
THIRD READING

Bill No: SB 1387
Author: Stern (D), et al.
Introduced: 2/20/26
Vote: 21

SENATE GOVERNMENTAL ORG. COMMITTEE: 15-0, 4/14/26
AYES: Rubio, Alvarado-Gil, Archuleta, Ashby, Blakespear, Cervantes, Choi,
Dahle, Hurtado, Ochoa Bogh, Padilla, Richardson, Smallwood-Cuevas, Wahab,
Weber Pierson

SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: 13-0, 4/21/26
AYES: Umberg, Niello, Allen, Ashby, Caballero, Durazo, Laird, Reyes, Stern,
Valladares, Wahab, Weber Pierson, Wiener

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 7-0, 5/4/26
AYES: Cervantes, Seyarto, Cabaldon, Dahle, Grayson, Richardson, Wahab

SUBJECT: State agencies: collection and reporting of demographic data:
Jewish identity

SOURCE: Jewish California

DIGEST: This bill requires a state agency that collects demographic data as to the ancestry or ethnic origin of Californians to use a separate collection category and tabulation for Jewish ancestry or ethnicity, as specified, and requires these state agencies to include the demographic data in every demographic report on ancestry or ethnic origins of Californians by the state agency published after January 1, 2027.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) Requires a state agency, board, or commission to include data on specified collection categories and tabulations in every demographic report on ancestry or ethnic origins of California residents that it publishes or releases. Existing law further requires these state agencies to make the collected data available to the public pursuant to state and federal law, except for personal identifying information, which existing law deems confidential.
- 2) Requires a state agency, board, or commission that directly or by contract collects demographic data as to the ancestry or ethnic origin of Californians to use separate collection categories and tabulations for specified Asian Groups and Pacific Islander groups.
- 3) Requires a state or local agency that directly or by contract collects demographic data as to the ancestry or ethnic origin of Californians to use separate collection categories and tabulations for major Middle Eastern and North African groups, as specified.
- 4) Declares that it is the policy of the state to afford all persons in public schools, regardless of specified characteristics, including race or ethnicity, equal rights and opportunities in the educational institutions of the state, and states that the purpose of related existing law is to prohibit acts that are contrary to that policy and to provide remedies. For these purpose, existing law defines “race or ethnicity” to include ancestry, color, ethnic group identification, and ethnic background.
- 5) Requires the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) and the Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) to use additional separate collection categories and other tabulations for major Asian groups and Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander groups.
- 6) Requires the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) to collect voluntary self-identification information pertaining to race or ethnic origin of people admitted, in custody, released, or paroled, including, but not limited, specified races and ethnic origins. CDCR is required, based on that voluntary self-identification information, to prepare and publish monthly demographic categories used by the department for the purposes of voluntary self-identification information. Existing law requires the data, except for personally identifying information, which existing law deems confidential, to be publicly available on the CDCR’s internet website via the Offender Data Points dashboard.

- 7) Requires the California Employment Development Department (EDD), in the administration of existing law relating to disability compensation, to collect demographic data for individuals who claim disability benefits or family temporary disability insurance benefits, including race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and gender identity data, as prescribed. Existing law requires the EDD to develop and make available online a public-facing dashboard that publishes demographic data pertaining to program participation by individuals and is updated on at least a quarterly basis.
- 8) Provides that, in enacting the California Public Records Act, the Legislature, mindful of the right of individuals to privacy, finds and declares that access to information concerning the conduct of the people's business is a fundamental and necessary right of every persons in this state. (Government Code Section 7921.000.)

This bill:

- 1) Requires a state agency that directly or by contract collects demographic data as to the ancestry or ethnic origin of Californians to use a separate collection category and tabulation for Jewish ancestry or ethnicity in any provided form that offers respondents the option of selecting one or more ethnic or racial designations.
- 2) Requires the state agency, except for personal identifying information, which shall be deemed confidential, to do both of the following with the data:
 - a) Include the data in every demographic report on ancestry or ethnic origins of Californians by the state agency that is published on or after January 1, 2027.
 - b) Make the aggregated data available to the public in accordance with state and federal law, including, but not limited to, by publishing the data on its internet website.
- 3) Defines ethnicity to include Jewish identity for purposes of existing law that declares that is the policy of the state to afford all persons in public schools, regardless of specified characteristics, including race or ethnicity, equal rights and opportunities in the educational institutions of the state.

