
UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Bill No: SB 800
Author: Reyes (D), et al.
Amended: 9/2/25 in Assembly
Vote: 21

SENATE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE: 15-0, 4/28/25
AYES: Cortese, Strickland, Archuleta, Arreguín, Blakespear, Cervantes, Dahle,
Gonzalez, Grayson, Limón, Menjivar, Richardson, Seyarto, Umberg, Valladares

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 6-0, 5/23/25
AYES: Caballero, Seyarto, Cabaldon, Grayson, Richardson, Wahab
NO VOTE RECORDED: Dahle

SENATE FLOOR: 39-0, 6/4/25
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, Richardson, Rubio, Seyarto, Smallwood-
Cuevas, Stern, Strickland, Umberg, Valladares, Wahab, Weber Pierson, Wiener
NO VOTE RECORDED: Reyes

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 79-0, 9/8/25 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: State bridges and overpasses: suicide prevention

SOURCE: City of Rancho Cucamonga

DIGEST: This bill requires the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), in consultation with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), and in collaboration with impacted local governments, by July 1, 2028, to incorporate suicide deterrent considerations in the updates of applicable guidance documents. Requires Caltrans to evaluate and adopt guidance for countermeasures, including the design, placement, or modification of barriers, fencing and other infrastructure.

Assembly Amendments of 9/2/25 eliminate the suicide deterrent pilot program in San Bernardino County; recast the provisions to instead require Caltrans and CDPH to incorporate suicide deterrent considerations into the updates of applicable guidance documents; require Caltrans to evaluate and adopt guidance for countermeasures, including the design, placement, or modification of barriers, fencing, and other infrastructure.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) Grants Caltrans the full possession and control of all state highways and all property and rights in property acquired for state highway purposes.
- 2) Requires Caltrans to install screening on state freeway overpasses to prevent objects from being dropped or thrown upon vehicles passing underneath, as provided.
- 3) Establishes CDPH to be vested with all the duties, powers, purposes, functions, responsibilities, and jurisdiction as they relate to public health, as specified.

This bill:

- 1) Requires Caltrans, on or before July 1, 2028, in consultation with CDPH, and in collaboration with impacted local governments, to incorporate suicide deterrent considerations in the updates of applicable guidance documents.
- 2) Requires suicide deterrent considerations to include, but not be limited to, the evaluation and adoption of guidance for countermeasures that may deter suicide attempts on bridges and overpasses on the state highway system. The countermeasures include the design, placement, or modification of barriers, fencing, and other infrastructure.
- 3) Declares that a suicide deterrent consideration incorporated into guidance documents pursuant to this bill will be as determined by Caltrans to be appropriate.
- 4) Declares that provisions of this bill do not impose a mandatory duty pursuant to current public entity liability law.

Comments

- 1) *Purpose of this bill.* According to the author, “Last year, in my district, there were two subsequent suicides that occurred on the Haven Avenue overpass onto the 210 Freeway. While this tragedy in the City of Rancho Cucamonga has shaken the community there are steps we can take to ensure we have infrastructure to support our community and make it a safer place. This is why I originally introduced SB 800 and I am proud to say that we have worked with Caltrans to have the bill require Caltrans to incorporate suicide deterrent considerations in the updates of applicable guidance documents. This will give Caltrans the relevant guidance to incorporate the appropriate suicide deterrent considerations when applicable. The evaluation and adoption of guidance for countermeasures that may deter suicide attempts on bridges and overpasses on the state highway system, may include the design, placement, and modification of barriers, fencing, and other infrastructure. Preventative measures like SB 800 are critical to ensuring similar situations will not occur in the future.”
- 2) *Suicide and Self-Harm in California.* According to a January 2025 data brief from CDPH, suicide is the leading cause of violent death, and self-harm is the third leading cause of injury-related emergency department (ED) visits. Men consistently have higher rates of suicide than women, and in 2022 men account for more than three-fourths of suicides. Use of firearms was the most common mechanism for suicide in 2021 and 2022. Youth under the age of 10 had a statistically significant increase in self-harm ED visit rates from 1.9 per 100,000 Californians in this age group in 2021 to 2.7 in 2022. Self-harm by poisoning was the most common mechanism of self-harm injury leading to ED visits, followed by cutting/piercing and, when combined, both accounted for approximately 85% of self-harm ED visits. Other mechanisms of self-harm combined, including fall, firearm, and hanging/suffocation, made up 2% of self-harm ED visits.

The brief also highlights opportunities for prevention, such as advancing protective factors as a part of prevention programming to build resilience and foster support at the individual, relationship, and community level to help decrease suicide risk. While the brief notes that prevention efforts should focus on the most common and lethal means of suicide (firearms and intentional drug overdoses), it also highlights the 2024 National Strategy for Suicide Prevention, which contains several goals, such as integrating suicide prevention into the culture of the workplace and into other community settings, and implementing

research-informed suicide prevention communication activities in diverse populations, using best practices from communication science.

- 3) *Suicide and self-harm on roadways.* Road-related methods of suicide include jumping off or on to road infrastructure, stepping into the path of a moving vehicle, or driving off or into road infrastructure or into another vehicle. A 2023 study entitled *Factors Prompting and Deterring Suicides on the Roads*, by researchers from Middlesex University in London investigated the factors prompting and deterring the decision to attempt suicide on the roads. They conducted interviews with people who had lived experience of suicidal ideation or behavior at a bridge or road location. They found that people perceived a road-related suicide to be quick, lethal, easy and accessible and to have the potential to appear accidental. The proportion of people who described their thoughts and attempts as impulsive appeared to be higher than had been observed with other method choices. The potential impact on other people was a strongly dissuasive factor.

