

Date of Hearing: June 9, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY  
Ash Kalra, Chair  
SB 1387 (Stern) – As Introduced February 20, 2026

**SENATE VOTE:** 33-0

**SUBJECT:** STATE AGENCIES: COLLECTION AND REPORTING OF DEMOGRAPHIC DATA: JEWISH IDENTITY

**SYNOPSIS**

*California state agencies regularly collect personal information – including information on race or ethnicity – from employees, students, residents, and others. Sometimes this information is necessary to provide the service or carry out the function that the agency was created to perform. More generally, according to the California Office of Data and Innovation, “collecting and analyzing data is essential to ensure California programs and policies serve all residents fairly and effectively.” Existing law requires state agencies to collect demographic data related to ancestry, race, and ethnicity to make the information publicly available in aggregate form, excluding personal identifying information, deemed confidential, that could link the demographic data to a particular individual.*

*This bill requires a state agency that collects demographic data on ancestry or ethnic origin to include a separate category and tabulation for Jewish ancestry or ethnicity in any form that offers respondents one or more ethnic or racial categories. The bill would also require the agency to include the data in aggregate form (that is, excluding personal identifying information) in any report published by the agency on or after January 1, 2027. The bill also requires the agency to make the aggregate data publicly available, including by posting it on the agency’s internet website. Finally, because these forms would constitute public records and the bill would limit access to personal identifying information reported on those forms, the bill makes constitutionally required findings as to the privacy interest that justify limiting access to the information.*

*According to the author and sponsor, this bill gives Jewish persons in California the ability to select an ethnic category that better aligns with their sense of Jewish identity and will provide the state with more accurate data, including more accurate data on instances of hate crimes. The bill is sponsored by the organization Jewish California and is supported by several other state and regional Jewish groups. The bill is opposed by several other Jewish organizations who argue that the bill inappropriately singles out and racializes Jewish people as a separate ethnic group, something that has endangered Jewish historically. Opponents also contend that the bill will create confusion by making demographic data collection in California inconsistent with federal data collection methods. Finally, opponents claim the bill will impose costs on government without any corresponding benefit. Should the bill be approved by this Committee, it will be referred to the Assembly Committee on Privacy & Consumer Protection.*

**SUMMARY:** Requires a state agency that collects demographic data as to ancestry or ethnic origin to include a separate category and tabulation for Jewish ancestry or ethnicity and makes corresponding changes in various code sections. Specifically, **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 form that offers respondents the option of selecting one or more ethnic or racial designations.
- 2) Except for personal identifying information, which shall be deemed confidential, requires a state agency to do both of the following with the demographic data collected:
  - 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 by publishing the data on its internet website.
- 3) Makes conforming changes to the Education, Penal, and Unemployment Insurance codes.

**EXISTING LAW:**

- 1) 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 provides specified remedies when such rights or opportunities are denied. Defines “race or ethnicity” to include ancestry, color, ethnic group identification, and ethnic background. (Education Code Sections 200, 212.1.)
- 2) Requires the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) to collect voluntary self-identification information pertaining to the race or ethnic origin of people admitted, in custody, released, or paroled. Requires CDCR, based on information collected, to prepare, publish, and otherwise make information publicly available, as specified, except for personally identifying information, which is deemed confidential. (Penal Code Section 2068.)
- 3) Requires the California Employment Development Department (EDD) to collect demographic data, including race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and gender identity data, for individuals who claim disability benefits, as specified. Requires EDD to develop and make available online a public-facing dashboard that provides access to the demographic data, as specified. (Unemployment Insurance Code Section 2615.)
- 4) 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. (Government Code Section 8310.5 (a).)
- 5) Requires state and local agencies, as defined, that collect 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 and to include that data in every demographic report published on or after January 1, 2029, and to make the aggregated data available to the public. (Government Code Section 8310.4.)
- 6) 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. (Government Code Section 8310.7.)