- 4) Includes Jewish among those specified races and ethnic origins for self identification for which CDCR is required to collect voluntary self-identification information pertaining to race or ethnic origin of people admitted, in custody, and released and paroled, including, but not limited to, specified races and ethnic origins.
- 5) Requires the EDD to collect data on Jewish ancestry or ethnicity as part of a current requirement that requires EDD to collect demographic data for individuals who claim disability benefits or family temporary disability insurance benefits, including race and ethnicity data and sexual orientation and gender identity data, as prescribed.

Background

Author Statement. According to the author's office, "California's commitment to equity depends on accurate data. Jewish identity is not solely a religion – it is also a people, a culture, an ethnicity. Yet our statute, agencies, and data systems often treat Jewish Californians as if they exist only in a religious category. That misclassification has real consequences. It affects how hate crimes are recorded. It affects how disparities are identified. And it affects whether communities are visible in the policymaking process. SB 1387 does not create a new protected class. It does not remove religious recognition. It simply ensures that Jewish Californians can be accurately counted and understood in the same way California has recognized other ethnic communities. Accurate data leads to better understanding and better policy. This bill is about precision, equity, and fairness."

Jewish Population in California. The Jewish population in California is one of the largest in the United States. According to the World Population Review, most recent estimates put the population at about 1.2 to 1.3 million people, or roughly three percent of the state's population. This makes California second only to New York in overall Jewish Population nationwide.

The community is heavily concentrated in major metropolitan areas, particularly the Los Angeles metropolitan area, which alone contains one of the largest populations outside of Israel, with more than 500,000 residents. Other significant centers include the San Francisco Bay Area, San Diego, and parts of Orange County.

The Jewish population in California, like other communities, faces a range of social, economic, and security related challenges. One of the most significant

concerns is the rise of antisemitism, including hate crimes, harassment, and vandalism targeting synagogues and community institutions. According to the Public Institute of California, while hate crimes against most racial and ethnic groups declined between 2020 and 2023, anti-Jewish crimes more than doubled between 2020 and 2023. Nearly two-third of hate crimes motivated by anti-Jewish sentiment in 2023 were property crimes.

Existing Data Collection for State Agencies. Existing law requires a state agency, board, or commission that directly or by contract collects demographic data as to the ancestry or ethnic origin of Californians to use separate collection categories and tabulations for the following:

- 1) Each major Asian group, including, but not limited to, Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Korean, Vietnamese, Asian Indian, Laotian, and Cambodian.
- 2) Each major Pacific Islander group, including, but not limited to, Hawaiian, Guamanian, and Samoan.
- 3) Each major Middle Eastern group, including, but not limited to, Afghan, Bahraini, Emirati, Iranian, Iraqi, Israeli, Jordanian, Kuwaiti, Lebanese, Omani, Palestinian, Qatari, Saudi Arabian, Syrian, Turkish, and Yemeni.
- 4) Each major North African group, including, but not limited to, Algerian, Djiboutian, Egyptian, Libyan, Mauritanian, Moroccan, Somali, Sudanese, and Tunisian.
- 5) Each major transnational Middle Eastern and North African group, including, but not limited to, Amazigh or Berber, Armenian, Assyrian, Chaldean, Circassian, and Kurdish.

In addition to the aforementioned requirements, both the DIR and the DFEH are required to collect and tabulate data for the following:

- 1) Additional major Asian groups, including, but not limited to, Bangladeshi, Hmong, Indonesian, Malaysian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, Taiwanese, and Thai.
- 2) Additional major Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander.

This bill would require a state agency that directly or by contract collects demographic data as to the ancestry or ethnic origin of Californians to use a

separate collection category and tabulation for Jewish ancestry or ethnicity in any provided form that offers respondents the option of selecting one or more ethnic or racial designations.

Additionally, current law requires CDCR to collect voluntary self-identification information regarding the race or ethnic origin of individuals admitted, in custody, or released and paroled. This includes specified races and ethnic origins. Based on this information, CDCR prepares and publishes monthly demographic reports reflecting the categories used for voluntary self-identification. This bill would expand those requirements by mandating that CDCR include Jewish as a distinct category in its demographic reporting.

Finally, under current law, EDD is required, in administering disability compensation programs, to collect demographic information for individuals claiming disability benefits or family temporary disability insurance benefits. This includes data on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity data, as prescribed. Existing law also requires EDD to develop and make available online a public-facing dashboard that publishes demographic data pertaining to program participation by individuals and is updated on at least a quarterly basis. This bill would expand on those requirements by mandating EDD include Jewish ancestry or ethnicity as a distinct category in its demographic reporting.

