

THIRD READING

Bill No: AB 2761
Author: Petrie-Norris (D), et al.
Amended: 3/19/26 in Assembly
Vote: 21

SENATE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE: 13-0, 6/23/26
AYES: Cortese, Strickland, Archuleta, Arreguín, Blakespear, Dahle, Gonzalez, Grayson, Menjivar, Richardson, Seyarto, Valladares, Wiener

SENATE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE: 6-0, 6/30/26
AYES: Arreguín, Seyarto, Caballero, Cortese, Pérez, Wiener

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 7-0, 8/13/26
AYES: Cervantes, Seyarto, Cabaldon, Dahle, Grayson, Richardson, Wahab

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 77-0, 5/26/26 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Vehicles: crash data

SOURCE: Author

DIGEST: This bill requires the California Highway Patrol (CHP) to develop and make available to all law enforcement agencies an electronic reporting system for reporting vehicle crashes.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) Requires drivers involved in certain accidents that result in severe property damage, bodily injury, or death to report the accident within 10 days. (Vehicle Code Section (VEH) 16000 - 16005)

- 2) Requires CHP to prepare and supply to police departments, coroners, sheriffs, and other suitable agencies or individuals, forms for accident reports. (VEH 2407)
- 3) 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 2408)
- 4) 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 20008)
- 5) Mandates 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 20011)
- 6) 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 20012)
- 7) 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 20012)
- 8) Imposes a fee, not to exceed the cost of production, on anyone requesting a copy of an accident report. (VEH 20012)

This bill:

- 1) Repeals the requirement that CHP provide accident reporting forms to police departments, coroners, sheriffs, and other suitable agencies or individuals.
- 2) Requires CHP by January 1, 2030, 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.

- 3) Exempts this reporting system and the development of reporting requirements from the Administrative Procedures Act.
- 4) Clarifies that CHP must maintain a database of all crash investigation reports.
- 5) Requires law enforcement agencies to document traffic crashes pursuant to the above requirements and electronically submit crash investigation reports in a timeframe determined by CHP.
- 6) Requires a coroner or medical examiner to submit required reports of motor vehicle crash deaths electronically instead of in writing.
- 7) Waives fees for electronic copies of crash investigation reports.
- 8) Authorizes individuals assigned by law enforcement agencies who are not peace officers to receive crash reports.
- 9) Replaces “accident” and “collision” with “crash” throughout the specified provisions of the Vehicle Code.

Comments

- 1) *Purpose of the 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.* California 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. Local agencies are then required to submit these reports to CHP, who collects the information in the Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS). This data is then in turn submitted to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Overall, this reporting plays a critical role in law enforcement, insurance adjudication, and traffic safety research, among other things.

Despite this importance however, crash reporting in California is outdated. This is because many agencies across the state still file these reports with pen-and-paper via traditional mail, rather than electronically. 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.

Beyond timeliness, NHTSA has also reported issues in data consistency between jurisdictions across the country. To address this problem, starting in 1998, 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 thus create consistency in crash reporting.

- 3) *CalCrash*. To help encourage the adoption of MMUCC standards, in 2022 NHTSA created the State Electronic Data Collection Program. As part of the program, states were awarded 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.

In 2025, the state budget then allocated money to CHP to begin planning the California Crash Data System Modernization (CalCrash) project. CalCrash will serve as the new centralized system, compliant with MMUCC, that will collect crash reports from across the state 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.

CHP solicited an initial request for information on designs of the CalCrash system in August 2024, and has since been moving forward with design. CHP has indicated it has solicited and will continue to solicit input from local agencies and will create a working group of enforcement agencies across the

state to help inform the development of minimum reporting and other standards to be incorporated into CalCrash. According to CHP, they plan to launch a pilot version of the program in a limited area of the state within the next few years.

This bill supports the development and implementation of the CalCrash system by rewriting the statute on crash reporting to require the use of electronic reporting and record keeping by all law enforcement agencies across the state. Writing in support, AAA Northern California, Nevada, & Utah, and the Automobile Club of Southern California state, “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.”

- 4) *Additional language changes.* Beyond changes to the crash reporting system generally, this bill also makes a number of smaller changes to statute regarding crash reporting. Primarily, this bill replaces the words “accident” and “collision” with the word “crash”. This reflects updated language standards reported in the MMUCC. This bill also authorizes individuals beyond peace officers to collect crash report information. However, these individuals must still be assigned by a law enforcement agency to investigate vehicle crashes. This change allows non-sworn officers, such as community safety officers or certain administrative staff, to collect crash report information.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: Yes

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee:

- CHP would incur significant costs, in the tens of millions over multiple fiscal years, to develop and implement an electronic crash reporting system. 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.
- 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 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)

SUPPORT: (Verified 8/13/26)

AAA Northern California, Nevada & Utah
Automobile Club of Southern California
Bike Walk Alameda

OPPOSITION: (Verified 8/13/26)

None received

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 77-0, 5/26/26

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Johnson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Ramos, Ransom, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

NO VOTE RECORDED: Muratsuchi, Quirk-Silva, Celeste Rodriguez

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