

Date of Hearing: April 15, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON ELECTIONS

Gail Pellerin, Chair

AB 2785 (Committee on Elections) – As Introduced March 12, 2026

AS PROPOSED TO BE AMENDED – SEE COMMENT #1 BELOW

SUBJECT: Elections: redistricting information.

SUMMARY: Clarifies the information that county elections officials are required to submit to the Legislature or its designee for the purpose of building the statewide redistricting database, and streamlines the process for submitting that information. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Clarifies the information that county elections officials must make available for redistricting purposes and the process for providing that information, and codifies information that routinely has been requested from county elections officials to prepare the official state redistricting database.
 - a) Specifies that the information must be made available to the Legislature *or its designee*, rather than to the Legislature or any appropriate committee thereof.
 - b) Specifies that submitted precinct maps must include maps for both registration and election precincts, and must include the boundaries of city council districts, state Board of Equalization (BOE) districts, and county supervisorial districts.
 - c) Clarifies that precinct-level election returns that are submitted must be complete and unredacted, must be provided for both election precincts and registration precincts, and must reflect the number of registered voters in the precinct.
 - d) Specifies that county elections officials must submit a master street index file that can be used to identify the associated precinct for a given street address in the county.
- 2) Requires the Legislature, or its designee, in conjunction with the Secretary of State (SOS), to establish a secure electronic process for county elections officials to submit the information and data required for the preparation of a complete and accurate computerized database for redistricting. Requires this process to include safeguards to protect the security and integrity of the submitted information. Requires precinct maps to be submitted in geographic information system (GIS) format, and election returns to be in comma-separated or tab-separated values files. Requires any other information and data submitted to be in an open, machine-readable format.
- 3) Requires unredacted, precinct-level election returns submitted by county elections officials to be received and maintained on a confidential basis and protected from public disclosure. Prohibits these election returns from being publicly posted or disclosed for any contest from a precinct in which fewer than 10 voters cast ballots at an election. Permits information about the total number of people who voted at the precinct and a breakdown of the number of

people who voted by political party preference at the precinct to be publicly disclosed for precincts in which fewer than 10 voters cast ballots.

- 4) Makes other technical, clarifying, and conforming changes.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Requires the Legislature to take all steps necessary to ensure that a complete and accurate computerized database is available for redistricting, and that procedures are in place to provide the public ready access to redistricting data and computer software for drawing maps. (Government Code §8253(b))
- 2) Requires each county elections official to compile and make available to the Legislature or any appropriate committee of the Legislature any information and statistics that may be necessary for use in connection with the reapportionment of legislative districts, including precinct maps, lists showing the election returns for each precinct, and election returns for each precinct reflecting the vote total for all ballots cast, including both vote by mail (VBM) ballots and ballots cast at polling places at each statewide election. (Elections Code §21000)
- 3) Requires local jurisdictions to use data that reallocates incarcerated persons from the places of their incarceration to their last known places of residence when conducting redistricting, as specified, if the redistricting database established pursuant to Government Code §8253(b) includes such a reallocation and is made publicly available. (Elections Code §21130(a)(2))

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown. State-mandated local program; contains reimbursement direction.

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Proposed Amendments:** To clarify the provisions of this bill and to ensure that the streamlined data collection envisioned by this bill can be implemented, committee staff recommends the following amendments to this bill as currently in print:

Amend the language on page 3, line 16-17 of the bill as follows:

(3) A master street index file that ~~identifies street names and house number ranges with their associated precincts.~~ can be used to identify the associated precinct for a given street address in the county.

Strike the language on page 3, lines 30-34 of the bill as follows, and make corresponding amendments to redesignate the other subdivisions of the bill:

~~(e) Not later than January 1, 2028, any election management system used in the state shall have the capability to transmit complete, unredacted election returns for each precinct following each statewide election using the process established pursuant to subdivision (b).~~

This analysis reflects these proposed amendments.

- 2) **Purpose of the Bill:** Although Propositions 11 (2008) and 20 (2010) transferred responsibility for drawing legislative, congressional, and BOE district boundaries to the Citizens Redistricting Commission (CRC), Proposition 11 expressly preserved the Legislature's longstanding role in preparing and maintaining the state's official redistricting database. Maintaining that database involves ongoing data collection and processing, including the collection of precinct maps and precinct-level election returns from every county for each statewide election. AB 2785 streamlines that data collection process. It also takes steps to protect voter privacy and to codify the categories of information counties have been required to provide for redistricting purposes in recent statewide elections.
- 3) **Redistricting Dataset:** Since 1993, the University of California (UC) system has housed the Statewide Database, which is the official redistricting database for California. According to information from the Statewide Database, it originally emerged from a database that was created by the Assembly for the 1981 redistricting process. In 1993, the state budget included funding to the UC system for the purpose of transferring the Assembly's redistricting database to the Institute of Governmental Studies at UC Berkeley, and for maintaining that database. The Statewide Database subsequently has moved and is now housed at the UC Berkeley School of Law.

Since voting to house the Statewide Database in the UC system, the Legislature has played an ongoing role in ensuring that the state's redistricting database remains complete and accurate. Section 21000 of the Elections Code requires county elections officials to make relevant information available to the Legislature for use in redrawing legislative and congressional districts, including precinct maps and election returns. The SOS regularly works with Statewide Database staff, with the involvement of legislative staff as needed, to collect that information from county elections officials for inclusion in the redistricting dataset.

The official redistricting database is used not only by the CRC when redrawing legislative, congressional, and BOE districts, but also is required to be used for local redistricting in California. Maintaining the completeness and accuracy of that database is essential for compliance with state and federal law governing the adoption of district boundaries for governmental bodies throughout the state.

- 4) **Data Collection:** Collecting data from county elections officials has been time- and labor-intensive for Statewide Database staff. Moreover, some county officials have raised concerns that releasing precinct-level election results could compromise ballot secrecy in precincts with very few voters. This bill seeks to streamline and improve that data collection process, while providing legal assurance of the protection of the privacy of election results in precincts with small numbers of voters.

Before each statewide election, Statewide Database staff works with the SOS to develop a memo that the SOS sends to county elections officials outlining the data the Statewide Database needs to receive from counties, along with instructions for sending that data. This bill codifies in the Elections Code the information that counties regularly have been asked to

submit for recent statewide elections. It also ensures that a secure electronic process is available for data submission. Finally, this bill codifies a practice of the Statewide Database that is designed to protect voter privacy. In precincts with fewer than ten voters, the Statewide Database masks the results, and contest-specific vote counts are not reported for these precincts.

Committee staff will continue to work with Statewide Database staff, the SOS, and the California Association of Clerks and Election Officials on potential future refinements to the language of this bill to ensure that data collection for the Statewide Database can be as streamlined as possible.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**Support**

None on file.

Opposition

None on file.

Analysis Prepared by: Ethan Jones / ELECTIONS / (916) 319-2094