

A photograph of a rocky stream bed. The foreground is dominated by a large, smooth, layered rock formation with horizontal bands of yellow, brown, and grey. To the left, a rock is covered in vibrant green moss. The stream bed is filled with numerous small, colorful pebbles in shades of blue, red, orange, and grey. Larger, smooth, rounded rocks are scattered throughout the scene. The water is clear and shallow, reflecting the surrounding rocks and pebbles.

2024

**LEGISLATIVE
SUMMARY**

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON ELECTIONS

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December 2024

Interested Parties:

This booklet summarizes selected legislation approved by the Assembly Elections Committee during the 2024 legislative year. Measures that were approved by both houses of the Legislature are included. Legislation that did not receive final legislative approval is not.

Among the most noteworthy measures considered and approved by the Committee were bills to address the use of deceptive, digitally-created or altered images, audio, and video that could undermine election integrity; to strengthen the ethics and conflict of interest rules that apply to public officials; to protect public officials (including elections officials) and voters from threats, harassment, and intimidation; and to improve access to the electoral process. These are just some of the important policy changes approved by the Legislature this year. This booklet has a complete listing of these and other measures.

Most of the bills signed into law will take effect on January 1, 2025. Bills noted as urgency measures took effect earlier this year, as detailed in the description of those bills. The full text of legislation summarized in this pamphlet, as well as the committee analysis of those measures, may be viewed on the Internet at the California Legislative Information website (<http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/>).

I hope you will find this publication informative and useful as a reference tool. For additional information concerning Committee activities, please contact Committee staff at (916) 319-2094.

Sincerely,

Gail Pellerin

Table of Contents

- 2024 Committee Membership[Page 1](#)
- Abbreviation Reference List[Page 2](#)
- 2024 Legislative Highlights[Page 3](#)
- 2024 Legislative Summary – Assembly Bills[Page 4](#)
- 2024 Legislative Summary – Senate Bills[Page 27](#)
- Index of Chaptered Bills[Page 50](#)
- Index of Chaptered Constitutional Amendments[Page 51](#)
- Index of Vetoed Bills.....[Page 52](#)

Assembly Committee on Elections 2024 Committee Membership

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Members

Assemblymember Tom Lackey, Vice Chair, 34th District

Assemblymember Steve Bennett, 38th District

Assemblymember Marc Berman, 23rd District

Assemblymember Sabrina Cervantes, 58th District

Assemblymember Bill Essayli, 63rd District

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Key to Abbreviations Used

- AR 77.2: Bill referred to policy committee pursuant to Assembly Rule 77.2, which provides that a bill that has been substantially amended since approval by a policy committee may be re-referred to a policy committee.
- N/R: Vote is not relevant.
- SR 28.8: Bill reported to Senate Floor pursuant to Senate Rule 28.8, which provides that bills referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee that do not have significant state costs shall be reported to the Senate Floor without a hearing by the Appropriations Committee.
- SR 29.10: Bill referred to policy committee pursuant to Senate Rule 29.10, which provides that a bill that has been substantially amended since approval by a policy committee may be re-referred to a policy committee.

Assembly Committee on Elections

2024 Legislative Highlights

Addressing the Deceptive Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to Undermine Election Integrity:

California law includes various provisions criminalizing deceptive tactics that undermine election integrity or interfere with voters' ability to participate in elections. However, advancements in AI that have made it easier to produce misleading media that resembles authentic content, and the rapid dissemination of such deceptive information over social media, have raised concerns that the threat posed by manipulated media to future elections' integrity is more significant than in the past. Two new laws restrict the production and dissemination of materially deceptive and digitally modified or created content related to elections during specified periods before and after an election. Another bill requires campaign advertisements to include disclaimers when ad contents were generated or substantially altered using AI.

Strengthening Ethics & Conflict of Interest Rules:

The Legislature approved and the Governor signed legislation designed to promote compliance with the state's "pay-to-play" laws that limit campaign contributions by entities seeking licenses and permits. Another new law will restrict public officials from voting on contracts that have the potential to provide significant financial benefits to their children. Other approved measures will ensure the continued availability of ethics training for local officials and clarify that officials with the California State Bar are subject to the state's generally-applicable conflict of interest rules.