- 7) Provides, pursuant to the California Constitution, that the people have the right of access to information concerning the conduct of the people's business and, as such, the meetings of public bodies and the writings of public officials and agencies must be open to public scrutiny. Requires any statute that limits access to public writings to include specified findings that justify the limitation. (California Constitution, Article I, Section 3.)
- 8) Governs the disclosure of information collected and maintained by public agencies. Provides, mindful of the individual right to privacy, that access to information concerning the conduct of the people's business is a fundamental and necessary right of every person in this state. Defines "public records" as any writing containing information relating to the conduct of the public's business that is prepared, owned, used, or retained by any state or local agency regardless of physical form or characteristics. (Government Code Sections 7920 to 7922.530.)

**FISCAL EFFECT:** As currently in print this bill is keyed fiscal.

**COMMENTS:** According to the author:

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.

***The movement away from rigid racial and ethnic categories toward voluntary self-identification.*** From the late 18<sup>th</sup> to the early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, "scientific experts" used the "Blumenthal" classification scheme to divide all the world's people into one of three "races" – Negroid, Mongoloid, or Caucasoid – based on perceived differences in skin color, hair texture, or facial features. Modern genetics – as well as a greater appreciation of the "socially constructed" nature of the concept of race – has led to a wholesale rejection of this tripartite scheme, both because of its failure to capture the range of human diversity and its Eurocentric biases. Although "ancestry," "race," and "ethnicity" are sometimes lumped together and sometimes distinguished, one would be hard-pressed to find a contemporary scholar willing to define the terms without significant exceptions and qualifications. Modern dictionaries and biogenetic texts, however, tend to associate "ancestry" with an identifiable genetic lineage; understand "race" as a social construct based on arbitrary physical traits; and treat "ethnicity" as a matter of shared culture and geographical origins, rather than the physical traits associated with "race."

An illustration of the socially constructed and historically fluid nature of race and ethnicity – and the resulting ambiguities – can be seen by tracking changes in the forms and categories that various government agencies have used to collect demographic data. According to historian Mae Ngai, immigration policies in the 1920s separated "race" from "nationality" while at the same

time conflating “nationality” with “ethnicity.” For example, the Immigration Act of 1924 placed non-white immigrants (primarily from Asia or Africa) into fixed, uniform “racial” categories while dividing white immigrants into different “ethnicities” that were more or less equated with a European “nationality.” Persons from Latin America (primarily from Mexico in the 1920s) were considered “white” under the law and according to the U.S. Census Bureau, but in popular discourse were generally treated as non-white, as were many Southern and Eastern Europeans during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. In 1930 the U.S. Census designated “Mexican” as a “race” but then dropped it in the 1940 Census, indicating that Mexicans were considered white “unless definitely of Indian or other nonwhite race.” [Mae Ngai, “The Architecture of Race in American Immigration Law: A Reexamination of the Immigration Act of 1924,” *Journal of American History* (1999); Cecilia Nunez, et.al., *Latino is Not a Race: Understanding Lived Experiences Through Street Race*, UCLA Latino Policy and Politics Institute, August 2024.]

As late as 1950, the U.S. Census used the following fixed racial categories: “White, “Black or Negro,” “American Indian,” “Asian,” and “Pacific Islander,” with no option for “Hispanic” appearing until the 1970 census. Since 1977, federal agencies, including the U.S. Census Bureau, adopted the definitions and standards set forth by the Office of Management and Budget’s (OMB) Statistical Policy Directive No. 15 (SPD-15.) OMB updated SPD-15 in 1997 and then again most recently in 2024. The 1997 directive made “Hispanic or Latino” an “ethnic” category and required the next U.S. Census to list “ethnicity” and “race” as separate questions. Under the “ethnicity” question the respondent could only select “Hispanic or Latino” or “Not Hispanic or Latino.” Under the “race” question one could check one of the five following categories: (1) American Indian or Alaskan Native; (2) Asian; (3) Black or African American; (4) Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander; or (5) White. The 1997 amendments also allowed the respondent to choose more than one category under the race question. The 2024 amendments – which will be adopted for the 2030 Census – combines race and ethnicity in a single question and adds “Middle Eastern and North African” as a new category. Finally, both the 1997 and 2024 amendments reiterate that the framework seeks to embody certain core principles, including (1) that racial and ethnic categories should not be interpreted primarily as biological or genetic, but as social and cultural; and (2) out of respect for individual dignity, that “respondent self-identification should be facilitated to the greatest extent possible” (See *Federal Register*, Vol. 62, No. 10, October 30, 1997, pp. 58782-58790, quote at 58782; see also Nunez, *supra*, 11-14.)

