

Date of Hearing: June 23, 2026  
Counsel: Mary Kennedy

## ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

Nick Schultz, Chair

SB 937 (Gonzalez) – As Amended June 16, 2026

**SUMMARY:** Prohibits law enforcement officers from using flash-bang grenades to disperse any assembly, protest, or demonstration, except as specified. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Prohibits the use of flash-bang grenades by any law enforcement agency for the purposes of dispersing any assembly, protest, or demonstration, and requires that flash-bangs only be deployed by a peace officer that has received training on their proper use by the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) for crowd control or special weapons and tactics certified by an equivalent entity or training facility, if the use is objectively reasonable to defend against a threat to life or serious bodily injury to any individual, including any peace officer, or to bring an objectively dangerous and unlawful situation safely and effectively under control, and only in accordance with all of the following requirements:
  - a) De-escalation techniques or other alternatives to force have been attempted, when objectively reasonable, and have failed.
  - b) Repeated, audible announcements are made announcing the intent to use kinetic energy projectiles and chemical agents and the type to be used, when objectively reasonable to do so. The announcements shall be made from various locations, if necessary, and delivered in multiple languages, if appropriate.
  - c) Persons are given an objectively reasonable opportunity to disperse and leave the scene.
  - d) An objectively reasonable effort has been made to identify persons engaged in violent acts and those who are not, and flash-bang grenades are targeted toward those individuals engaged in violent acts. Projectiles shall not be aimed indiscriminately into a crowd or group of persons.
  - e) Flash-bang grenades are used only with the frequency, intensity, and in a manner that is proportional to the threat and objectively reasonable.
  - f) Officers shall minimize the possible incidental impact of their use of flash-bang grenades on bystanders, medical personnel, journalists, or other unintended targets.
  - g) An objectively reasonable effort has been made to extract individuals in distress.
  - h) Medical assistance is promptly provided, if properly trained personnel are present, or procured, for injured persons, when it is reasonable and safe to do so.
  - i) Flash-bang grenades shall not be aimed at the head, neck, or any other vital organs.

- j) Flash-bang grenades shall not be used by any law enforcement agency solely due to any of the following:
    - i) A violation of an imposed curfew.
    - ii) A verbal threat.
    - iii) Noncompliance with a law enforcement directive.
  - k) Only a commanding officer at the scene of the assembly, protest or demonstration may authorize the use of flash-bang grenades.
  - l) Flash-bang grenades shall not be deployed for crowd control within 300 feet of the following areas if children are visibly present, unless the use is objectively reasonable to defend against a threat to life or serious bodily injury to any individual:
    - i) A school zone. For purposes of this section, “school zone” means an area in, or on the grounds of a public or private school providing instruction in kindergarten or grades 1-12, inclusive.
    - ii) A park.
    - iii) Any other area where children are visibly present. For purposes of this section, “child” means a person under 18 years of age.
  - m) Flash-bang grenades shall not be used by any law enforcement agency for the purposes of immigration enforcement, unless done as part of a joint law enforcement task force.
- 2) Defines “flash-bang grenades” as any less-than-lethal explosive or pyrotechnic devices that are deployed by hand or as projectiles and that produce a bright flash and loud noise intended to temporarily stun, distract, effect an arrest, or disperse a gathering of people. Flash-bang grenades include, but are not limited to, explosive or pyrotechnic devices that also emit chemical agents, kinetic energy projectiles, or shrapnel, or that are commonly referred to as blast balls, sting balls, stinger grenades, noise flash diversionary devices, concussion grenades, or stun grenades.
- 3) Defines “law enforcement agency” as any of the following:
- a) Any department or agency of the state or any local government, special district, or other political subdivision thereof, that employs any peace officer, as defined.
  - b) Any federal law enforcement agency
- 4) Expands existing prohibitions against the use of kinetic energy projectiles and chemical agents to federal law enforcement agencies.
- 5) Requires each law enforcement agency, within 60 days of each incident, to publish a summary on its internet website of all instances in which a peace officer employed by that agency uses a flash-bang grenade for crowd control. Authorizes an agency to extend that period for 30 days if they demonstrate just cause, but in no case longer than 90 days from the time of the incident.

