
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

SB 1050 (Ashby) - False advertising: synthetic digital performers

Version: April 23, 2026

Policy Vote: P., D.T., & C.P. 7 - 0, JUD.
13 - 0

Urgency: No

Mandate: Yes

Hearing Date: May 11, 2026

Consultant: Bob Franzoia

Bill Summary: SB 1050 would make it unlawful for a person, in connection with the creation or dissemination of any advertisement to use or cause to use a synthetic performer without a clear and conspicuous disclosure that the performer is synthetic.

Fiscal Impact: Unknown, significant to major cost pressure to the courts to the extent there are additional civil filings for new violations created by this bill. Actual costs would depend on the number of violations and the amount of court time required for each action, for example advertisements without proper disclosure. Although courts are not funded based on workload, increased pressure on the Trial Court Trust Fund may create a demand for increased funding for courts. The proposed FY 2026-07 Governor's budget would provide \$70 million General Fund support (Trial Court Trust Fund, General Fund).

Background: The introduction of GenAI models has made it cheap and easy to produce synthetic content, for example audio, images, text, and video recordings that are not real, but that are so realistic that they are virtually impossible to distinguish from authentic content, including so-called "deepfakes."

Existing law prohibits false advertising and falsely holding oneself out to have certain qualifications or to unlawfully use the likeness of another for commercial purposes. This bill seeks to address the increased usage of synthetic performers, specifically in advertisements, by making it unlawful for any person, in connection with the creation or dissemination of an advertisement in this state, to use or cause to be used a synthetic performer without a clear and conspicuous disclosure that the performer is synthetic.

As used in this chapter, unfair competition shall mean and include any unlawful, unfair or fraudulent business act or practice and unfair, deceptive, untrue or misleading advertising and any act prohibited by Unfair Competition Law. Actions for relief shall be prosecuted by the Attorney General, a district attorney, county counsel or by a city attorney, as specified,

Proposed Law: This bill would prohibit an advertising medium from transmitting, distributing, displaying, airing, or otherwise making available an advertisement containing a synthetic performer if a court of competent jurisdiction has issued an order finding that the advertisement violates the bill's provisions or enjoining the creator from publishing the advertisement, and the advertising medium is served with the order, as specified. The bill would define various terms for these purposes. By expanding the scope of a crime, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

Any violation of the provisions of this section is a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment in the county jail not exceeding six months, or by a fine not exceeding two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500), or by both that imprisonment and fine

Related Legislation: SB 942 (Becker) Chapter 291/2024, the California AI Transparency Act (CAIT Act) imposes obligations on “covered providers,” persons that create, code, or produce a GenAI system that has over 1,000,000 monthly visitors or users and is publicly accessible within California. The bill requires such providers to make an AI detection tool available at no cost by which a person can assess whether content was created or altered by the provider’s GenAI system.

AB 853 (Wicks), Chapter 674/2025 bolstered the CAIT Act by establishing similar transparency requirements on large online platforms, capture device manufacturers, and GenAI system hosting platforms.

SB 1146 (Gonzalez) 2026 requires an advertisement to include a disclosure, as applicable, when it depicts a digitally altered or generated person representing themselves to be, or “identifiably depicting” a person as, a health care provider to promote the sale of a health-related consumer product or service. SB 1146 is on the Appropriations Committee Suspense File.

Staff Comments: This bill would make it unlawful for any person, in connection with the creation or dissemination of an advertisement in this state, to use or cause a synthetic performer to be used without a clear and conspicuous disclosure that the performer is synthetic.