According to the California Office of Data and Innovation, California adopts the definitions of the OMB’s SPD-15, with minor variations. For example, the “State Employee Race/Ethnicity Questionnaire” form used by the California Department of Human Services (CalHR 1070), consistent with SPD-15 principles, allows an employee to check “one or more boxes that describe your race or ethnicity.” As revised in November of 2023, the “Black or African American” category is broken down into three categories: (1) a descendant of a person or persons who were enslaved in the United States; (2) not a descendant of a person or persons who were enslaved in the United States, including African Black, Caribbean Black, or other Black; or (3) descendant status is unknown or choose not to identify. An employee can now choose from several “Asian” and “Pacific Islander” categories. The “Asian” category lists Cambodian, Chinese, Filipino, Indian, Japanese, Korean, Laotian, Vietnamese, or Other Asian. The “Pacific Islander” category lists Guamanian, Native Hawaiian, Samoan, or Other Pacific Islander.

While Blacks, Asians, and Pacific Islanders have several more refined options on the CalHR 1070 form, the “Hispanic or Latino” category is lumped together as a single choice on the

employee questionnaire, even though Hispanics and Latinos include as many subgroups or “nationalities” as do the Asian and Pacific Islander categories. Although “Hispanic” and “Latino” may overlap and are often used interchangeably, they are not same thing; moreover, they are not necessarily indicators of “race or ethnicity” as traditionally understood. “Hispanic” is a linguistic or cultural category referring to groups who descend from Spanish-speaking peoples, while “Latino” typically refers to persons who trace their ancestry to a Latin American country. Thus, someone from Brazil (where Portuguese is the predominant language) would presumably be Latino but not Hispanic. Moreover, while “Hispanic or Latino” is listed as a “race or ethnicity” on state forms, people from the Spanish-speaking countries of Latin American could include a white Cuban, a Black Dominican, or an indigenous Guatemalan. In short, state and federal data collection has sometimes treated race and ethnicity as synonymous, and other times treated them as distinct, and almost always as confusing.

Perhaps because of inherent fuzziness and malleability of terms like “race” and “ethnicity,” recent decades have placed greater emphasis on allowing persons to self-identify. After all, given the seeming consensus that terms like race or ethnicity are socially constructed and historically malleable, one could argue that an individual’s subjective identity should prevail over a constructed category dictated by government, law, society, or even genetic composition. At the same time, however, government has a substantial interest in using *consistent* racial and ethnic categories of some sort to enforce anti-discrimination laws or monitor ethnic and racial disparities in education, health, or economic opportunity, so as to enact policies that eliminate those disparities. Self-identification may create certain inconsistencies, insofar as people with otherwise similar ancestry or genetics may select different identities, but this is the trade-off that federal and state agencies have made in order to honor the principle of self-identification.

***Pew Research Center Report on Jewish Identity.*** “There is no one way that American Jews think about being Jewish,” according to a 2020 report by the Pew Research Center. When asked whether being Jewish is mainly a matter of religion, ancestry, or culture- some Jewish respondents picked one descriptor, some picked all of them, and some chose two of three. The Pew report, therefore, supports a central claim made by the author and sponsor: *being Jewish is not a matter of religion alone*. Indeed, only 11% of the Pew respondents stated that being Jewish was a matter of religion alone, and only 36% included “religion” in combination with other choices. Over one-half (52%) of the Pew respondents mentioned “ancestry,” either alone or in combination with other categories. A similar number (55%) associated being Jewish with “culture,” either alone or in combination with other categories. Even among Jews who identify as religious, just 44% mention religion as a primary facet of Jewish identity, although Orthodox Jews stand out in this regard: 40% say being Jewish is about only religion, and about 30% of Orthodox adults say it is some combination of religion, ancestry, and culture, or all three of these. The vast majority of Jews who do not identify as religious nonetheless still identify as Jewish. The self-identified “nonreligious” Jews reported that, for them, being Jewish is mainly a matter of ancestry (41%), culture (25%) or both (15%). (See Pew Research Center, *Jewish Americans in 2020*, available at [www.pewresearch.org/religion/2021/05/11/jewish-americans-in-2020](http://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2021/05/11/jewish-americans-in-2020). See especially chapter 2, “Jewish Identity and Belief,” and chapter 9, “Race, Ethnicity, Heritage, and Immigration Among U.S. Jews.”)