Related/Prior Legislation

AB 91 (Harabedian, Chapter 357, Statutes of 2025) required a state or local agency that directly or by contract collects demographic data as to the ancestry or ethnic origin of Californians to use separate collection categories and tabulations for major Middle Eastern or North African groups, as specified.

SB 435 (Gonzalez of 2024) would have required the State Department of Social Services, in the course of collecting demographic data as to the ancestry or ethnic origin of California residents for any report on the CalFresh program, to use separate collection categories and tabulations for each major Latino group, Mesoamerican Indigenous nation, and Mesoamerican Indigenous language, as specified. (Vetoed by Governor Newsom)

AB 943 (Kalra, Chapter 459, Statutes of 2023) required CDCR to publish its monthly demographic data in a manner disaggregated by race and ethnicity, as specified.

AB 2763 (Essayli of 2024) would have required a state agency that directly or by contract collects demographic data as to the ancestry or ethnic origin of California to use separate collections for the Middle Eastern and North African group, as specified. (Held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee Suspense File)

AB 1088 (Eng, Chapter 689, Statutes of 2011) required certain state agencies to collect and tabulate data for additional major Asian groups, as listed, in order to better reflect the diversity of Asian American, Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Communities in California.

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

SUPPORT: (Verified 5/14/26)

Jewish California (Source)

30 Years After

Adat Shalom Los Angeles

Agudath Israel of California

Bay Area Center to Counter Antisemitism

Bay Area Jewish Coalition Education & Advocacy

Beverly Hills Synagogue

Board of Rabbis of Southern California

California Jewish Democrats

Chai Marin

Contra Costa Jewish Democrats

Hadassah, the Women's Zionist of America, INC.

Hillel of San Diego

JCC/federation of San Luis Obispo

JCRC, Jewish Long Beach

Jewish California

Jewish Center for Justice

Jewish Center of Berkeley

Jewish Community Relations Council of Sacramento

Jewish Democratic Coalition of the Bay Area

Jewish Family and Children's Services of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties

Jewish Family Service LA

Jewish Family Service of the Desert

Jewish Family Services of Silicon Valley

Jewish Federation Bay Area

Jewish Federation Los Angeles

Jewish Federation of Greater Santa Barbara
Jewish Federation of Orange County
Jewish Federation of San Diego
Jewish Federation of the Desert
Jewish Federation of the Greater San Gabriel and Pomona Valleys
Jewish Federation of Ventura County
Jewish Silicon Valley
JFCS East Bay
Northern California Jewish Labor Committee
Oakland Jewish Alliance
Palo Alto Jewish Alliance
Progressive Zionists of California
SF Jews in School
Stand With Us
Valley Beth Shalom

OPPOSITION: (Verified 5/14/26)

BUSD Jewish Parents for Collective Liberation
International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network, SF Bay Area Chapter
Jewish Voice for Peace – Bay Area Chapter
Jewish Voice for Peace – Los Angeles Chapter
National Campus Jewish Alliance – California Chapter

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT: According to Jewish California, Jewish identity is widely understood as encompassing ancestry, history, language, culture, community, and shared values – not solely religion. These are characteristics of an ethnicity. Yet California's data collection systems treat Jewish identity only as a religion, if at all. This results in the systematic undercounting, misclassification, and misunderstanding of Jewish Californians, undermining equitable policymaking and the accurate tracking of antisemitic hate crimes. Importantly, SB 1387 does not remove or replace existing religious categorization. It simply adds the option for Jewish Californians to self-identify based on ethnicity – ensuring that our community is neither invisible nor misrepresented in the data systems that drive critical public health, education, and civil rights decisions.”

ARGUMENTS IN OPPOSITION: According to the National Campus Jewish Alliance – California Chapter, “SB 1387 specifies that ‘Jewish’ be added to demographic data collection by the Department of Education (DOE), Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DOCR), and Employment Development Department (EDD). Currently none of these departments collect data on religious

identities, and there is no reason for the state to treat Judaism differently than other religions. To do so is unequal and potentially illegal. In addition, history has shown creating 'lists of Jews' that could be accessed by government entities is potentially dangerous for Jewish communities. Furthermore, this bill would define ethnicity and race to include Jewish identity. This is wholly unnecessary. Any protection against discrimination afforded by California law already applies to Jews as a religious group."

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5/16/26 11:24:52

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