

Date of Hearing: June 29, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Lori D. Wilson, Chair

SB 1156 (Caballero) – As Amended June 24, 2026

SENATE VOTE: 39-0

SUBJECT: Vehicles: driving under the influence

SUMMARY: Requires the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), upon appropriation, to include a summary of existing penalties for driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs (DUI) with each vehicle registration renewal, transfer of registration, and driver's license or renewal.

Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Requires DMV, upon appropriation from the Legislature, to include, as appropriate, a summary of existing penalties for DUI violations with each motor vehicle registration renewal, transfer of registration, and with each driver's license and license renewal.
- 2) Requires the printed summary to contain the following information, including but not limited to:
 - a) Criminal penalties associated with driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
 - b) Administrative consequences associated with driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, including driver's license suspension or revocation, or prohibition of buying alcohol.
 - c) Financial consequences of driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, including fines and fees.
 - d) Risks to public safety associated with driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
 - e) Annual updates to DUI-related statutes.
- 3) For digital registration systems, requires DMV to ensure that the summary information is displayed prominently before user interaction as a pop-up window and on any redirected internet website page.
- 4) Expresses the intent of the Legislature to maintain the educational provisions of the physical materials under this section once the digital registration system is available and accessible to the public.
- 5) Exempts from the bill "private industry partners" and other private, third parties who provide registration, titling and other services under DMV contract or licensing.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Requires DMV to publish a printed summary describing the penalties for noncompliance with existing law requiring all drivers to carry evidence of insurance or financial responsibility and requiring all drivers to file an accident report to the DMV. The summary must be included with each motor vehicle registration, registration renewal, and transfer of registration and with each driver's license and license renewal (Vehicle Code (VEH) §1656.2).

- 2) Requires DMV to include with each driver's license or certificate of renewal and each vehicle registration renewal mailed by DMV, information that shows with reasonable certainty the amount of alcohol consumption necessary for a person to reach a 0.08 percent blood alcohol concentration by weight; also requires at least one question in the written driver's license exam to verify that the applicant has read and understands the table of blood alcohol concentration published in the DMV's Driver's Handbook (VEH §1666).
- 3) Makes it unlawful for any person who is under the influence of any alcoholic beverage or drug, or under the combined influence of any alcoholic beverage and drug, or who has 0.08% or more, by weight, of alcohol (BAC) in their blood, to drive a vehicle (generally referred to as a DUI) (VEH §23152).
- 4) Punishes a DUI conviction as follows:
 - a) A first DUI is a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment for four days to six months in county jail, a fine of \$390 to \$1,000, an order to install a functioning, certified ignition interlock device (IID) on any vehicle that person operates for up to six months, at the court's discretion, a six-month license suspension or a 10-month suspension if probation is given and a 9-month DUI program is ordered, and completion of a three- or nine-month DUI program, if given probation (VEH §§13352, 13352.1, 23536, 23538 23575.3).
 - b) A DUI with one prior is a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment for three months to one year in county jail, a fine of \$390 to \$1,000, a one-year IID installation mandate, a two-year license suspension, and completion of an 18- or 30-month DUI program, as specified, if given probation (VEH §§1335223540, 23542, 23575.3).
 - c) A DUI with two priors is a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment for four months to one year in county jail, a fine of \$390 to \$1,000, a two-year IID installation mandate, a three-year license revocation, and three-year designation as a habitual traffic offender, and an 18- or 30-month DUI program, as specified, if given probation and at the court's discretion (VEH §§13352, 23546; 23548, 23575.3).
 - d) A DUI with three or more priors is an alternate felony-misdemeanor (hereafter, "wobbler") punishable by imprisonment for six months to one year in jail, or as a jail-eligible felony by 16 months, or two or three years, a fine of \$390 to \$1,000, a three-year IID installation mandate, a four-year license revocation, and three-year designation as a habitual traffic offender, and an 18- or 30-month DUI program, as specified, if given probation and at the court's discretion (VEH §§13352, 23550; 23552, 23575.3).
- 5) Makes it unlawful for any person who is under the influence of any alcoholic beverage or drug, or the combined influence of the two, or who has a BAC of .08 or more, to drive a vehicle, and concurrently do any act forbidden by law or neglect any duty imposed by law in driving the vehicle, which proximately causes bodily injury to any person other than the driver (generally referred to as a DUI causing bodily injury) (VEH §23153).
- 6) Punishes a DUI causing bodily injury, as follows:

