

SENATE THIRD READING
SB 385 (Seyarto and Wahab)
As Amended April 10, 2025
2/3 vote. Urgency

SUMMARY

Removes the requirement that the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) approve and adopt specified education criteria for peace officers within two years of the Office of the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges (OCCC) submitting a report to the Legislature outlining a plan to implement a modern policing degree program.

Major Provisions

COMMENTS

Effect of this bill. This bill would remove the requirement that POST approve and adopt education criteria for peace officers based on, and within two years of the submission of, the OCCC report to the Legislature. The OCCC report was released in November of 2023. POST is thereby required to adopt peace officer education criteria by the end of this year. This bill removes that requirement. AB 992 (Irwin) of the 2025-2026 Legislative Session similarly strikes this requirement, however, SB 385 additionally includes an urgency provision to ensure this statutory deadline is removed in advance of POST's end of year mandate. With a proposed urgency clause, this bill would require a 2/3 majority on the floor.

Effectively, this not only removes POST's deadline to adopt peace officer education criteria, but POST's responsibility to develop such criteria more generally. It may be helpful to consider this bill alongside AB 992 (Irwin), which is pending a hearing in the Senate Public Safety Committee. While this bill removes the requirement that POST adopt peace officer education criteria by the end of the year, AB 992 (Irwin) would require a peace officer to obtain either an associate's degree, bachelor's degree, modern policing degree, professional policing certificate, or otherwise have specified military or out-of-state law enforcement experience, within 36 months of receiving their basic certificate from POST. If both bills are enacted into law, this would shift responsibility for developing peace officer minimum education standards from POST to the Legislature, which is distinct from the process initially proposed by AB 89 (Jones-Sawyer) Chapter 405, Statutes of 2021

According to the Author

"SB-385 Adds clarity to education requirements for Peace Officer Candidates including the timeline for completion of upcoming degree requirements under the PEACE Act. Currently police officers would be required to complete a bachelor and associate degree within 24 months of their appointment as a Peace Officer. Adding flexibility to the timeline for completion allows officers to secure their employment and establish their career before being required to complete a degree. As California faces law enforcement shortages in rural and urban areas adding more flexibility will aid the hiring of more high quality officers."

Arguments in Support

According to the *California Police Chiefs Association*, "In 2021, CPCA sponsored AB 89 (Jones-Sawyer), which created a working group under the Community College Chancellor's

Office to produce recommendations to the Legislature for advancing the education standard for law enforcement. These recommendations were meant to be the basis for guidance on future legislation to codify a higher education component to existing peace officer training requirements. Unfortunately, AB 89 only gave two years to implement these new standards from the time the report was released, which is October of 2025. As such, SB 385 is necessary to delay the implementation date, and give the Legislature time to consider fully what education standard should be set for law enforcement (note: Assembly Bill 992 (Irwin) is pending this year, which contains the new higher education components)."

Arguments in Opposition

None submitted.

FISCAL COMMENTS

No significant fiscal impact. POST reports no fiscal impact.

VOTES**SENATE FLOOR: 38-0-2**

YES: Allen, Alvarado-Gil, Archuleta, Arreguín, Ashby, Becker, Blakespear, Cabaldon, Caballero, Cervantes, Choi, Cortese, Dahle, Durazo, Gonzalez, Grayson, Grove, Hurtado, Jones, Laird, McGuire, McNerney, Menjivar, Niello, Ochoa Bogh, Padilla, Pérez, Richardson, Rubio, Seyarto, Smallwood-Cuevas, Stern, Strickland, Umberg, Valladares, Wahab, Weber Pierson, Wiener

ABS, ABST OR NV: Limón, Reyes

ASM PUBLIC SAFETY: 9-0-0

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

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 15-0-0

YES: Wicks, Sanchez, Arambula, Calderon, Caloza, Dixon, Elhawary, Fong, Mark González, Hart, Pacheco, Pellerin, Solache, Ta, Tangipa

UPDATED

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