

Date of Hearing: August 5, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

SB 985 (Strickland) – As Amended June 10, 2026

Policy Committee:	Emergency Management	Vote:	6 - 0
	Communications and Conveyance		9 - 0

Urgency: No State Mandated Local Program: No Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill requires the Office of Emergency Services (OES) to provide quarterly reports to the Legislature on the development, implementation, and funding of the Next Generation 911 (NextGen 911) system.

Specifically, this bill requires OES to provide quarterly reports to the Legislature, until the NextGen 911 system is fully implemented and the legacy 911 system has been decommissioned, that include: (a) documentation of progress toward, as well as major challenges facing, statewide development and implementation of NextGen 911, (b) information on proposed solutions to identified challenges, such as potential costs and effects on the completion timeline, and (c) recommendations made by the State 911 Advisory Board and actions taken by OES that contradict those recommendations, including justification for such actions.

FISCAL EFFECT:

OES reports costs of approximately \$237,000 annually, through the duration of NextGen 911 implementation, for one staff position to manage production of a quarterly report (General Fund). However, OES notes that an additional budget appropriation is not needed beyond any resources allocated to implement the provision of SB 172 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review), Chapter 84, Statutes of 2026, that already requires OES, beginning October 1, 2026, to submit a quarterly report to the Legislature that contains most of the information specified by this bill, as well as additional information such as quarterly expenditures separated by certain categories and the status of public safety answering point transitions.

Regardless, since the primary purpose of this bill is to create a report, this bill qualifies for this committee's suspense file consistent with committee rules and custom and practice.

COMMENTS:

1) **Purpose.** According to the author:

This administration made big promises and spent hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars, but failed to deliver a functioning, upgraded emergency response system. Instead, many 911 callers faced busy signals or were unable to get through at all. The Fix 911 Act provides transparency and legislative oversight so this never happens again. Accountability is not optional when public safety is at stake.

This bill is supported by various first responder and public safety associations.

- 2) **NextGen 911.** NextGen 911 Internet Protocol-based technology sends 911 data from one computer to another and allows callers to share multimedia emergency communications, including text messages, and improved location data with dispatch centers, which can share this data directly with first responders. In 2021, 23 of the state's dispatch centers began transitioning voice calls from "legacy 911" copper landlines to NextGen 911, with some experiencing difficulties. In early 2025, OES paused the transition of additional dispatch centers to investigate. In November 2025, OES released an updated transition plan, under which the state will switch away from a regional approach to a statewide approach with two statewide network providers – one prime network service provider and one back-up provider.

In February 2026, the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) released a report on the ongoing implementation of the NextGen 911 system, finding that the project is significantly delayed, the cost estimate for OES's new approach is unclear, and changing the system will bring tradeoffs, especially related to system redundancy. The LAO recommended the Legislature consider halting the project to allow an independent third-party to evaluate the state's options and require OES to provide ongoing monthly project updates and quarterly fiscal reports, among other recommendations.

SB 172 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review), Chapter 84, Statutes of 2026, implements some of these LAO recommendations by requiring OES to enter into a contract with the Rand Corporation to perform an independent technical evaluation of the development and implementation of NextGen 911 and produce a final report by May 1, 2027. SB 172 also prohibits OES from issuing a request for proposals or awarding a Next Gen 911 network services contract sooner than 60 days after the final report is complete and OES has provided the Legislature with OES's response to the report. Lastly, SB 172 requires OES to submit a quarterly report to the Legislature regarding the development, implementation, and funding of the NextGen 911 system until completion of the project. This bill similarly requires OES provide quarterly NextGen 911 reports to the Legislature, comprised of mostly the same information, until the NextGen 911 system is fully implemented and the legacy system has been decommissioned.

- 3) **Related Legislation.** AB 1805 (Ransom) requires OES to submit four quarterly reports to the Legislature regarding NextGen 911 development and implementation, among other provisions to enhance state oversight over NextGen 911. AB 1805's hearing by the Senate Privacy, Digital Technologies, and Consumer Protection Committee was canceled at the request of the author.

Analysis Prepared by: Irene Ho / APPR. / (916) 319-2081