The researchers concluded that “measures designed to prevent access to potentially lethal sites may be particularly important, given that many participants described their thoughts and behavior as impulsive. In addition, fostering a culture of care and consideration for other road users may help to dissuade people from taking action on the roads.”

- 4) *Tragedy in San Bernardino County.* As noted by the author, over a few weeks last fall, two high-school students took their own lives on the Haven Avenue overpass on State Route (SR) 210, in the City of Rancho Cucamonga. The city is sponsoring SB 800 and states, “The rising number of suicide incidents from freeway overpasses is not only a profound tragedy for individuals and families but also a serious public safety concern for motorists, first responders, and the broader community. In the past six months alone, multiple suicides and attempts have occurred along the 210 Freeway overpasses, including the heartbreaking loss of two high school students at the same location – 1.5 weeks apart from one another. In December, another individual from outside the area also died by suicide at a Rancho Cucamonga overpass. While some attempts have been prevented, each represents a crisis that could have ended in another devastating loss. These incidents underscore the urgent need for intervention. No family, school, or community should have to endure such unimaginable grief. It is imperative that we take immediate action to implement preventive measures that provide hope, support, and protection for those in distress.”

- 5) *Statewide prevention efforts – 988.* As of July 16, 2022, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline number transitioned to 988, providing an easy to remember number that anyone can call, text, or chat to receive support when experiencing a suicidal, mental health and/or substance use related crisis. When Californians dial 988, they are directed to one of twelve Lifeline crisis call centers. California's call centers are part of the broader 988 Lifeline crisis center network. If a local crisis center is unable to take the call, the caller is automatically routed to a national backup crisis center. According to the 988 California Crisis Center Consortium, 988 routed 342,394 calls with an average answer speed of 34 seconds, answer rate of 85%, and call length of 12 minutes in 2023.
- 6) *Rancho Cucamonga is also working on prevention.* The City of Rancho Cucamonga has been committed to mental health services and suicide prevention for many years. In 2008, the City Council launched the Healthy RC initiative, which connects “planning, program, policy, and partnership efforts that work across sectors and priority areas to promote community health and wellness.”

Mental health is a major part of the initiative with the city noting its high priority in the community. Since the start of Healthy RC, suicide and self-inflicted injury hospitalization rates have decreased by 19%.

Additionally, last year the city launched Community Outreach and Support Team (COAST), which is a multi-disciplinary mobile mental health crisis response team. The team consists of a social worker from the Department of Behavioral Health, a law enforcement officer, and a fire safety employee with a service dog trained in crisis response. The purpose of the team is to engage with those experiencing a mental health crisis in order to provide alternative services including the ability to follow-up with individuals for continuum of care, provide a better treatment option for those in crisis, provide community outreach and education, and prevent further crises through follow-up. COAST can respond in lieu of, or relieve, police and fire resources to keep those units available for emergency response.

The city has also been working directly with Caltrans to help prevent future deaths at the SR 210 location and others throughout the area. According to Caltrans, they are working with the city to assess the bridge overpass area and work on erecting fencing to block access. Currently, the overpass in question has fencing on the bridge deck but people have still been able to climb up the

side to access the bridge. The city would like to add four additional fences to close off the access points. Additionally, for added prevention, Caltrans and the city have erected signage at the overpass location that state, “there is hope, we can help,” and lists the 988 lifeline number.

- 7) *SB 800 focuses on prevention efforts on state highways.* Currently, Caltrans is required to install screening on state freeway overpasses where pedestrians are allowed to prevent objects from being dropped or thrown upon vehicles passing underneath. The locations are up to Caltrans’ discretion, but first consideration must be given to overpasses in urban areas. The Caltrans Highway Design Manual contains requirements for bridge barriers and railings. The railings are spirited into four classes based on their preventative function, vehicle barrier railings, combination vehicle barrier and pedestrian railings, pedestrian railings, and bicycle railings. According to Caltrans, overpasses with pedestrian access include fencing. As noted above, the overpass on the SR 210 does have pedestrian fencing on the bridge deck.

To focus on infrastructure improvements and help prevent future tragedies, SB 800 requires Caltrans, in consultation with CDPH, by July 1, 2028, to incorporate suicide deterrent considerations into subsequent updates of applicable guidance documents, such as the Highway Design Manual. Additionally, Caltrans must collaborate with affected local governments throughout the process. The bill also requires Caltrans to evaluate and adopt guidance for countermeasures, including the design, placement, or modification of barriers, fencing and other infrastructure. Recent amendments recast provisions of SB 800 to work in conjunction with AB 440 (Ramos, 2025), which requires Caltrans and CDPH to work with behavioral health experts and other stakeholders to develop best practices for the consideration of suicide countermeasures on bridges and overpasses, including evaluating appropriate physical infrastructure and design features.

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

SUPPORT: (Verified 9/8/25)

City of Rancho Cucamonga (source)
Bridge Rail Foundation
California Association of Psychiatric Technicians
California Hospital Association
Children Now
Omid and Krista Furutan

San Bernardino County Transportation Authority
Union of American Physicians and Dentists
Wellness Ranch Equine Assisted Therapy

OPPOSITION: (Verified 9/8/25)

None received

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT: Writing in support of the bill, the parents of one of the high-school students who lost her life by suicide on the SR 210 overpass state, “The bill’s focus on placing both physical barriers and suicide prevention signage on high-risk overpasses is a crucial step in saving lives. Research has shown that suicide deterrents work—when barriers are in place, lives are preserved, and those in crisis are given more time to seek help.”

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 79-0, 9/8/25

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Johnson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

NO VOTE RECORDED: Nguyen

Prepared by: Melissa White / TRANS. / (916) 651-4121
9/8/25 19:53:03

**** **END** ****