- a) A first DUI causing bodily injury is a wobbler punishable by imprisonment for three months to one year in county jail or 16 months, or two or three years in state prison, a fine of \$390 to \$1,000, a one-year IID installation mandate, a one-year license suspension, and completion of a three-month DUI treatment program, or a nine-month program if the person's BAC was .20% or more or they refused to take a chemical test, if given probation (VEH §§13352, 23554, 23556, 23575.3).
 - b) A DUI causing bodily injury with one prior is a wobbler punishable by imprisonment for four months to one year in county jail or 16 months, or two or three years in state prison, a fine of \$390 to \$5,000, a two-year IID installation mandate, a three-year license revocation, and an 18- or 30-month DUI program, as specified, if given probation and at the court's discretion (VEH §§13352, 23560, 23562, 23575.3).
 - c) A DUI causing bodily injury with two or more priors is a felony punishable by imprisonment in state prison by two, three, or four years, a fine of \$1,015 to \$5,000, a three-year IID installation mandate, a five-year license revocation and three-year designation as a habitual traffic offender, and an 18- or 30-month DUI program, as specified, if given probation (VEH §§13352, 23566; 23568, 23575.3).
- 7) Punishes a DUI with specified prior felonies, or those that cause certain injury, as follows:
- a) Punishes a person convicted of a DUI causing bodily injury, where the violation proximately causes great bodily injury to another person, and the offense occurred within 10 years of two or more priors, as a felony with a five-year license revocation, and a three-year IID installation mandate (VEH §§23566, 13352).
 - b) Punishes a person convicted of any DUI within 10 years of specified felonies – a DUI with three or more priors, a DUI causing bodily injury, or gross vehicular manslaughter – as a wobbler with a four or five-year license revocation and a three or four-year IID mandate (VEH §§13352, 23550.5).
 - c) Punishes a person convicted of any DUI who has a prior conviction for felony intoxicated vehicular manslaughter or intoxicated vehicular manslaughter while operating a vessel as a wobbler with a four or five-year license revocation and a three or four-year IID mandate (VEH §§13352, 23550.5).
- 8) Authorizes the DMV to issue a restricted license to a person convicted of a DUI or DUI causing bodily injury, contingent on that person installing an IID.
- 9) Requires the DMV to administratively suspend the driving privileges of drivers who exceed the legal BAC limit or who fail or refuse to complete a chemical or alcohol screening test, before any criminal conviction, as specified. (VEH §§13353.2; 13353.3.)

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS: According to the author's office: "Every year, Californians lose their lives to impaired driving, which is one of the most preventable causes of traffic fatalities and serious injuries on our roadways. Despite decades of public awareness campaigns, drivers continue to overlook the risks of driving under the influence, and underestimate the severe legal, financial, and personal consequences that follow. SB 1156 requires the Department of Motor Vehicles to

distribute educational materials on the dangers and legal consequences of impaired driving with all driver and vehicle registration materials. These educational materials are a common-sense addition to the documents the DMV currently sends and turns a routine piece of mail into a consistent, life-saving reminder that demonstrates the safety and well-being of Californians remains our state's top priority.”


Background: DMV’s most recent annual report on DUIs indicates that in 2021 there were 110,017 DUI arrests and 1,344 and 844 alcohol- and drug-related crash fatalities, respectively. The number of alcohol- and drug-involved crash fatalities that year was the highest and third-highest, respectively, recorded in at least a decade. However, even accounting for variation over the past 25 years, alcohol-involved fatalities in 2021 were essentially the same in 1995. In contrast, the number of drug-involved fatalities has more than tripled in the same time period. Compared to the total number of all crash fatalities in 2021, 30% were alcohol-involved, a 31.8% decline from 2019 and the lowest value recorded in at least a decade. The percent of drug-involved fatalities was 19.3%, nearly equivalent to the lowest value observed since 2011.

In terms of DUI-related arrests, according to the DMV, “The last decade has seen a fairly steady decline in the DUI arrest rate. The increase for 2021 puts the arrest rate in line with that trajectory after the substantial reduction observed in 2020, which was linked to the shutdown associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.”

In 2020, 66.6% of DUI arrests resulted in convictions for DUI offenses, which represents a substantial drop from years prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, 8.1% of DUI convictions in 2020 were for driving under the influence of drugs, which represents a significant increase from 2019 and is the highest value observed in the prior last five years.

Finally, most DUI related convictions are first time offenses. In 2020, first time offenses accounted for 73.5% of arrests, while third- and fourth-time offenders accounted for 6.7% of arrests. The proportion of repeat offenders has decreased considerably since 1989, when it stood at 37%.

The efficacy of registration or license inserts. Existing law requires the DMV to include a paper insert (about 3.5” x 8.5”) at the time of registration, license application, or renewal summarizing requirements to carry evidence of financial responsibility and the duty of drivers to report involvement in an accident causing injury, death or property damage over \$1,000. On the opposite side of the insert (see below), DMV is required include information that shows with reasonable certainty the amount of alcohol consumption necessary for a person to reach a 0.08 percent blood alcohol concentration by weight.

		 BLOOD ALCOHOL CONTENT (BAC) Table for Male (M) / Female (F)								
Number of Drinks		Body Weight in Pounds							Driving Condition	
		100	120	140	160	180	200	220		240
0	M	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	Only Safe Driving Limit
	F	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	
1	M	.06	.05	.04	.04	.03	.03	.03	.02	Driving Skills Impaired
	F	.07	.06	.05	.04	.04	.03	.03	.03	
2	M	.12	.10	.09	.07	.07	.06	.05	.05	
	F	.13	.11	.09	.08	.07	.07	.06	.06	
3	M	.18	.15	.13	.11	.10	.09	.08	.07	
	F	.20	.17	.14	.12	.11	.10	.09	.08	
4	M	.24	.20	.17	.15	.13	.12	.11	.10	Legally Intoxicated
	F	.26	.22	.19	.17	.15	.13	.12	.11	
5	M	.30	.25	.21	.19	.17	.15	.14	.12	
	F	.33	.28	.24	.21	.18	.17	.15	.14	

Subtract .01% for each 40 minutes that lapse between drinks.
 1 drink = 1.5 oz. 80 proof liquor, 12 oz. 5% beer, or 5 oz. 12% wine.
Fewer than 5 persons out of 100 will exceed these values.

