

Date of Hearing: August 5, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

SB 1166 (Arreguín) – As Introduced February 18, 2026

Policy Committee: Public Employment and Retirement Vote: 6 - 0

Urgency: No State Mandated Local Program: Yes Reimbursable: Yes

SUMMARY:

This bill provides authority to the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) to enforce certain provisions related to the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District's (AC Transit) and unfair practice charges (UPC) for represented employees should an exclusive representative for AC Transit employees select to move one or more of its represented bargaining units to PERB's jurisdiction.

FISCAL EFFECT:

One-time General Fund costs of \$150,000 and \$100,000 ongoing annually for PERB to promulgate regulations and pay for attorney time for unfair practice charges resulting from this bill.

COMMENTS:

1) **Purpose.** According to the author:

The vast majority of local government labor relations are governed by the Meyers-Milias-Brown Act (MMBA) (e.g., cities, counties, municipalities, most special districts). PERB resolves unfair labor practice charges and representation disputes for employers and employees under the MMBA. However, public transit districts have collective bargaining statutes governed by individual codes under Public Utilities Code, meaning by default, that public transit districts and their employees must rely upon the courts to remedy any alleged labor disputes. Courts often go without expertise in public sector labor relations. To address this disparity, the Legislature has brought several public transit districts under PERB's jurisdiction to adjudicate labor disputes. AC Transit is one of the remaining public transit districts whose unionized employees do not have the opportunity to access PERB's expertise on labor law or its provision of expeditious and cost-effective alternatives to processing labor disputes, which means claims of unfair labor practices currently must go through superior court.

2) **Background.** Current law does not prescribe labor relations that cover all public transit districts by one common set of statutes, rather, resolution of workplace violation allegations are adjudicated by the courts, pursuant to AC Transit's specific enabling statute in Public

Utilities Code. However, in some instances, the Legislature has enacted legislation to vest authority within PERB to adjudicate such cases. According to AFSCME Local 57, the court adjudication process is “a costly and slow process that can delay resolution, increase labor tensions, and further complicate the collective bargaining process” whereas a process overseen by PERB provides a more timely, accessible, and labor-focused forum.

This bill provides the authority for PERB to have jurisdiction of UPC for AC Transit employees.

- 3) **Related Legislation.** AB 1510 (Committee on Public Employment and Retirement), Chapter 454, Statutes of 2025, amends the Valley Transit Authority (VTA) employment relations statute relating to authorizing the appeal of a final decision or order of the PERB for purposes of equity and parity to various other public employment relations statutes administered by the PERB.
- 4) **Prior Legislation.** AB 2524 (Kalra), Chapter 789, Statutes of 2022, gave PERB jurisdiction over disputes relating to employer-employee relations of the VTA for those exclusive representatives that have elected to move one or more of its bargaining units to the jurisdiction of the PERB for unfair practice charges.

AB 598 (Pan), Chapter 492, Statutes of 2021, gave exclusive employee organizations the option of transferring jurisdiction over unfair labor practices for their represented bargaining units within the Sacramento Regional Transit from the judicial system to the PERB.

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