- 6) Specifies that for each incident reported, the summary is limited to that information known to the agency at the time of the report and includes only the following:
  - a) A description of the assembly, protest, demonstration, or incident, including the approximate crowd size and the number of officers involved.
  - b) The type of flash-bang grenade deployed.
  - c) The number of flash-bang grenades deployed, as applicable.
  - d) The number of documented injuries as a result of the flash-bang grenade deployment.
  - e) The justification for using the flash-bang grenade, including any de-escalation tactics or protocols and other measures that were taken at the time of the event to de-escalate tensions and avoid the necessity of using the flash-bang.
- 7) Requires the DOJ to post on its internet website a compiled list linking each law enforcement agency's reports posted pursuant to the reporting requirement.
- 8) Prohibits any peace officer of a local, state, or federal law enforcement agency, or a person acting on behalf of such an agency, from using explosive breaching charges for the purpose of immigration enforcement unless done as part of a joint law enforcement task force.
- 9) Defines "explosive breaching charge" as less lethal explosive charges that are deployed by hand to effectuate the forced opening of closed or locked points of entry often through the destruction of doors, locks, hinges, windows, and frame materials. Specifies that these charges include, but are not limited to, detonating cords, sheet explosives, shaped charges, blasting caps, and detonators.
- 10) Defines peace officer, for the purposes of the prohibition of use for immigration enforcement, as an officer of a local, state, or federal law enforcement agency, or a person acting on behalf of a local, state, or federal law enforcement agency.
- 11) Includes a severability clause.

**EXISTING LAW:**

- 1) Declares the intent of the Legislature that the authority to use physical force, conferred on peace officers by existing law, is a serious responsibility that shall be exercised judiciously and with respect for human rights and dignity and for the sanctity of every human life, and that every person has a right to be free from excessive use of force by officers acting under color of law. (Pen. Code, § 835a, subd. (a)(1).)
- 2) Includes a legislative finding and declaration that the decision by a peace officer to use force shall be evaluated carefully and thoroughly, in a manner that reflects the gravity of that authority and the serious consequences of the use of force by peace officers, in order to ensure that officers use force consistent with law and agency policies. (Pen. Code, § 835a, subd. (a)(3).)

- 3) Authorizes a peace officer who has reasonable cause to believe that a person to be arrested has committed a public offense to use objectively reasonable force to effect the arrest, to prevent escape, or to overcome resistance. (Pen. Code, § 835a, subd. (b).)
- 4) Permits a peace officer who is authorized to make an arrest and who has stated their intention to do so, to use all necessary means to effect the arrest if the person to be arrested either flees or forcibly resists. (Pen. Code, § 843.)
- 5) Requires each law enforcement agency to maintain a policy that provides a minimum standard on the use of force which, among other elements, must include all of the following:
  - a) A requirement that officers utilize de-escalation techniques, crisis intervention tactics, and other alternatives to force when feasible.
  - b) A requirement that an officer may only use a level of force that they reasonably believe is proportional to the seriousness of the suspected offense or the reasonably perceived level of actual or threatened resistance.
  - c) A requirement that officers immediately report potential excessive force to a superior officer when present and observing another officer using force that the officer believes to be beyond that which is necessary, as determined by an objectively reasonable officer under the circumstances based upon the totality of information actually known to the officer.
  - d) A requirement that officers promptly provide, if properly trained, or otherwise promptly procure medical assistance for persons injured in a use of force incident, when reasonable and safe to do so.
  - e) Standards and requirements relating to demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the law enforcement agency's use of force policy by officers, investigators, and supervisors.
  - f) Training and guidelines regarding vulnerable populations, including, but not limited to, children, elderly persons, people who are pregnant, and people with physical, mental, and developmental disabilities. (Gov. Code, § 7286, subd. (b).)
- 6) Prohibits a law enforcement agency from authorizing the use of a carotid restraint, as defined, by any peace officer employed by that agency. (Gov. Code, § 7286.5, subd. (a).)
- 7) Prohibits a law enforcement agency from authorizing techniques or transport methods that involve a substantial risk of positional asphyxia. (Gov. Code, § 7286.5, subd. (b).)
- 8) Generally prohibits law enforcement agencies from using kinetic energy projectiles and chemical agents, as defined, to disperse any assembly, protest or demonstration. (Pen. Code, § 13652, subd. (a).)
- 9) Provides that kinetic energy projectiles and chemical agents shall only be deployed by a peace officer that has received training on their proper use by POST for crowd control if the use is objectively reasonable to defend against a threat to life or serious bodily injury to any individual, including any peace officer, or to bring an objectively dangerous and unlawful

