
VETO

Bill No: SB 509
Author: Caballero (D), et al.
Enrolled: 9/16/25
Vote: 27

SENATE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE: 6-0, 4/1/25

AYES: Arreguín, Seyarto, Caballero, Gonzalez, Pérez, Wiener

SENATE GOVERNMENTAL ORG. COMMITTEE: 15-0, 4/8/25

AYES: Padilla, Valladares, Archuleta, Ashby, Blakespear, Cervantes, Dahle, Hurtado, Jones, Ochoa Bogh, Richardson, Rubio, Smallwood-Cuevas, Wahab, Weber Pierson

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 6-0, 5/23/25

AYES: Caballero, Seyarto, Cabaldon, Grayson, Richardson, Wahab

NO VOTE RECORDED: Dahle

SENATE FLOOR: 38-0, 6/3/25

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

NO VOTE RECORDED: Hurtado, Reyes

SENATE FLOOR: 40-0, 9/11/25

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

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 59-0, 9/10/25 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Office of Emergency Services: training: transnational repression

SOURCE: Author

DIGEST: This bill requires the Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), on or before January 1, 2027, to develop a transnational repression and response training, as specified.

ANALYSIS:

Existing federal law:

- 1) Provides that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), under the federal Homeland Security Act of 2002, has responsibility for integrating law enforcement and intelligence information relating to terrorist threats to the homeland. (6 United States Code (U.S.C.) § 111.)
- 2) Provides that it is the sense of Congress that some International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) member countries have repeatedly misused INTERPOL's databases and processes to conduct activities of an overtly political or other unlawful character and in violation of international human rights standards, including by making requests to harass or persecute political opponents, human rights defenders, or journalists. (22 U.S.C. § 263b, subd (a).)
- 3) Requires the Attorney General and Secretary of State to use the voice, vote and influence of the United States, as appropriate, within INTERPOL's General Assembly and Executive Committee to promote reforms aimed at improving the transparency of INTERPOL and ensuring its operation consistent with its Constitution, as specified. (22 U.S.C. § 263b, subd (b).)
- 4) Requires the U.S. Secretary of State to transmit to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate, by February 25 of each year, a full and complete report that includes, where applicable, a description of the nature and extent of acts of transnational repression that occurred during the preceding year, as specified.

Existing state law:

- 1) Establishes Cal OES within the Office of the Governor for the purpose of mitigating the effects of natural, manmade, or war-caused emergencies. (Government (Gov.) Code, § 8550.)

- 2) Requires Cal OES to coordinate the emergency activities of all state agencies in connection with an emergency and requires every state agency and officer to cooperate with Cal OES in rendering all possible assistance in carrying out its duties, as specified. (Gov. Code, § 8587, subd. (a).)
- 3) Establishes the California Specialized Training Institute (CSTI) in Cal OES, to assist the Governor in providing training to state agencies, cities, and counties in their planning and preparation for disaster. (Gov. Code, § 8588.3, subd. (b).)
- 4) Establishes the Curriculum Development Advisory Committee to recommend criteria for terrorism awareness curriculum content to meet the training needs of state and local emergency response personnel and volunteers, and to make recommendations pertaining to training oversight agencies for first responders. (Gov. Code, § 8588.12, subd. (a).)
- 5) Specifies that Cal OES shall be considered a law enforcement organization as required for receipt of specified criminal intelligence information by persons employed by Cal OES whose duties and responsibilities require the authority to access criminal intelligence information. (Gov. Code, § 8585, subd. (c).)
- 6) Establishes POST to set minimum standards for the recruitment and training of peace officers, develop training courses and curriculum, and establish a professional certificate program that awards different levels of certification based on training, education, experience, and other relevant prerequisites. Authorizes POST to cancel a certificate that was awarded in error or fraudulently obtained; however, POST is prohibited from canceling a properly-issued certificate. (Penal (Pen.) Code, §§ 830-832.10 and 13500 et seq.)
- 7) Provides that the Commission on POST has, among others, the power to develop and implement programs to increase the effectiveness of law enforcement and, when those programs involve training and education courses, to cooperate with and secure the cooperation of state-level peace officers, agencies, and bodies having jurisdiction over systems of public higher education in continuing the development of college-level training and education programs. (Pen. Code, § 13500.3, subd. (e).)
- 8) Requires POST, in consultation with subject matter experts, to develop guidelines and a course of instruction and training for law enforcement officers who are employed as peace officers, or who are not yet employed as a peace officer but are enrolled in a training academy for law enforcement officers, addressing hate crimes. (Pen. Code, § 13519.6, subd. (a).)

