
THIRD READING

Bill No: AB 2785
Author: Committee on Elections
Amended: 8/19/26 in Senate
Vote: 21

SENATE ELECTIONS & C.A. COMMITTEE: 5-0, 6/16/26

AYES: Wiener, Choi, Allen, Cervantes, Umberg

SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: 13-0, 6/30/26

AYES: Umberg, Niello, Allen, Ashby, Caballero, Durazo, Laird, Reyes, Stern,
Valladares, Wahab, Weber Pierson, Wiener

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 7-0, 8/13/26

AYES: Cervantes, Seyarto, Cabaldon, Dahle, Grayson, Richardson, Wahab

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 78-0, 5/26/26 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Elections: redistricting information

SOURCE: Author

DIGEST: This bill 1) requires the Legislature or an appropriate designee of the Legislature, in conjunction with the Secretary of State (SOS), to establish a secure electronic process for county election officials to submit required data and information for redistricting; and 2) clarifies what data and information needs to be submitted.

Senate Floor Amendments of 8/19/26 provide a way for the Legislature or the appropriate designee of the Legislature to obtain complete, unredacted election returns from the SOS, if the Legislature or an appropriate designee of the Legislature does not receive the election returns from the county elections official.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) Requires county election officials to send the SOS, within 31 days of an election in an electronic format, one completed copy of all the results for all candidates voted for specified offices and statewide measures, as well as the total number of ballots cast.
- 2) Requires the Legislature to take all steps necessary to ensure a complete and accurate computerized database is available for redistricting and procedures are in place to provide the public access to redistricting data and computer software for drawing maps.
- 3) Requires county election officials in each county to compile and make available to the Legislature or any appropriate committee of the Legislature any information and statistics that may be necessary for the use in connection with the reapportionment of legislative districts, including precinct maps and other districts, as specified, lists showing the election returns for each precinct, and election returns for each precinct reflecting the vote total for all ballots cast including vote by mail ballots and ballots cast at polling places.

This bill:

- 1) Requires the Legislature, or any appropriate designee of the Legislature, in conjunction with the SOS, to establish a secure electronic process that allows county election officials to submit information and data required for redistricting purposes. The process must include safeguards to protect the security and integrity of the submitted information.
- 2) Requires precinct maps to be submitted in geographic information system format and election returns to be submitted in comma-separated values files. Any other information must be submitted in an open format that is machine readable.
- 3) Clarifies what information and data county election officials must compile and make available to the Legislature, or any appropriate designee of the Legislature, for the purposes of redistricting and for the computerized database for redistricting. The data and information must include:
 - a) Precinct maps for registration and election precincts indicating boundaries of incorporated cities, wards or city council districts, school districts, judicial districts, Assembly districts, senatorial districts, congressional districts, State Board of Equalization (BOE) districts, and county supervisorial districts.

- b) Complete, unredacted election returns for each election precinct, that reflects the number of registered voters and vote totals for all ballots casts, including the number of votes cast by mail and at polling places.
 - c) A master street index file that may be used to identify the associated precinct for a given street address in the county.
- 4) Requires the complete unredacted election returns to be received and maintained on a confidential basis and be protected from public disclosure.
 - 5) Prohibits election returns from being publicly posted or disclosed for any contest in precincts in which fewer than 10 voters cast a ballot at an election. In precincts where fewer than 10 voters cast a ballot, only 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 may be publicly disclosed.
 - 6) Requires county election officials, pursuant to 1) of existing law, to include the complete, unredacted election returns for each election precinct reflecting the number of registered voters and the vote total for all ballots cast, including the number of ballots cast by mail ballots and the number of ballots cast at polling places.
 - 7) Provides the Legislature or the appropriate designee of the Legislature, upon request, to receive the complete, unredacted election returns from the SOS if the Legislature or the appropriate designee of the Legislature did not receive the elections returns from the county elections official.

Background

The Statewide Database. The Statewide Database (SWDB) is the official redistricting database for California and publishes electoral and demographic datasets continuously. The SWDB provides data used for state legislative, congressional, BOE, and local redistrictings.

The database was originally created in 1981 for the California State Assembly. In 1993, the California Legislature voted to house the database in a nonpartisan environment and moved its location to the University of California (UC). It is now housed in the UC Berkeley School of Law and the data is available to the public free of charge.

County election officials provide the SWDB with precinct level data about voter registration and voting results, which becomes the electoral dataset. The U.S

Census Bureau annually publishes the Citizen Voting Age Populations report, which is a breakdown of the race and ethnicity of citizens and voting aged citizens. The U.S Census Bureau also conducts the decennial census and releases the Redistricting Data Summary Files. The electoral dataset, the Citizens Voting Age Populations report, and the decennial census dataset are compiled into California's official redistricting database. Although state legislative, congressional, and BOE redistricting is done through the California Citizens Redistricting Commission (CRC), the CRC still uses the data when redistricting. The Legislature helps ensure the SWDB remains complete and accurate.

Comments

Author's Statement. Although Propositions 11 (2008) and 20 (2010) transferred responsibility for drawing legislative, congressional, and BOE district boundaries to the 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. This bill 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.

Current Collection of Data. County election officials are required to provide relevant information to the Legislature and its designee for the use of redistricting. The SOS, and legislative staff if needed, work with the SWDB staff to collect necessary data and information from county election officials. Data collection from county election officials can be time and labor exhausting for SWDB staff.

The SOS, before each statewide election, sends a memo to county election officials outlining the necessary data and information the SWDB needs to receive. The memo also includes instructions on how to send the data. A memo sent to county election officials on February 25, 2026, provided election officials deadlines to submit the information and options to provide the data electronically through a link, an email, or through mail delivery. County election officials rarely submit data through mail delivery. This bill codifies the secure electronic process for data submission the SOS provides and many counties already use, as well as, the information that county election officials have been regularly asked to submit.

Additionally, county election officials have raised concerns regarding the release of precinct level election results that could compromise the ballot secrecy in

precincts with few voters. This bill would codify a practice the SWDB implemented to protect voter privacy in precincts with fewer than 10 voters.

Backup Provided. In cases where the SWDB is unable to obtain election results from county election officials, this bill provides an outlet for them to request and receive the elections results from the SOS. County election officials already send the SOS precinct-level election results when they submit certified election results, thus, this bill does not add any extra requirements. County election officials are still required and expected to provide the SWDB election results directly, as the SWDB should only request election results from the SOS if county election officials fail to send them the results.

Related/Prior Legislation

AB 1734 (Elections & Redistricting Committee, Chapter 515, Statutes of 2007) required elections officials to send election results to the SOS in an electronic format, in part to assist the SWDB in its work to build the state's official redistricting database.

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

According to the Senate Committee on Appropriations:

- By requiring local elections officials to perform additional, specified duties, this bill creates a state-mandated local program. To the extent the Commission on State Mandates determines that the provisions of this bill create a new program or impose a higher level of service on local agencies, local agencies could claim reimbursement of those costs. The magnitude is unknown, but could exceed \$50,000 per year (General Fund).
- The bill would likely result in minor and absorbable costs to the Legislature to maintain the database as specified.
- SOS would incur minor and absorbable costs to establish a secure electronic reporting process with the Legislature.

SUPPORT: (Verified 8/19/26)

None received

OPPOSITION: (Verified 8/19/26)

None received

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 78-0, 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, Quirk-Silva, 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, Celeste Rodriguez

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8/20/26 10:27:56

**** END ****