situation safely and effectively under control, and only in accordance with all of the following requirements:

- a) De-escalation techniques or other alternatives to force have been attempted, when objectively reasonable, and have failed.
  - b) Repeated, audible announcements are made announcing the intent to use kinetic energy projectiles and chemical agents and the type to be used, when objectively reasonable to do so. The announcements shall be made from various locations, if necessary, and delivered in multiple languages, if appropriate.
  - c) Persons are given an objectively reasonable opportunity to disperse and leave the scene.
  - d) An objectively reasonable effort has been made to identify persons engaged in violent acts and those who are not, and kinetic energy projectiles or chemical agents are targeted toward those individuals engaged in violent acts. Projectiles shall not be aimed indiscriminately into a crowd or group of persons.
  - e) Kinetic energy projectiles and chemical agents are used only with the frequency, intensity, and in a manner that is proportional to the threat and objectively reasonable.
  - f) Officers shall minimize the possible incidental impact of their use of kinetic energy projectiles and chemical agents on bystanders, medical personnel, journalists, or other unintended targets.
  - g) An objectively reasonable effort has been made to extract individuals in distress.
  - h) Medical assistance is promptly provided, if properly trained personnel are present, or procured, for injured persons, when it is reasonable and safe to do so.
  - i) Kinetic energy projectiles shall not be aimed at the head, neck, or any other vital organs.
  - j) Kinetic energy projectiles or chemical agents shall not be used by any law enforcement agency solely due to any of the following:
    - i) A violation of an imposed curfew.
    - ii) A verbal threat.
    - iii) Noncompliance with a law enforcement directive.
  - k) If the chemical agent to be deployed is tear gas, only a commanding officer at the scene of the assembly, protest, or demonstration may authorize the use of tear gas. (Pen. Code, § 13652, subd. (b).)
- 10) Requires each law enforcement agency, within 60 days of each incident, to publish a summary on its internet website of all instances in which a peace officer employed by that agency uses a kinetic energy projectile or chemical agent for crowd control. Provides that an agency may extend that period for 30 days if they demonstrate just cause, but in no case longer than 90 days from the time of the incident. (Pen. Code, § 13652.1, subd. (a).)

- 11) Specifies the information that must be included in the incident summary published by law enforcement agencies, and requires the Department of Justice (DOJ) to post on its internet website a compiled list linking each law enforcement agency's reports. (Pen. Code, § 13652.1, subd. (b), (c).)
- 12) Defines "destructive device" as including any bomb, grenade, explosive missile or similar device or any launching device therefor, among other applicable devices, weapons and ammunition types. (Pen. Code, § 16460, subd. (a)(2).)
- 13) Makes it a crime for any person, firm or corporation from possessing any destructive device within this state, except as specified. (Pen. Code, § 18710.)
- 14) Establishes other various crimes relating to the possession, use and transfer of destructive devices. (Pen. Code, §§ 18715-18780.)
- 15) Exempts on-duty peace officers acting within the scope and course of their employment from the above restrictions related to destructive devices. (Pen. Code, § 18800.)

