

Date of Hearing: April 21, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, GROWTH, AND  
HOUSEHOLD IMPACT

José Luis Solache, Jr., Chair

ACR 164 (Bains) – As Introduced March 23, 2026

**SUBJECT:** Mexican Consulate: County of Kern

**SUMMARY:** This resolution would state, among other things, that the Legislature supports the establishment of a Mexican Consulate in the County of Kern to strengthen the state's relationship with Mexico and empower immigrant communities.

Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Understands California and Mexico share a deep, centuries-long partnership rooted in cultural, economic, and social ties that continue to drive mutual prosperity and strengthen communities on both sides of the border.
- 2) Acknowledges ongoing collaboration through trade, education, tourism, and daily cross-border exchange supports jobs, families, and economic growth, while reinforcing the importance of a resilient and sustainable California-Mexico border.
- 3) California reaffirms its commitment to this vital relationship, recognizing the significant contributions of its diverse immigrant population—particularly Latino communities—and highlighting regions like Kern County as key to advancing this enduring partnership.

**EXISTING LAW:** Consular offices are created and operated under federal authority and international law. The key framework is the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, which governs the rights and responsibilities of consular posts worldwide. Under this framework, foreign governments determine where to establish consulates, subject to approval by the host country's national government.

In the United States, authority over foreign diplomatic and consular presence rests with the federal government, specifically the U.S. Department of State. Foreign governments must obtain federal approval to open, relocate, or expand consular offices. States, including California, do not have legal authority to approve, deny, or regulate these decisions.

California law does, however, recognize and interact with consulates in limited ways. State and local agencies may coordinate with consulates to support immigrant communities, provide access to services, and facilitate communication with foreign nationals. In addition, some state policies acknowledge the use of consular identification documents, such as the matrícula consular, for certain purposes, including identification in financial or local government contexts.

**FISCAL EFFECT:** None

**COMMENTS:** Kern County has approximately 900,000 residents, with a Latino population of about 56.6 percent, or roughly 500,000 people. Despite this population size, residents must travel to consulates in Fresno or Los Angeles, requiring about 130 to 135 miles one way and 3 or more

hours of travel. This creates a consistent barrier to accessing basic consular services. The author seeks to address limited access to consular services for residents in Kern County.

The resolution is grounded in the broader California–Mexico relationship, which supports significant economic activity and workforce stability. Mexico is California’s largest trading partner, and cross-border commerce supports hundreds of thousands of jobs in the state. Increased access to consular services can facilitate labor mobility, maintain valid identification, and support participation in the formal economy. Consulates also provide legal guidance, documentation, and connections to financial and educational resources, which can improve economic integration and reduce vulnerability to fraud.

The resolution also emphasizes the role of immigrant communities in California’s economy. With more than 10 million immigrants statewide, improving access to basic services supports economic stability and community resilience. This measure is declarative and does not require state funding or administrative action. The decision to establish a consulate rest with the government of Mexico.

**Author’s Statement:** According to the author, “Kern County is home to a vibrant, growing Latino community representing over 56% of its population, yet residents are forced to travel hours to Los Angeles or Fresno for basic consular services.

ACR 164 is a statement of commitment from the California Legislature that our immigrant communities deserve local, accessible support. Not endless miles on the road and money spent on gas for a passport or legal protection.

California and Mexico share more than two centuries of cultural, economic, and social history. This is not a new relationship; it is a foundational partnership, active every single day through trade, collaboration, and education that benefits both sides of the border.

A Mexican Consulate in Kern County would be life-changing, providing residents with consular IDs, passports, legal advocacy, and connections to critical resources, while reducing the burden on working families who can no longer afford to be ignored.

With over 10 million immigrant residents statewide, California cannot and will not leave its communities without a safety net or a voice. ACR makes that crystal clear.”

## **REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

### **Support**

None on file.

### **Opposition**

None on file.

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