

CONCURRENCE IN SENATE AMENDMENTS

AB 642 (Muratsuchi)

As Amended June 23, 2025

2/3 vote. Urgency

SUMMARY

Authorizes, as an urgency measure, school employees to donate catastrophic leave to another employee impacted by a state of emergency declared by the Governor. Specifically, *this bill*:

- 1) Establishes the authority of the governing board of a school district, county office of education (COE), or charter school to implement a catastrophic leave program that permits employees to donate eligible leave credits to another employee who is impacted by a state of emergency declared by the Governor.
- 2) Defines "state of emergency" as one proclaimed by the Governor pursuant to Chapter 7 of Division 1 of Title 2 of the Government Code.
- 3) Requires the same conditions and administrative rules as existing catastrophic leave programs, including employee verification, exhaustion of paid leave, donation minimums, a 12-month maximum usage period, and irrevocability of transfers.
- 4) Declares this bill to be an urgency statute and provides for immediate effect upon enactment.

Senate Amendments

Authorizes, in a new section of the Education Code, the governing board or body of a school district, COE, or charter school to establish a catastrophic leave program to permit employees of that school district, COE, or charter school to donate eligible leave credits to an employee when that employee is impacted by a state of emergency.

COMMENTS

Catastrophic leave policies. Existing law authorizes school districts and COEs to establish catastrophic leave programs to allow employees to transfer leave to each other in the case of catastrophic illness or injury to the employee or a member of their family.

During the recent wildfires in Los Angeles County, it was discovered that the existing statute authorizing catastrophic illness policies does not extend to employees who are displaced due to natural disasters. This bill seeks to authorize an employee who is impacted by a declared state of emergency to be eligible to receive leave credits donated by their fellow employees in the same manner as the existing program.

This bill does not mandate the creation of new catastrophic leave programs but instead expands the scope of programs that governing boards may voluntarily establish. It preserves the core elements of existing law — such as requiring employees to exhaust their own leave before receiving donations, setting limits on the duration of use, and allowing governing boards to define verification and administrative procedures. These guardrails help ensure appropriate use and local oversight.

How many employees were impacted by the 2025 LA wildfires? While the total number of employees affected by the wildfires is currently unknown, according to the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE), the following districts have employees out of leave who could benefit from the catastrophic leave policy established by this bill: Pasadena (73), Arcadia (34), Glendale (5), Duarte (3), San Gabriel (2), and Azusa (1).

According to the Author

According to the author, "As we continue to face more frequent and severe natural disasters, it is important that we provide school employees with the support they need during emergencies and ensure that displaced students can continue their education with minimal disruption. AB 642 will help ensure that California's education system can respond quickly and effectively to the challenges posed by state-declared emergencies."

Arguments in Support

The Los Angeles County Office of Education states, "The recent wildfires and windstorms in Los Angeles have underscored the urgent need to improve support systems for both school employees and students affected by natural disasters and other emergencies. Many teachers and school staff were unable to access adequate leave to recover or support their families, while thousands of students were displaced without a clear mechanism to track their enrollment status, leading to challenges in providing essential educational resources and services. Current catastrophic leave programs do not explicitly allow for leave donations to employees affected by such emergencies, leaving many struggling without the necessary time off to handle the aftermath of these crises. Additionally, the lack of a consistent, statewide system for tracking displaced students hampers efforts to ensure they receive continued educational support."

Arguments in Opposition

None on file

FISCAL COMMENTS

This bill has been keyed non-fiscal by the Office of Legislative Counsel.

VOTES:

ASM EDUCATION: 9-0-0

YES: Muratsuchi, Hoover, Addis, Alvarez, Bonta, Castillo, Garcia, Lowenthal, Patel

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 11-0-4

YES: Wicks, Arambula, Calderon, Caloza, Elhawary, Fong, Mark González, Hart, Pacheco, Pellerin, Solache

ABS, ABST OR NV: Sanchez, Dixon, Ta, Tangipa

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 79-0-0

YES: 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, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

SENATE FLOOR: 37-0-3

YES: Allen, Alvarado-Gil, Archuleta, Arreguín, Ashby, Becker, Blakespear, Cabaldon, Caballero, Cervantes, Choi, Cortese, Dahle, Durazo, Gonzalez, Grayson, Grove, Hurtado, Jones, Laird, Limón, McGuire, McNerney, Menjivar, Niello, Ochoa Bogh, Padilla, Richardson, Rubio, Seyarto, Smallwood-Cuevas, Stern, Strickland, Valladares, Wahab, Weber Pierson, Wiener
ABS, ABST OR NV: Pérez, Reyes, Umberg

UPDATED

VERSION: June 23, 2025

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FN: 0001101