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Unknown

**COMMENTS:**

- 1) **Sponsor:** California Community Foundation
- 2) **Author Statement:** According to the author: "Californians across the state have a constitutionally protected right to protest. This right has been consistently under threat in recent years, as the equipment law enforcement uses for crowd control has become increasingly militarized and dangerous. Flash-bang grenades, which emit blinding flashes of light, create overpressure, and produce extremely loud bangs, have grown in popularity as a tool of crowd control and immigration enforcement actions. Though supposedly non-lethal, flash-bangs can cause temporary blindness, deafness, and fire shrapnel or pellets that can seriously injure both users and the public, especially without proper training. A lack of regulation, transparency, and training also extends to explosive breaching devices, often used by law enforcement to blow open doors and windows, and posing similar safety risks."

"The Legislature has already taken steps to curtail other dangerous crowd control devices, such as tear gas, rubber bullets, and beanbag rounds. SB 937 extends these existing restrictions and training requirements to flash-bang grenades, and it bars use of explosive breaching devices for immigration enforcement. This measure is vital to ensuring the safety of both citizens exercising their right to protest and law enforcement agents in the field."
- 3) **Recent uses of "Less than Lethal" Munitions for Crowd Control:** Law enforcement officers utilize a range of "less lethal" munitions in order to compel compliance, disperse gatherings, or incapacitate individuals during crowd control incidents. These weapons and devices include several broad categories, including kinetic energy projectiles (such as rubber bullets or beanbag rounds), chemical agents or irritants (such as pepper spray and tear gas) and other disorientation or incapacitation devices, including everything from long-range acoustic devices, water cannons, and flash-bang grenades. Although dubbed "less lethal," these weapons are capable of causing serious injury and even death in rare cases, especially when they are used at close range or against vulnerable individuals. Flash-bang grenades, the

subject of this bill, have been found to carry unique and significant risks. According to a recent report published jointly by a trio of human rights organizations:

Disorientation devices, also known as “flashbangs” or stun grenades, create a loud explosion and, in some instances, a bright flash of light. They are made of both metal and plastic parts that may fragment during the explosion and therefore carry risks of blast injuries to targeted individuals and bystanders. Explosions that occur close to people have led to amputation, fractures, burns and death. Additionally, the ability to precisely place these thrown devices is questionable, especially when used in protest settings. There are frequent news reports and anecdotal evidence of injuries and deaths from these weapons, including reports of injuries to military, corrections, and other law enforcement officials while handling these devices.<sup>1</sup>

Recent incidents involving the use of flash-bang grenades by law enforcement – primarily in the context of large-scale protests against federal immigration enforcement efforts – have brought these risks to the forefront of public discourse. In early June 2025, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) work raids at several restaurants in San Diego ended with federal agents using flash-bang grenades against residents protesting the operations in an attempt to disperse the crowd. (“ICE agents with assault rifles toss flash-bangs in trendy San Diego neighborhood. Community fights back.” *Los Angeles Times*. 2 June 2025. [ICE agents with assault rifles toss flash-bangs in San Diego neighborhood. City officials outraged - Los Angeles Times](#)) These events were the subject of recent litigation between a group of protestors, journalists and legal observers and the federal agencies that deployed crowd control munitions against them. The judge in that case ultimately enjoined the defendant federal agencies from using crowd control weapons – including kinetic impact projectiles, chemical irritants and flash-bang grenades – against members of the press, legal observers, and protestors who are not themselves posing a threat of imminent harm to a law enforcement officer or another person. (*L.A. Press Club v. Noem* (2025) 799 F.Supp.3d 1036.) The same month, during the “No Kings” protests in downtown Los Angeles, a protestor lost two fingers after a flash-bang grenade deployed by Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Office deputies detonated next to him, blowing off one finger and requiring another to be amputated later.<sup>2</sup> According to the author, events such as these are the reason for the introduction of this bill.