The Pew study suggests, therefore, that many Jewish people, if given the option to select one or more categories under the “race and ethnicity” question on state forms would select “Jewish,” either alone or in combination with another option. This bill, therefore, is consistent with prior legislation enacted by the California Legislature that has followed the more modern

understanding of race and ethnicity as a matter of self-identification rather than fixed or absolute categories that the law imposes on people.

***Will this bill produce more accurate data, or merely allow people to self-identify?*** According to the author, California's "commitment to equity depends on accurate data." To be sure, as discussed above, the bill follows recent state and national trends favoring self-identification. However, whether self-identification results in more accurate data depends upon what one means by "accurate." The revised forms required by this measure will provide a more accurate count of the number of people who self-identify as ethnically Jewish, but may not necessarily capture people who do not view their Jewishness as a form of ethnic or racial identity, but who nonetheless still consider themselves Jewish. Based on the data described above this may result in the omission of at least 10 percent of persons identifying as Jewish in some manner. No doubt some percentage of Jews will take advantage of the option to self-identify as "Jewish," while other Jews may continue to identify as ethnically or racially white, Black, Asian, Latino, or any other category that fits their understanding. Nonetheless, the bill moves California further along the path of collecting demographic data in a manner consistent with modern principles of self-identification and will provide more accurate data on how Jews self-identify, but not necessarily a more accurate accounting of the number of Jewish Californians.

Relatedly, it is difficult to see how this bill will more accurately affect "how hate crimes are recorded." For example, the bill adds "Jewish" to the list of racial and ethnic categories currently collected (by means of voluntary self-identification) by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) in order to identify demographic trends in the prison population, including patterns of release and parole. However, if an imprisoned person is subjected to a hate crime – whether by staff or fellow prisoners – an anonymized check box may not be terribly helpful in identifying the rate of hate crimes in CDCR facilities. Indeed, whether a hate crime has been committed always depends upon the facts of a specific case and any evidence that the crime was committed because of the person's identity. If a prisoner who selected "Jewish" as their ethnicity becomes a victim of a crime, a checkbox does not indicate the motive of the perpetrator. The victim may have identified as "Jewish" but was targeted for a hate crime because of their race or gender identity. Conversely, a Jewish prisoner may have checked "white" or "Black" or "Hispanic" category, and not appear in the record as Jewish, even if by the perpetrator targeted the person because they were, or were perceived to be, Jewish. Finally, given the nature of prison culture within CDCR facilities, a Jewish inmate also becomes the victim of a crime for reasons wholly unrelated to ancestral or religious reasons.

What is true of the CDCR forms is equally true of other agency forms. The information on these forms will not tell us much about incidents of hate crimes unless the form asks about that issue. Whether a person has been a victim of a hate crime will depend upon facts and evidence suggesting that the crime was motivated by some real or perceived characteristic of the victim. Notwithstanding this measure, "hate crime" data will continue to come, as it does now, from law enforcement sources, private entities that collect reports of hate crimes, and the personal reports of victims.

In sum, if the purpose of the bill is to permit Jews to identify in a manner that is most meaningful to them, then that may be justification enough. But if the purpose is, as the author claims, to provide more accurate data, the bill standing on its own may not accomplish this, for the simple reason that a Jewish person who checks that they are racially or ethnically "white" (as 92% of U.S. Jews do now) instead of checking the "Jewish" box will not be recorded as Jewish. As

noted by the opposition to this measure, Jews in the United States do not think monolithically about this issue, and thus it seems inevitable that *some* Jews will check “Jewish” and others will continue to check “white” or some other category. So while this measure, like prior legislation adding new options for demographic self-identification, may not give the state a more accurate count of Jewish persons in California, the bill will, however, tell us how many Jews think of their Jewish identity as a matter of race or ethnicity and, perhaps more important, it will allow Jews to make a choice more consistent with their understanding.