Protecting Effective and Impartial Election Administration:

In response to concerns about increasing threats toward and harassment of election workers and voters, urgency legislation created a new civil action to address improper attempts to intimidate, threaten, or coerce people engaged in election-related activities. Another urgency bill clarifies that it is a felony under state law to knowingly provide unauthorized access, or break the chain of custody, to certified voting technology, and updates state laws governing the retention and preservation of election records.

Improving Access to the Electoral Process:

New laws ensure participation by experts and the public in the development of voter education and outreach plans and extend the existence of a taskforce of elections officials and community groups that advise the Secretary of State on the implementation of California's voter registration process at the Department of Motor Vehicles. Other bills approved by the Legislature sought to improve access to the electoral process for voters with limited-English proficiency and individuals who are detained in county jails.

Assembly Committee on Elections 2024 Legislative Summary

Assembly Bills

[AB 453 \(Cervantes\)](#)

Chapter 195, Statutes of 2024
District based elections.

[Amends Section 10010 of the Elections Code, relating to elections]

Existing California law requires a local government body that is changing from at-large to district-based elections to hold at least four public hearings as part of that process before the hearing at which the governing body votes to approve or defeat the ordinance establishing district-based elections. At least two hearings must be held before any draft map or maps of the proposed boundaries of districts are drawn, and at least two hearings must be held after any draft maps are drawn and made publicly available.

Additionally, existing state law requires a local government body that is adjusting the boundaries of the electoral districts that are used to elect members of the jurisdiction’s governing body (a process commonly referred to as “redistricting”) to comply with various requirements, including a requirement to conduct a specified number of public hearings as part of that process. If a public hearing held by a local government body as part of that redistricting process is consolidated with a meeting of the body that includes other substantive items, state law requires the portion of the meeting related to redistricting to be held at a fixed time. This requirement seeks to make it easier for members of the public to participate in redistricting hearings by making the time of those discussions more predictable.

This bill requires a political subdivision that is changing from at-large to district-based elections to set the discussion of that item for a fixed time at all required public hearings related to that change.

Legislative History:

Assembly Elections.....	8-0	Senate Elections & CA.....	7-0
Assembly Local Government.....	8-0	Senate Local Government.....	7-0
Assembly Appropriations.....	14-0	Senate Appropriations.....	(SR 28.8)
Assembly Floor.....	79-0	Senate Floor.....	38-0

[AB 544 \(Bryan\)](#)

Vetoed

Voting pilot program: county jails.

[Adds and repeals Chapter 10 (commencing with Section 2750) to Division 2 of the Elections Code]

Existing law allows eligible voters held in jails to register and vote. Many counties have vote by mail programs to facilitate voting in county jails. However, voter turnout among eligible voters in county jails is very low, potentially due in part to barriers to voting and to accessing voter educational materials.

This bill would have required the Secretary of State (SOS) to operate a pilot grant program to provide grants to three specified counties – San Benito, San Mateo, and Santa Cruz – to design, implement, and evaluate a program to improve voter participation in jail facilities using appropriated funds. Specifically, this bill would have required a county elections official to coordinate with the county sheriff or jail facility administrator to provide in-person voting opportunities to eligible incarcerated persons at each jail facility. The bill also would have required grants to be issued in time to support increased participation in statewide primary and general elections from 2026 through 2028, and permitted a county to provide in-person voting for local and special elections as part of the pilot program. Participating counties would have been required to evaluate the program and report the results of the evaluation to the SOS and submit the report to the Legislature.

On September 22, 2024, Governor Newsom vetoed this bill. In his [veto message](#), the Governor stated, “While I appreciate the author's commitment to this issue, under the Elections Code, counties are able to establish these types of programs without statutory authority. Further, this bill creates a new, unfunded grant program and should be considered in the annual budget process. In partnership with the Legislature this year, my Administration has enacted a balanced budget that avoids deep program cuts to vital services and protected investments in education, health care, climate, public safety, housing, and social service programs that millions of Californians rely on. It is important to remain disciplined when considering bills with significant fiscal implications that are not included in the budget, such as this measure.”