- 4) **Existing Law Regarding Use of Force and Less Lethal Munitions for Crowd Control:** In 1989, the U.S. Supreme Court set the standard for reasonable use of force in law enforcement. The general rule for how much force a law enforcement officer can use in response to a given situation is determined by a reasonableness test, requiring the careful balancing of the force against the countervailing government interest at stake. (*Graham v. Connor* (1989) 490 U.S. 386, 396. The central question is whether the amount and type of force applied was reasonably necessary in light of the police need to prevent the subject from engaging in whatever conduct it was that they were engaging in at the time the force was

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<sup>1</sup> “Lethal In Disguise 2: How Crowd-Control Weapons Impact Health and Human Rights.” Published by the International Network of Civil Liberties Organizations and Physicians for Human Rights in collaboration with the Omega Research Foundation. March 2023, p.13. [REPORT-Lethal-in-Disguise-2-PHR-INCLO-March-2023.pdf](#).

<sup>2</sup> “Law enforcement violating rules on less-lethal weapons in ICE protests, critics say.” *Los Angeles Times*. 11 July 2025. Less-lethal weapons cause physical, psychological harm, critics say - Los Angeles Times.

used. Three important factors to that test are: 1) the severity of the crime at issue; 2) whether the suspect poses an immediate threat to the safety of the officers or others; and 3) whether the person is actively resisting arrest or attempting to evade arrest by flight. With specific regard to “flash-bangs” the Ninth Circuit held in *Boyd v. Benton County* (2004) 374 F.3d 773 that:

There are likely circumstances in which a risk to officers’ safety would make the use of a flash-bang device appropriate. And we recognize that less-than-lethal alternatives are intended to avoid unnecessary fatalities. Nonetheless, given the inherently dangerous nature of the flash-bang device, it cannot be a reasonable use of force under the Fourth Amendment to throw it “blind” into a room occupied by innocent bystanders absent a strong governmental interest, careful consideration of alternatives and appropriate measures to reduce the risk of injury.

In 2019, California refined its use of force statutes in order to provide clearer guidance to law enforcement and the public, specifically regarding the when the use of deadly force is appropriate. Namely, AB 392 (Weber), Chapter 170, Statutes of 2019, specified the circumstances in which deadly force is and is not appropriate, and SB 230 (Caballero), Chapter 285, Statutes of 2019, required law enforcement agencies to update their training and policies with specific requirements regarding use of force, including a requirement that an officer may only use a level of force that they reasonably believe is proportional to the seriousness of the suspected offense or the reasonably perceived level of actual or threatened resistance. (Gov. Code, § 7286, subd. (b).)

A couple of years later, in the wake of the nationwide protests sparked by the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis, the Legislature passed additional legislation aimed at limiting how law enforcement may deploy certain tactics. One such measure was AB 48 (Gonzalez), Chapter 404, Statutes of 2021, enacting Penal Code section 13652, which generally prohibited law enforcement agencies from using kinetic energy projectiles and chemical agents to disperse any assembly, protest or demonstration.

- 5) **Expanding prohibition to flash-bang grenades:** Flash-bang grenades are less than lethal explosive or pyrotechnic devices that are deployed by hand or as projectiles that produce a bright flash and loud noise intended to temporarily stun, distract, effect and arrest, or disperse a gather of people. This bill incorporates flash-bang grenades into the existing framework for the prohibition on use of non-lethal munitions to disperse any assembly, protest, or demonstration. and expands its applicability to include federal law enforcement agencies. The bill expands when any of the non-lethal munitions may be used to include not only when an officer has been trained by POST in crowd control but also if they had training in special weapons or tactics certified by an entity equivalent to POST.

In addition to the crowd control prohibition in general, this bill provides specifically that they should not be used within 300 feet of a school zone, park, or other areas where children under 18 are visibly present unless the use is objectively reasonable to defend against a threat to life or serious bodily injury of any individual. The standard of reasonable to defend against a threat to life or serious bodily injury of any individual is the same standard as lethal force, so is it appropriate that the standard be the same for lethal and non-lethal force in circumstances where children are present?



