

SENATE THIRD READING
SB 1306 (Cortese)
As Introduced February 20, 2026
Majority vote

SUMMARY

Exempts chemical mixtures containing 70% or less of gamma-butyrolactone (GBL) from specified requirements of the Uniform Controlled Substances Act.

Major Provisions

- 1) Exempts chemical mixtures containing GBL from the provisions of the Uniform Controlled Substance Act that impose the reporting, permitting, and specified regulatory requirements.
- 2) Defines "chemical mixtures containing GBL" to mean two or more chemical substances, one of which is GBL (CAS no. 96-48-0) in a concentration of 70% or less by weight or volume, and at least one other substance that is not solely an inert carrier or an impurity.
- 3) Defines "inert carrier" to mean a chemical that does not interfere with the function of gamma-butyrolactone (CAS no. 96-48-0) in the mixture but is present to aid in its delivery so it can be used in a chemical process.

COMMENTS

According to the Author

"SB 1306 brings California into alignment with federal law by exempting chemical mixtures containing 70% or less GBL when regulatory requirements would apply solely due to the presence of GBL. This bill does not change existing requirements related to the purchase, storage, or use of pure GBL. In 2010, under the Obama Administration, the United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) adopted regulations exempting chemical mixtures containing GBL at concentrations of 70% or less by weight or volume from Controlled Substances Act requirements. Through that rulemaking, the DEA determined that the 70% threshold was an appropriate level because such mixtures did not present a significant risk of diversion. Mirroring that policy on the state level will help reduce operational disruptions, support in-state [Research and Development] R&D, and strengthen California's role as a global leader in high-technology innovation."

Arguments in Support

According to *SEMI*, the bill's sponsor, "The California Uniform Controlled Substances Act regulates pure gamma-butyrolactone (GBL), as well as chemical mixtures containing GBL, the latter of which are used in semiconductor photoresists. In 2010, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration determined that chemical mixtures containing 70 percent or less GBL do not present a significant risk of diversion (specifically, as a precursor of [gamma hydroxybutyric acid] GHB, a nervous system depressant) and thus exempted those mixtures from specified federal Controlled Substances Act requirements. California has not adopted a comparable exemption, leaving semiconductor materials suppliers subject to burdensome and costly permitting, extensive reporting and recordkeeping requirements, and 21-day transaction holds that create unnecessary operational delays.

"This regulatory misalignment directly impacts California's semiconductor ecosystem, including research, design, and specialty materials manufacturing concentrated in Silicon Valley and supporting chip production nationwide. Semiconductor chips power essential technologies across healthcare, transportation, energy infrastructure, and communications. California leads the nation in semiconductor R&D, and the sector contributes more than \$100 billion annually to the state's economy. Ensuring reliable access to critical manufacturing inputs is essential to maintaining this leadership.

"SB 1306 narrowly exempts chemical mixtures containing 70 percent or less GBL when regulatory requirements would apply solely due to the presence of GBL, while preserving existing controls on pure GBL. By aligning state policy with federal standards, this bill reduces unnecessary disruptions without compromising public safety."

Arguments in Opposition

According to the *California Narcotics Officers' Association*, "GBL is a widely recognized industrial solvent that is rapidly converted in the human body into gamma-hydroxybutyrate (GHB), a powerful central nervous system depressant, frequently referred to as a 'date-rape drug.' GHB is a controlled substance under both federal and California law due to its well-documented association with overdose deaths, drug-facilitated sexual assaults, and significant public health risks. GBL functions as a direct precursor and surrogate for GHB, and its availability has historically been exploited to circumvent drug control laws.

"From a narcotics enforcement perspective, maintaining regulatory oversight of GBL is critical. Law enforcement agencies have repeatedly encountered GBL in clandestine settings where it is possessed, distributed, or marketed for human consumption. Its deregulation would create a substantial loophole, allowing individuals to lawfully obtain a substance that can be easily converted into a dangerous intoxicant with minimal technical knowledge.

"SB 1306 would significantly hinder our ability to intervene in cases involving GHB analogs before harm occurs. Currently, regulatory controls provide an essential legal tool that allows officers to disrupt distribution networks, seize hazardous materials, and prevent downstream criminal activity. Removing these safeguards would force law enforcement to wait until after conversion, possession, or harm occurs —undermining proactive policing and increasing risks to the public.

"GBL has been linked to cases of drug-facilitated sexual assault due to its rapid onset, sedative effects, and difficulty of detection. Weakening controls over a known GHB 'date-rape' drug precursor would likely increase availability in illicit markets and exacerbate these already serious concerns.

"California has taken a leadership role in addressing emerging synthetic drug threats and precursor chemicals. SB 1306 moves in the opposite direction by eliminating a critical layer of oversight on a substance with a clear and well-established abuse pathway.

"Preserving the current regulatory framework for GBL is essential to protecting public safety, supporting effective narcotics enforcement, and preventing avoidable harm in our communities."

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee:

- 1) Likely minor workload cost savings (General Fund/special fund) to DOJ from no longer processing permit applications, transaction reports, and related filings for the exempted GBL mixtures. Because existing law caps GBL permit and renewal fees at DOJ's processing costs, the corresponding reduction in fee revenue is largely offset by the reduced workload, producing no significant net fiscal effect. DOJ reports no fiscal impact.
- 2) Possible minor reduction in DOJ enforcement and county prosecution workload costs associated with the reporting and permitting of offenses that would no longer apply to exempted mixtures. Any such effect is unknown and likely negligible, given the apparently small universe of affected transactions (semiconductor-sector suppliers). DOJ reports no fiscal impact.

VOTES

SENATE FLOOR: 32-2-6

YES: Allen, Archuleta, Arreguín, Ashby, Becker, Blakespear, Cabaldon, Caballero, Cervantes, Cortese, Dahle, Durazo, Gonzalez, Grayson, Hurtado, Jones, Laird, Limón, McGuire, McNerney, Padilla, Pérez, Reyes, Richardson, Rubio, Seyarto, Smallwood-Cuevas, Stern, Umberg, Wahab, Weber Pierson, Wiener

NO: Alvarado-Gil, Strickland

ABS, ABST OR NV: Choi, Grove, Menjivar, Niello, Ochoa Bogh, Valladares

ASM PUBLIC SAFETY: 9-0-0

YES: Schultz, Alanis, Hart, Haney, Harabedian, Lackey, Nguyen, Ramos, Sharp-Collins

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 13-1-1

YES: Wicks, Hoover, Aguiar-Curry, Calderon, Caloza, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Ta

NO: Dixon

ABS, ABST OR NV: Tangipa

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