This bill requires the DMV, upon appropriation, to include a summary via mail or digital registration systems (web or mobile) additional information regarding the consequences, penalties and safety risks of a DUI. The author intends that DMV include this information on the above existing insert though given the extent of this information DMV will likely have to include a new insert in registration or licensing documents mailed to drivers. For online registration, the bill specifies that the information would appear in a pop-up window and the author envisions that a user would click through dialog boxes acknowledging review of its contents. This would likely only apply to those who have opted to receive electronic registration and other notifications in lieu of paper versions pursuant to existing law.

The author argues that this additional information is necessary since there is no continuing driver education required by law (except in limited circumstances such as drivers with poor driving records or with medical conditions that may impair driving). Further, Streets Are For Everyone or SAFE, the sponsor of this bill, indicates that it tested 900 California drivers on six “basic” driving laws and in an unpublished study found that only 4% of those tested correctly answered all six questions whereas 20% answered five correctly.

The efficacy of paper inserts in bills or mail is well-studied and it is doubtful that the information required by this bill will meaningfully improve reader engagement, especially given the small format of the existing insert and the amount of information this bill requires to be summarized (see existing law). While there does not appear to be any research on the efficacy of the specific insert in question, the literature overwhelmingly finds that generic informational inserts tucked inside bills suffer from very low active engagement rates. Most recipients simply recycle or throw them away. While passive informational inserts stuffed into a registration envelope could increase general background awareness it is questionable if they will have a measurable deterrent effect on behavior.

Similarly, research in digital human-computer interaction, behavioral economics, and traffic safety finds that generic digital pop-ups and mandatory click-throughs generally fail to alter criminal driving behavior. Other research shows that moving from a physical paper slip to an

electronic pop-up only shifts physical clutter to digital clutter causing what is known as “banner blindness” or “click-through fatigue” as the brain treats mandatory checkboxes as “cognitive noise”. Consequently, users subconsciously scan screens for an action button (like "continue" or "submit") and in this case will likely click through a pop-up summarizing DUI penalties or consequences without processing the text.

Finally, since 2019, DMV has been modernizing its operations and systematically moving away printer paper and mail. For example, more than 90% of DMV transactions are now available online. DMV has also made available nearly 300 kiosks statewide and thousands of third party “private industry partners” that process title and registration documents and provide other services to dealers, fleets, individuals, and others. Many transactions that previously required an office visit can be started online and completed with the assistance of a virtual agent. Existing law authorizes DMV, with an individual’s consent, to substitute electronic notification for any applicable requirement in the Vehicle Code or regulation otherwise requiring notification by mail and DMV intends to use this authority to a greater extent. Accordingly, this bill appears to be moving in the opposite direction by expanding and preserving a paper insert.

So what seems to work? The DMV has published peer-reviewed studies on direct mail targeting known offenders, which may serve as a proxy for how drivers respond to DMV mail or inserts. Studies of escalating warning letters sent to drivers accumulating traffic points have found that while formal, text-heavy letters have a very small effect on behavior, letters redesigned using “personalized threat messaging” and behavior change psychology achieve a statistically significant reduction in subsequent crashes and traffic convictions. Researchers also evaluated how drivers react to DMV mail regarding license suspensions demonstrating that using certified mail or masking the DMV return address drastically altered how many people opened, read, and took action compared to standard first-class mail. These and other more innovative approaches to change driving behavior used in the U.S. and other countries are worthy of exploration.

To increase the effectiveness of digital interventions, researchers have focused on highly targeted, immediate interactions rather than passive pop-ups. For example, sending safety alerts via push notifications or rideshare discounts via mobile apps to users physically located in entertainment districts between 10 PM and 2 AM has proven to be effective in reducing DUIs. Researchers have also analyzed interventions integrated into point-of-sale systems at bars or alcohol delivery apps, prompting users to pre-arrange a safe ride home before completing an alcohol purchase.

Writing in support of this bill, the California Association of Highway Patrolmen states: “The main duty of the CHP is to patrol our state’s highways, and every officer understands the importance of keeping dangerous drivers off the road. SB 1156 educates California drivers of the ramifications of driving while intoxicated. This is deterrence through awareness.”

Related legislation. AB 2522 (Shelley), Chapter 833, Statutes of 2000 required the DMV to include with each driver’s license or certificate of renewal and each vehicle registration renewal mailed by DMV, information that shows with reasonable certainty the amount of alcohol consumption necessary for a person to reach a 0.08 percent blood alcohol concentration by weight.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

California Association of Highway Patrolmen
California League of Cities
Streets are for Everyone

Opposition

None on file

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