The use of flash-bang grenades shall also be included in the published summaries on the use of non-lethal force.

- 6) **Prohibition on using flash-bang grenades or explosive breaching charges for immigration enforcement:** This bill also prohibits peace officers from using flash bang grenades or explosive breaching charges for the purpose of immigration enforcement unless done as part of a joint law enforcement task force authorized under the Government Code. Explosive breaching charges are less than lethal charges that are used to effectuate the forced entry into locked doors, windows, etc.
- 7) **Inclusion of Federal Officers:** This bill includes federal officers in the definition of peace officers in both provisions of this bill.

The regulation of federal agencies and officers raises issues the Supremacy Clause of the U.S. Constitution. State laws that conflict with federal laws or attempt to regulate the federal government may be invalidated for several reasons. The Supremacy Clause of the U.S. Constitution provides that federal law “shall be the supreme Law of the Land; and the Judges in every State shall be bound thereby, any Thing in the Constitution or Laws of any State to the Contrary notwithstanding.” (U.S. Const., Art. VI, Cl 2.) The doctrine of intergovernmental immunity is derived from the Supremacy Clause of the Constitution, and demands that “the activities of the Federal Government are free from regulation by any state.” (*United States v. California* (9th Cir. 2019) 921 F.3d 865, 879.) This makes a state regulation invalid if it “regulates the United States directly or discriminates against the Federal Government or those with whom it deals.” “A state or local law discriminates against the federal government if it treats someone else better than it treats the government.” (*N.D. v. United States* (1990) 495 U.S. 423, 435 and *Boeing Co. v. Movassaghi* (9th Cir. 2014) 768 F.3d 832, 839) However, it is well settled that generally applicable state laws can apply to federal entities. (*United States ex rel. Drury v. Lewis*, 200 U.S. 1, 7-8 (1906); *Johnson v. Maryland*, 254 U.S. 51, 56 (1920).)

A related doctrine is conflict preemption, whereby state laws that conflict with federal law are preempted, which “includes cases where compliance with both federal and state regulations is a physical impossibility, and those instances where the challenged state law stands as an obstacle to the accomplishment and execution of the full purposes and objectives of Congress.” (*U.S. v. California*, (2019) 921 F.3d 865 at pp. 878-879; *Arizona v. United States*, 567 U.S. 387, 399 (2012).) For example, in *United States v. California* (2019) 921 F.3d 865, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the provisions of the California Values Act relating to law enforcement cooperation with ICE. The court of appeals had “no doubt that SB 54 makes the jobs of federal immigration authorities more difficult.” (*Id.* at 886) However, the court concluded that “this frustration does not constitute obstacle preemption,” because federal law “does not require any particular action on the part of California or its political subdivisions.” The court reasoned that “even if SB 54 obstructs federal immigration enforcement, the United States’ position that such obstruction is unlawful runs directly afoul of the Tenth Amendment and the anticommandeering rule,” and that “California has the right, pursuant to the anticommandeering rule, to refrain from assisting with federal efforts.” (*Id.* at 888-891) The court concluded that SB 54 does not violate the United States’ intergovernmental immunity for similar reasons.

The provisions of this bill seeking to regulate federal agencies and their agents will undoubtedly be subject legal challenge under the doctrines of intergovernmental immunity and conflict preemption. Though the outcome of such a claim is unclear and dependent on several factors, a recent decision from the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California, which assessed the constitutionality of SB 627 (Wiener), Chapter 125, Statutes of 2025, and SB 805 (Perez), Chapter 126, Statutes of 2025, provides some useful guidance. (The *United States of America v. State of California et al* (2026) Case No. 2:25-cv-10999-CAS-AJRx.) SB 627 prohibited local and federal law enforcement officers from wearing certain facial coverings in the performance of their duties, and SB 805 required local, state, and federal officers to visibly display identification, including a name or badge number and their agency, when performing their duties. The court ultimately concluded, analyzing the statutes under the intergovernmental immunity doctrine, that:

[SB 805] does not violate the Supremacy Clause by directly regulating the federal government. Further, because it does not treat federal officers differently from state officers, [SB 805] does not discriminate against the federal government. [...] With regard to SB 627 [...] the United States has failed to demonstrate that the facial covering prohibition directly regulates the federal government. The Court finds that federal officers can perform their federal functions without wearing masks. However, because [SB 627] as presently enacted does not apply equally to all law enforcement officers in the state, it unlawfully discriminates against federal officers. Because such discrimination violates the Supremacy Clause, the Court is constrained to enjoin the facial covering prohibition. (*Id.* 19-20)

Given the court's reasoning in this case, the success of a Supremacy Clause challenge to this bill may turn on whether the less lethal munitions in question are so essential to federal law enforcement as to interfere with or control federal law enforcement functions. If they are as or less essential to such functions as the masking and identification practices at issue in *U.S v. State of California* were, because the bill does not appear to discriminate against federal law enforcement (i.e., applies equally to local, state, and federal law enforcement), it is possible that the bill would survive a Supremacy Clause challenge.

- 8) **Argument in Support:** According to the *Ella Baker Center for Human Rights*, “In June 2025, protests against the current federal administration were organized across the country, drawing over 5,000 attendees in Los Angeles alone. Though these protests started peacefully, excessive misuse of crowd control equipment contributed to injuries of both attendees and law enforcement. Flash-bang grenades, also known as stun grenades, have recently grown in popularity as crowd control devices during large-scale protests. Flash-bangs emit a loud bang and a blinding flash of light when deployed and can also throw shrapnel or rubber balls. Though classified as ‘less lethal’, these grenades pose safety risks to both the user and protestors. Eardrum rupture, lung injuries, fractures, and hemorrhaging are just a few of the reported injuries caused by flash-bangs.

“Last June, a man attending a protest in Los Angeles was hit by flash-bang shrapnel while observing, resulting in the loss of a finger. Premature deployment of flash-bangs can also seriously injure users— in 2024, an officer in New York suffered extensive injuries to his hand after a flash-bang detonated while he was holding it.

“Explosive breaching charges, or high-velocity explosive devices, are used by law enforcement to rapidly break open a door or window, usually during a raid. Use of these devices can cause serious injuries for all involved parties, ranging from hearing loss and burns to long-term traumatic brain injuries. In June 2025, federal immigration agents in Huntington Park endangered a mother and her two children when they used an explosive breaching charge to blow the windows off a home while they were inside. The suspect in question was not present and posed no imminent threat to the officers.

“California currently restricts the use of some military weaponry that is commonly used for crowd control, including tear gas and kinetic energy projectiles (KEPs) like rubber bullets and beanbag rounds, and requires proper training for their use, but has no training requirement or restrictions on the circumstances under which flash-bangs or explosive breaching devices can be used by law enforcement. Lack of proper training and reporting on the use of these devices undermines the safety of police officers and public trust of law enforcement.

“SB 937 adds flash-bang grenades to the existing restrictions on other less-lethal crowd control devices and prohibits their use, alongside explosive breaching devices, for the purposes of immigration enforcement. The bill also requires any user of a flash-bang to receive training from the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training before use. This measure is vital to maintaining both the safety of citizens exercising their right to protest and that of police officers in the field.”

- 9) **Argument in Opposition:** According to the *California Peace Officers’ Association*, “SB 937 establishes a categorical ban on the use of flashbang devices in areas where children may be present, regardless of the nature or severity of the threat. This blanket prohibition fails to account for the realities faced by law enforcement officers responding to violent, rapidly evolving situations.

“Flashbang devices are a carefully controlled tool designed to disorient and distract, often allowing officers to de-escalate situations and take individuals into custody without resorting to lethal force. By removing this option entirely—even in life-threatening circumstances—SB 937 may inadvertently increase the likelihood of more severe uses of force, placing both officers and the public at greater risk.