***Opponents raise important, but not fatal, concerns.*** The opponents of this bill raise important questions both about the logic and merits of making “Jewish” as an option in ethnic or racial question. For example, the opponents correctly note that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) sets forth rules for the collection of demographic data by the U.S. Census Bureau and other federal agencies. California, according to the Office of Data and Innovation, adopts the OMB’s definition of “race and ethnicity.” OMB does not permit someone to select “Jewish” under the newly combined “race and ethnicity” question. Opponents contend that, for purposes of consistency and making meaningful comparisons across different data sets, California should follow the framework used by the federal government and other private and public entities. However, while the opponents are no doubt correct that researchers using different data sets will need to take these differences into account, those differences do not eliminate the possibility of comparative analyses across different data sets. This is especially true given the current federal government’s clear preference for certain demographic groups over others and their potential inclination to meddle with federally collected demographic data.

In addition to practical problems that different categories could create for researchers, the opponents – who also represent Jewish groups – argue that this bill could “endanger Jewish Californians by falsely and unnecessarily counting them using the false and harmful category of ‘race.’” Some opponents, for example, contend that creating “lists of Jews” has troubling historical antecedents, and they fear that under reactionary political climates this information could be accessed by government entities or antisemitic groups that could use it to endanger the Jewish community. However, it should be stressed that this bill would not create, much less publicize, a “lists of Jews.” The data collected would only be published or posted in aggregate form, with the name and any other personal identifying information deemed confidential. Indeed, existing law already requires a state agency that collects demographic data to keep all personal identifying information confidential, which means not only that the information would not be posted but that it would be redacted from any public records request. (Government Code Section 8310.5.)

Finally, many of the opponents insist that there “is no Jewish ‘race’ or ‘ethnic’ group,” and point out that Jews can be of any race or ethnicity, adopt varying cultural practices, and trace their ancestry different geographical regions, as is evident in the major branches of Ashkenazi, Sephardic, and Mizrahi Jews. Moreover, the opponents “vehemently reject any attempt to categorize Jews as [a race] . . . Jewish people in Europe, the US, and elsewhere have been historically and currently racialized . . . and subsequently been segregated, excluded, and murdered based on this false notion.” Though it is important to remember this history, it seems quite clear that the purpose of this bill is not to “racialize” all Jews. To the contrary, the bill appears rooted in the modern assumption that “race” and “ethnicity” are better understood as matters of self-identification, and not as fixed and timeless categories imposed by law or mandated by one’s DNA. The bill does not assume that Jews represent a single race or ethnicity;

rather, it allows persons who understand their Jewish identity in terms of ethnicity to express that understanding on state forms.

***The author may wish to consider a minor amendment to clarify the bill's intent.*** As discussed above, the bill appropriately follows recent trends by allowing people to select an option that best conforms with their sense of ethnic or cultural identity. Given this emphasis on self-identification, it would appear that the intent of the bill is not for government to declare what ethnicity *is*. Yet, the proposed new language in the Education Code could be read as doing just that. Specifically, the author may wish to consider changing the proposed new subdivision (d) in Education Code Section 212.1, which currently reads: "*Ethnicity*" *is inclusive of Jewish identity.*" Should the bill move forward, the author may wish to consider changing this to:

***"(d) Ethnic group identification" may include Jewish identity.***

The reason for this proposed change is twofold:

- First, the definitions in (b) through (d) refer to the terms used in subdivision (a), and the term used in (a) is "ethnic group identification," not "ethnicity."
- Relatedly, because the bill allows persons to self-identify as ethnically "Jewish," "may include" seems more appropriate than "is inclusive." In other words, the state is not declaring that Jewish *is* an ethnicity; it is saying that people *may* choose to identify as such.

***ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT:*** Jewish California, the sponsor, citing the Pew Center study discussed in the analysis, stress that for most American Jews, "religion is not central to their Jewish identity." Rather, Jews are more likely to associate their Jewishness with their ancestry, history, and cultural practices. Jewish California writes further:

California relies on demographic data to identify disparities, conduct research, tailor services, and ensure compliance with civil rights protections. When Jewish ethnicity is absent from data systems, disparities affecting Jewish communities – whether in healthcare needs, educational outcomes, or discrimination – are less likely to be identified or addressed.