This bill:

- 1) Includes various findings and declarations regarding transnational repression.
- 2) Includes definitions for the following terms:
 - a) “Human rights” means the free exercise or enjoyment of any right or privilege secured to an individual by the California Constitution or the laws of this state or by the United States Constitution or the laws of the United States, in whole or in part.
 - b) “Transnational repression” means any action taken by a foreign government or an agent of a foreign government involving the transgression of national borders through physical, digital, or analog means in order to intimidate, silence, coerce, harass, or harm members of diaspora and exile communities or organizations that advocate for individuals in diaspora or exile communities in order to prevent the exercise of their human rights, including gathering information about individuals in diaspora and exile communities or organizations that advocate for individuals in diaspora or exile communities on behalf of a foreign government with the intent to use that information to harass, intimidate, or harm individuals in order to prevent their exercise of their human rights.
- 3) Provides that on or before January 1, 2027, the Office of Emergency Services, through its California Specialized Training Institute, and in consultation with POST, shall develop a transnational repression recognition and response training, which is intended to provide law enforcement with unbiased information on transnational repression, including trends and guidance from federal authorities.
- 4) Requires that the training include, but not be limited to, all the following:
 - a) How to identify different tactics of transnational repression in physical and nonphysical forms, including, but not limited to, tools of digital surveillance and other cybertools frequently used to carry out transnational repression activities.
 - b) Those governments that are known to employ transnational repression, including those that use it most frequently and the specific tactics commonly used by specific foreign governments
 - c) Best practices for appropriate local and state law enforcement prevention, reporting, and response tactics.

- d) Information about communities targeted by transnational repression and misinformation that may be perpetuated by foreign governments, including, but not limited to, improper labeling of dissidents as terrorist threats and notice abuses effectuated through international law enforcement cooperatives that otherwise play a critical role in addressing transnational crime, including the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL).
 - e) Any guidance, best practices, definitions, or identified trends or threats issued by federal authorities on national security and public safety.
 - f) Culturally competent outreach to diverse impacted diaspora communities and subject matter experts in order to support effective and unbiased law enforcement responses to transnational repression.
- 5) Provides that the provisions above shall not prohibit the exercise of rights under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution.

Comments

In December 2023, the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee held a hearing entitled “Transnational Repression: Authoritarians Targeting Dissenters Abroad,” in which the organization Freedom House submitted testimony articulating that “transnational repression occurs when states reach across borders to silence dissent from activists, journalists, and others living in exile, perpetrator states do so using intimidation and violence.” An earlier report by Freedom House describes how the federal governing is responding to the growing threat posed by transnational repression:

Authorities, particularly at the federal level, are increasingly aware of the threat of transnational repression within the United States, and have taken steps to prevent the worst of it: assassination attempts, rendition, and assault. However, property damage, stalking, and intimidation still occur, causing severe disruption to people’s lives. The Departments of Homeland Security, Justice, and State, as well as the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) are part of a recently launched “whole-of-government” approach to this issue, which is being coordinated by the National Security Council. Significant effort has been expended to make federal law enforcement practices more responsive to the threat of transnational repression, deploy targeted sanctions to hold perpetrators accountable, and prosecute those

engaging in the most aggressive campaigns. Important action has also been taken by Congress, including passage of legislation to help end the authoritarian practice of misusing Interpol to target critics.

Established in 1971 to enhance the state's emergency preparedness, the CSTI is a division of Cal OES that provides training in emergency management, homeland security, hazardous materials response, crisis communications, law enforcement, and disaster response, among other topics. CSTI's courses are designed to meet state and federal training requirements in these areas, and the division works closely with a wide range of local, state and federal emergency agencies, including law enforcement agencies, fire departments, hazardous materials response agencies, national guard units, private sector actors, and other educational and research institutions.

This bill seeks to provide California law enforcement personnel and other relevant state and local agencies with training on transnational repression recognition and response, by requiring Cal OES, through CSTI and in consultation with the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training, to develop a training that must include: how to identify tactics of transnational repression, instruction on specific governments that are known to employ transnational repression, best practices for local and state law enforcement, information about communities targeted by transnational repression and misinformation that may be perpetuated by foreign governments, and any relevant federal guidance. This bill requires Cal OES to develop the training by January 1, 2027, and provides statutory definitions for the terms "human rights" and "transnational repression."

