
CONSENT

Bill No: SB 1187
Author: Durazo (D)
Introduced: 2/19/26
Vote: 21

SENATE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE: 7-0, 4/29/26
AYES: Durazo, Choi, Arreguín, Ashby, Cervantes, Laird, Seyarto

SUBJECT: Open meetings: majority

SOURCE: Author

DIGEST: This bill defines “majority” for the purposes of local agency meeting laws.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) Guarantees, pursuant to Article I, Section 3 of the California Constitution, that “the people have the right to instruct their representatives, petition government for redress of grievances, and assemble freely to consult for the common good.” This includes a right to access information concerning the meetings and writings of public officials.
- 2) Requires, pursuant to the Constitution, local agencies to comply with certain state laws that outline the basic requirements for public access to meetings and public records. If a subsequent bill modifies these laws, it must include findings demonstrating how it furthers the public’s access to local agencies and their officials.
- 3) Provides, under the Ralph M. Brown Act, guidelines for how local agencies must hold public meetings:
 - a) Defines a “meeting” as “any congregation of a majority of the members of a legislative body at the same time and location, including teleconference

locations, to hear, discuss, deliberate, or take action on any item that is within the subject matter jurisdiction of the legislative body.”

- b) Requires local agencies to notice meetings in advance, including the posting of an agenda, and requires these meetings to be open and accessible to the public.
- c) Requires members of the public to have an opportunity to comment on agenda items, and generally prohibits deliberation or action on items not listed on the agenda.
- d) If a member of the public, including the respective district attorney, believes a local agency violated the Brown Act, it must first send an order to the local agency to correct the violation. If the local agency disagrees with the complaint and does not correct it, the submitter can pursue the complaint through the courts. If the court agrees with the complaint, outcomes range from invalidating certain actions of the local agency to a misdemeanor.

This bill defines “majority” in the Brown Act to mean the number of members of the legislative body equaling one more than half of the total number of seats on the legislative body. If a seat on the legislative body is vacant, that seat shall still be counted as a seat on the legislative body.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: No Local: No

SUPPORT: (Verified 4/28/26)

None received

OPPOSITION: (Verified 4/28/26)

None received

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT: According to the author, “SB 1187 is needed to bring clarity and stability to how a “majority” is defined under the Brown Act, cutting through the confusion that has, at times, disrupted local governance. When rules are open to interpretation, they can be stretched, challenged, or even ignored. Californians have seen firsthand during the Central Basin Municipal Water District dispute, where disagreement over what counted as a majority led to a prolonged stalemate and public frustration. That kind of uncertainty doesn’t just slow down decision-making; it chips away at trust in the institutions meant to serve the public. By firmly defining a majority as more than half of all authorized seats even when

some are vacant, SB 1187 restores a clear, reliable standard that every legislative body must follow. In doing so, it reinforces the spirit of transparency and accountability at the heart of the Brown Act, ensuring that decisions carry real legitimacy and reflect the true will of the governing body.”

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5/1/26 13:13:04

**** END ****