Furthermore, antisemitic hate crimes are frequently motivated by perceived ethnicity, ancestry, or peoplehood – not religious observance. When Jews are categorized only as a religion, hate crimes targeting Jews as an ethnic group may be mischaracterized, underreported, or analytically obscured. This weakens California's ability to accurately measure antisemitism, identify trends, allocate prevention resources, and evaluate the effectiveness of state interventions.

State law does not merely collect data – it signals to the public how communities are understood. When California recognizes Jews only as a religion, it reinforces a narrow and incomplete understanding of Jewish identity, encouraging the misconception that Jews are defined solely by belief or worship rather than by a rich and distinct culture, history, peoplehood, and shared experience. That misunderstanding leads to generalizations, creating fertile ground for bias and discrimination.

SB 1387 is consistent with a long-standing legislative principle that California has applied to many communities. Recognizing that good data informs good policy, California has enacted several recent laws requiring more detailed demographic data collection, including for Asian American and Pacific Islander subgroups (AB 1088, 2011; AB 1726, 2016), Black subgroups (SB 189, 2022), LGBTQ+ communities (SB 957, 2024), and Middle Eastern and North African populations (AB 91, 2025). Extending the same recognition to Jewish Californians is both equitable and overdue.

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:*** Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP) of Los Angeles opposes the bill because it “endangers Jewish Californians by falsely and unnecessarily counting them using the false and harmful category of ‘race.’” In addition, JVP argues that the bill makes state demographic categories inconsistent with federal categories, thereby making comparison with other studies more problematic. Finally, JVP argues that this bill will impose considerable costs upon the state without any corresponding benefit. JVP explains further:

This bill. . . would require state agencies, boards, and commissions to include “Jewish” as an ethnic category in the collection and public reporting of demographic data. If enacted, this bill would endanger Jewish Californians by falsely and unnecessarily counting them using the false and harmful category of “race.” In addition, the bill would place undue burden on state data collection systems which currently do not collect data on religious identities.

There is no Jewish “race” or “ethnic” group, and we vehemently reject any attempt to categorize Jews as such. Jewish people in Europe, the US, and elsewhere have been historically and currently racialized (treated as a single “race” of people), and Jewish people have subsequently been segregated, excluded, and murdered based on this false notion. Although SB 1837 uses the term “ethnic,” in state data collection as well as in public discourse the terms “race” and “ethnic” are used interchangeably or in combination (“race/ethnic”), therefore any application of “ethnic” may be included under “race.” Notably, the California Department of Education reports data on “race/ethnicity.”

There is no single “Jewish” ethnic group. Jewish people come from all parts of the world, and while some have developed unique subcultures (e.g., Eastern European Jews, North African Jews, Ethiopian Jews, etc.), they also share cultural practices of their places of origins.

Federal race/ethnicity standards set by the US Office of Management and Budget (OMB) are primarily based on place of origin and there are no religious identities included. For efficiency and to enable comparison and aggregation of datasets, state and private agencies generally follow the OMB standards. Recognizing that substantial numbers of people with origins in Southwest Asian and North Africa were being counted as “White” (which otherwise counts people of European origin), the OMB added Middle Eastern/North African (MENA) as a race/ethnic category. In 2025 California followed suit in passing AB 91, the MENA Inclusion Act.

**REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:****Support**

Jewish California (sponsor)  
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 Bay Area  
JCRC Long Beach  
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  
The Jewish Coalition of Berkeley  
Valley Beth Shalom

**Opposition**

1021 Jewish Workers for Justice  
Bend the Arc California  
Bend the Arc: Jewish Action California  
Beyt Tikkun: a Synagogue Without Walls  
International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network  
Jewish Parents for Collective Liberation  
Jewish Voice for Peace Bay Area  
Jewish Voice for Peace Santa Barbara  
Jewish Voice for Peace, Los Angeles  
National Campus Jewish Alliance California Chapter  
Workers Circle/Arbeter Ring of Northern California

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