method and standards for electronically submitting all crash investigation reports, and provide a crash investigation report system to law enforcement and individuals by January 1, 2030.

This bill requires CHP to maintain a database of all crash investigation reports.

This bill requires law enforcement agencies to document traffic crashes and electronically submit crash investigation reports in a timeframe determined by CHP.

This bill requires a coroner or medical examiner to submit required reports of motor vehicle crash deaths electronically instead of in writing.

This bill waives fees for electronic copies of crash investigation reports.

This bill authorizes individuals assigned by law enforcement agencies who are not peace officers to receive crash reports.

This bill replaces “accident” and “collision” with “crash” throughout the specified provisions of the Vehicle Code.

COMMENTS

1. Need For This Bill

According to the author:

Current law does not require law enforcement agencies to submit crash reports electronically or to use the most up-to-date reporting format. As a result, California's crash data is incomplete, delayed, and inconsistent. The delays in data reporting compromise California's ability to identify trends, evaluate programs, develop enforcement strategies, secure grant funding, and implement safety improvements. AB 2761 amends the California Vehicle Code to modernize data collection from a combination of paper and electronic process to a fully automated electronic process. Electronic crash reports will be easier to share with stakeholders, ensure consistency statewide, and provide timely information to identify trends, evaluate programs, refine enforcement strategies, and target safety improvements.

2. Vehicle Crash Reporting

Existing law generally requires drivers involved in a vehicle crash to report the crash to the relevant law enforcement authorities. This is particularly true for cases where there is substantial property damage, injury, or death. (Veh. Code, §§ 20001-20004.) Local law enforcement agencies are then required to submit these reports to CHP, which collects the information in the Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS). This data is submitted to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). This reporting plays a critical role in traffic enforcement, insurance adjudication, and traffic safety research, among other things.

Crash reporting in California is outdated because many agencies across the state file paper reports rather than electronic reports. According to CHP, this includes roughly 40% of agencies across the state. As a result, data is delayed in getting to CHP, which then delays data reporting to NHTSA. The current average period of delay is roughly two years. This lack of timely data makes it difficult for state and federal regulators to detect safety risks or trends, address urgent safety needs via recalls, assess the efficacy of safety equipment, or monitor new technologies like automated driving systems.

NHTSA has also reported issues in data consistency between jurisdictions across the country. To address this problem, NHTSA published the Model Minimum Uniform Crash Criteria (MMUCC). This document, which was most recently updated in 2024, lays out a set of voluntary guidelines that describe a standardized set of parameters useful for describing vehicle crashes. The goal of MMUCC is to encourage agencies across the country to adopt these uniform standards and create consistency in crash reporting.

To help encourage the adoption of MMUCC standards, NHTSA created the State Electronic Data Collection Program in 2022. As part of the program, states were awarded federal grant money to align their crash reporting systems with MMUCC. In 2024, California was awarded roughly \$60 million over five years to create a new, centralized electronic reporting system.

The 2025 Budget Act allocated \$3.5 million to CHP to begin planning the California Crash Data System Modernization (CalCrash) program.¹ CalCrash will serve as the new centralized system, compliant with MMUCC, that will automatically collect statewide crash data for storage in SWITRS. Access to CalCrash will be provided to local agencies at no-cost. According to CHP, in addition to improving the collection, timeliness, accuracy, uniformity, integrity, and accessibility of the state's crash data system, CalCrash will empower all stakeholders to gain a deeper understanding of crash data and allow the state to improve its own understanding and analysis of crashes to enhance safety for all road users.

This bill supports the development and implementation of the CalCrash system by revising the statute on crash reporting to require the use of electronic reporting and record keeping by all law enforcement agencies across the state.

3. Argument in Support

The Auto Club of Southern California and AAA Northern California, Nevada & Utah write:

This measure strengthens California's traffic safety framework by modernizing crash data collection through standardized electronic reporting, resulting in more accurate, timely, and actionable information.

High-quality crash data is essential to reducing fatalities and serious injuries. Today's largely paper-based system can result in delays, inconsistencies, and incomplete reporting, limiting the ability of state and local agencies to identify safety risks and respond effectively. AB 2761 addresses these gaps by improving data consistency across jurisdictions and accelerating access to critical crash information. More timely and reliable data will enable transportation agencies to better identify high-injury corridors, evaluate safety countermeasures, and prioritize investments that deliver the greatest safety benefit.

For impaired driving, improved data is especially critical. Research from the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety (AAAFTS) shows that drug-impaired driving is prevalent and difficult to measure, with many users underestimating its effects, no reliable correlation between THC levels and impairment, and frequent polysubstance use. These challenges underscore the need for comprehensive crash data, including timely toxicology information to better understand trends and support effective enforcement and prevention strategies.

AB 2761 will also improve coordination among law enforcement, public health, and transportation agencies by establishing a more integrated and accessible data system. This is critical to implementing a Safe System Approach, which relies on shared data to identify risks and deploy targeted solutions. By replacing outdated reporting practices with a modern, electronic system, the bill enhances both efficiency and long-term cost-effectiveness.

We recognize that transitioning to electronic reporting may raise concerns regarding implementation costs and administrative burden for local agencies.

¹ Senate Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review, *Final Action Report: A Summary of the 2025 Budget Act* (Oct. 21, 2025), p. 5-32, available at <<https://sbud.senate.ca.gov/system/files/2025-10/final-action-report-a-summary-of-the-2025-budget-act.pdf>>.

However, these challenges are outweighed by the long-term benefits of improved data quality, reduced duplication, and streamlined reporting processes. Standardization will ultimately reduce inefficiencies and support more effective use of limited safety resources. Ensuring appropriate implementation timelines and technical support will be important to achieving a smooth transition.

AB 2761 represents a practical, data-driven step toward improving roadway safety outcomes across California. By equipping decision-makers with better information, the bill will help prevent crashes, save lives, and support more effective traffic safety strategies.

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