“SB 937 also includes provisions related to immigration enforcement, despite the existence of a well-established statutory framework governing these issues. Senate Bill 54 (2017) already provides clear and comprehensive guidance regarding local law enforcement’s role in immigration matters.

“The additional restrictions proposed in SB 937 are duplicative and risk creating confusion, inconsistency, and potential conflict with existing law. Rather than enhancing protections, these provisions may complicate compliance and divert attention from established policies that agencies have successfully implemented statewide.

“Perhaps most concerning, SB 937 imposes sweeping, categorical restrictions without allowing for the exercise of professional judgment based on the totality of the circumstances. Law enforcement officers are routinely required to make split-second decisions in high-risk environments where lives are at stake.

“Policies governing use of force must be grounded in objective reasonableness and allow for necessary discretion. By substituting inflexible prohibitions for this well-established standard, SB 937 undermines officers’ ability to respond appropriately to dynamic and dangerous situations, potentially leading to worse outcomes for all involved.

“The California Peace Officers’ Association strongly supports policies that enhance safety, accountability, and public trust. However, SB 937, as drafted, removes critical tools, duplicates existing law, and restricts the reasonable discretion officers need to protect lives.”

**10) Prior Legislation:**

- a) SB 627 (Wiener), Chapter 125, Statutes of 2025, made it a crime for law enforcement to wear facial cover in gin performance in their duties. SB 627 is currently being litigated.
- b) AB 400 (Pacheco), of the 2025-2026 Legislative Session, would have required POST to study the use of canines by law enforcement. AB 400 was vetoed by the Governor.
- c) AB 490 (Gipson), Chapter 407, Statutes of 2021, prohibits law enforcement from authorizing techniques or transport methods that involve a substantial risk of positional asphyxia.
- d) AB 48 (Gonzalez), Chapter 404, Statutes of 2021, prohibited the use of kinetic energy projectiles and chemical agents by law enforcement to disperse any assembly, protest, or demonstration except as specified.
- e) AB 1196 (Gipson), Chapter 324, Statutes of 2020, prohibited a law enforcement agency from authorizing the use of a carotid restraint or a choke hold.
- f) AB 392 (Weber), Chapter 170, Statutes of 2019, specified the circumstances in which deadly force by law enforcement is and is not appropriate.
- g) SB 230 (Caballero), Chapter 285, Statutes of 2019, required law enforcement agencies to update their training and policies with specific requirements regarding use of force, including a requirement that an officer may only use a level of force that they reasonably believe is proportional to the seriousness of the suspected offense or the reasonably perceived level of actual or threatened resistance.

**REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

**Support**

ACLU California Action  
All of US or None (HQ)  
American Friends Service Committee  
Berkeley Friends Meeting  
California Community Foundation  
California Immigrant Policy Center  
California Public Defenders Association  
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA)

Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles  
Courage California  
Ella Baker Center for Human Right  
Ella Baker Center for Human Rights  
Felony Murder Elimination Project  
Initiate Justice  
Latino Equality Alliance  
Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area  
League of Women Voters of California  
Legal Services for Prisoners With Children  
Oakland Privacy  
Policing Project At Nyu Law School  
Public Counsel  
Rubicon Programs  
San Francisco Public Defender  
Sister Warriors Freedom Coalition  
Western Center on Law & Poverty  
Western Center on Law and Poverty

**Oppose**

Association for Los Angeles Deputy Sheriffs  
Association for Los Angeles Deputy Sheriffs (ALADS)  
California Association of Highway Patrolmen  
California Narcotic Officers' Association  
California Peace Officers' Associaiton  
California Police Chiefs Association  
California State Sheriffs' Association  
Los Angeles County Professional Peace Officers Association  
Los Angeles Police Protective League  
Peace Officers Research Association of California (PORAC)

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