
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 2761 (Petrie-Norris) - Vehicles: crash data

Version: March 19, 2026

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: August 3, 2026

Policy Vote: TRANS. 13 - 0, PUB. S. 6 - 0

Mandate: Yes

Consultant: Mark McKenzie

Bill Summary: AB 2761 would require the California Highway Patrol (CHP) to develop and make available to all law enforcement agencies an electronic crash reporting system by January 1, 2030, and require local law enforcement agencies and coroners to electronically submit specified reports to CHP electronically, as specified.

Fiscal Impact:

- The CHP would incur significant costs, in the tens of millions over multiple fiscal years, to develop and implement an electronic crash reporting system. The CHP indicates that the department received a federal grant in 2024 to build a crash reporting system that would allow law enforcement agencies to complete crash reports for data collection by CHP. The requirements of this bill are consistent with the work that is currently underway using federal dollars, and CHP indicates that any costs related to this bill would be covered by the existing grant funds, which are appropriated each year through the budget process. See Staff Comments. (federal funds)
- Unknown one-time and ongoing local mandated costs, at least partially offset by savings from efficiencies that are likely to be achieved from submitting crash data and other specified reporting information to the CHP electronically rather than forwarding reports by current manual means. Local costs, particularly up-front one-time costs, could be reimbursable by the state, subject to a determination by the Commission on State Mandates. (General Fund)

Background: Existing law generally requires drivers involved in a vehicle crash to report the crash to the relevant law enforcement authorities, which is especially important in cases where there is substantial property damage, injury, or death. Existing law requires the CHP to prepare and supply police departments, coroners, and sheriffs with forms for accident reports that include sufficient detail regarding the cause of an accident, conditions at the time of the accident, and persons or vehicles involved in the accident. Local law enforcement agencies are then required to submit these reports to CHP, which are then collected and entered into the Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS). Existing law also requires coroners and medical examiners to report the death of any person as a result of a traffic accident, the circumstances of the accident, and any information on blood alcohol content and blood drug concentration. This data is also submitted to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and plays a critical role in traffic enforcement, insurance adjudication, and traffic safety research, among other things.

According to the CHP, approximately 40% of law enforcement agencies across the state file paper reports rather than submitting data electronically. This can result in significant delays in reporting crash data to the department, and subsequent delays in reporting information to NHTSA. 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. In response, NHTSA began publishing the Model Minimum Uniform Crash Criteria (MMUCC) in 1998. This document, which was most recently updated in 2024, prescribes 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 can qualify for federal grant money to align their crash reporting systems with MMUCC. In 2024, California was awarded a \$60.3 million NHTSA grant over five years to create a new, centralized electronic crash data reporting system.

Proposed Law: AB 2761 would require the CHP to develop and make available to all law enforcement agencies an electronic crash reporting system by January 1, 2030, and require local law enforcement agencies and coroners to electronically submit specified reports to CHP electronically. Specifically, this bill would:

- Repeal the requirement that CHP provide accident reporting forms to police departments, coroners, sheriffs, and other suitable agencies or individuals.
- Require the 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.
- Require the CHP to maintain a database of all crash investigation reports.
- Require law enforcement agencies to document traffic crashes and electronically submit crash investigation reports in a timeframe determined by CHP.
- Require a coroner or medical examiner to submit required reports of motor vehicle crash deaths electronically instead of in writing.
- Require the CHP and local law enforcement agencies to provide electronic copies of crash investigation reports at no cost to the requestor.
- Authorize individuals assigned by law enforcement agencies who are not peace officers to receive crash reports.
- Make various clarifying changes by replacing “accident” and “collision” with “crash” throughout the specified provisions of the Vehicle Code.

Staff Comments: As noted above, the CHP receive a \$60.3 million grant from NHTSA to develop a user-friendly crash reporting system within five years. The CalCrash Project will provide CHP with an updated crash management application and California’s “Allied Agencies” (law enforcement and others who currently report data manually) with an application to electronically complete crash reports for data collection. The 2025 Budget Act allocated \$3.5 million to CHP from available NHTSA grant funds

to begin planning the California Crash Data System Modernization (CalCrash) program. 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. The 2026 Budget Act allocated an additional \$13.7 million to work with the California Department of Technology to continue the planning phase and transition into the execution phase of the CalCrash Program. Staff notes that the requirements of this bill appear to be consistent with the work that is currently underway, and should not result in any additional CHP costs beyond what is available under the federal grant.

The bill imposes a state-mandated local program on local law enforcement agencies, as well as coroner and medical examiners, by requiring those local entities to document traffic crashes and deaths, and to electronically submit investigation and other reports to the CHP, pursuant to the methods and standards prescribed by the department. While approximately 650 local agencies affected by this bill are likely to benefit from long-term and ongoing savings and efficiencies related to electronic, rather than manual submittal of reports, local agencies would likely incur one-time administrative costs to update policies and procedures and train staff on electronic reporting requirements, as well as potentially procuring or updating IT infrastructure to facilitate electronic reporting, among other things. Any local costs to comply with the bill's requirements could be reimbursable from the State General Fund to the extent a local agency files a successful claim, and the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state.

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