Because responding to transnational repression is substantially bound up with American foreign policy, the issue generally falls within the jurisdiction of the federal government and federal law enforcement agencies. The proposed federal legislation from the prior congressional session would have defined "transnational repression," established federal training procedures, and provided guidance on transnational repression recognition and response. Notably, the definition of "transnational repression" included in one of the proposed measures from the prior Congress is different than that definition in this bill. Although it is unclear whether the federal measures pending this year will include similar provisions to the measures proposed in the last Congress and given that response to transnational repression is primarily a federal issue, it may be prudent for California to wait for federal legislative guidance before enacting legislation in this space. Conversely, as the likelihood of congressional action in any policy area is unpredictable, it may

benefit California to begin training relevant state actors on transnational repression, and address any future congressional action in future legislation.

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

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee:

- Cost pressures of an unknown amount, potentially in the millions of dollars, across state agencies to prioritize and execute directives consistent with the declared policy of the state (General Fund or special fund).
- Annual costs of approximately \$572,000 to OES for three additional staff positions to research, develop, implement, and update the training program (General Fund).
- Minor and absorbable costs to POST to consult with OES on the training program.

SUPPORT: (Verified 10/14/25)

Americans for Kashmir
 California Democratic Party
 California Police Chiefs Association
 Center for Security, Race and Rights
 Hindus for Human Rights
 Immigrant Defense Advocates
 India Civil Watch International
 Indian American Muslim Council
 Indo-American Center
 Jakara Movement
 Japanese American Citizens League
 Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund
 Sikh Coalition
 Sikh Council of Central California
 South Asian Network

OPPOSITION: (Verified 10/14/25)

Americans4Hindus
 Bay Area Hindu Democratic Coalition
 Bay Area Jewish Coalition
 Bay Area Youth Vaishnav Parivar
 Coalition of Hindus of North America

Global Organization People of Indian Origin
Hindu American Foundation, Inc.
Hindu American Political Action Committee
Hindu Americans of San Diego
Hindu Community Institute
Hindu Delegates Forum
Hindu Speakers Bureau
HinduPact
India Heritage Foundation
Indo-American Community Federation
InterfaithShaadi
Israeli-American Civic Action Network
Karya Siddhi Hanuman Temple
Republican Hindu Coalition of California
Riverside County Sheriff's Office
Sacramento Organization of Hindu Malayalee
Santana Hindu-Dharma International Vedic Awareness
Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office
SMVS Newark CA LLC
Sri Venkateshwara Temple
Stand With Us
The Avanti Foundation
The Khalsa Today
United Hindu Council
3 Individuals

GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE:

This bill would require the Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), in consultation with the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST), to develop training on recognizing and responding to transnational repression.

While I appreciate the author's intent to enhance the state's ability to identify and respond to transnational repression, this issue is best addressed through administrative action in coordination with federal agencies. By codifying definitions related to this training, this bill would remove the state's flexibility and ability to avoid future inconsistencies related to this work, especially since no unified federal definition exists.

Cal OES has already developed a training to help law enforcement recognize and respond to transnational repression. Information about this Transnational Repression Awareness class can be found on Cal OES's California Specialized Training Institute Criminal Justice / Homeland Security webpage. This work was done in coordination with Cal OES, POST, and federal partners to ensure alignment with national standards and equip local law enforcement with the tools needed to identify and react to this threat. My administration moved quickly to provide local agencies with the necessary tools to protect these impacted communities while maintaining the essential administrative flexibility to adapt to this evolving issue. For these reasons, I cannot sign this bill.

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 59-0, 9/10/25

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Connolly, Davies, Dixon, Elhawary, Fong, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Mark González, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Irwin, Jackson, Kalra, Krell, Lee, Lowenthal, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Valencia, Wicks, Wilson, Rivas

NO VOTE RECORDED: Ahrens, Bauer-Kahan, Castillo, Chen, DeMaio, Ellis, Flora, Gabriel, Jeff Gonzalez, Hadwick, Hoover, Johnson, Lackey, Macedo, Patel, Patterson, Sanchez, Tangipa, Wallis, Ward, Zbur

Prepared by: Alex Barnett / PUB. S. /
10/14/25 15:06:48

**** END ****