Legislative History:

Assembly Elections.....	6-2	Senate Elections & CA.....	6-1
Assembly Appropriations.....	12-3	Senate Public Safety.....	4-1
Assembly Floor.....	53-14	Senate Appropriations.....	5-2
Assembly Concurrence.....	56-15	Senate Floor.....	30-10

AB 884 (Low & Cervantes)

Vetoed

Elections: language accessibility.

[Amends Sections 2103, 2158, 2300, 2406, 2408, 3019, 4005, 9054, 12303, 13107, 13209, 13211.7, 13307, 14105.3, 14111, 14200, 14219, and 19101 of, amends and repeals Section 13400 of, amends, repeals, and adds Section 14201 of, and adds Section 2601 to, the Elections Code]

The 15th Amendment to the United States Constitution and the federal Voting Rights Act (VRA) prohibits the denial of a citizen's right to vote on account of the voter's race or color. The VRA also requires certain jurisdictions with significant populations of voting age citizens in a language minority community to provide all voting materials in that language. Pursuant to Section 203 of the VRA, California, as well as 28 of California's 58 counties, must provide bilingual voting assistance to Spanish speakers. Additionally, nine counties must provide language assistance in at least one more language and translate all election-related materials into those languages. However, federal law defines language minorities as persons who are Asian, Native American, Alaskan Native, or of Spanish-heritage, and does not cover other language minority groups.

Separately, state law requires the Secretary of State (SOS), in each gubernatorial election year, to determine the precincts where 3% or more of voting-age residents in each county and precinct are members of a single language minority group and who lack sufficient skills in English to vote without assistance (commonly referred to as limited English proficiency (LEP) voters). For the counties and precincts identified by the SOS, elections officials must provide assistance to voters in the relevant language. Under the SOS's determination, 35 counties must provide assistance in at least one more language that is not Spanish. However, the type of assistance required under state law is more limited than under federal law, which requires translation of all election-related materials. Thus, while state law covers more languages in California than federal law, it covers a smaller volume of election materials.

This bill would have expanded language requirements and created a new state threshold that would have required the SOS to make language determinations and identify the number of LEP voters in each county and precinct by December 15, 2025 and December 15 of every subsequent year following the presidential election, including minority language groups that are not covered by federal law, such as European, Middle Eastern, or African minority groups. Additionally, this bill would have required the SOS and county elections officials to provide specified translated election materials, including forms, notices, instructions, and ballots, in the languages identified beginning January 1, 2028. This bill also would have required, at both state and county levels, an elections official to provide translated election materials and language assistance in all of the languages identified.

On September 22, 2024, Governor Newsom vetoed this bill. In his [veto message](#), the Governor stated, "While I support the author's goal of expanding language access and resources in our

elections, this bill would create new, ongoing general fund cost pressures in the tens of millions of dollars not included in the 2024 Budget Act...It is important to remain disciplined when considering bills with significant fiscal implications that are not included in the budget, such as this measure. For this reason, I cannot sign this bill.”

Legislative History:

Assembly Elections.....	7-0	Senate Elections & CA.....	7-0
Assembly Appropriations.....	12-0	Senate Appropriations.....	7-0
Assembly Floor.....	65-0	Senate Floor.....	38-1
Assembly Concurrence.....	72-0		

[AB 1170 \(Valencia\)](#)

Chapter 211, Statutes of 2024

Political Reform Act of 1974: filing requirements.

[Amends Sections 81009 and 87500.3 of, and repeals and adds Section 87500 of, the Government Code]

As part of the Political Reform Act's (PRA) comprehensive scheme to prevent conflicts of interest by state and local officers, existing law requires candidates for, and current holders of, specified elected or appointed state and local offices and designated employees of state and local agencies to file statements of economic interests (SEIs) disclosing their financial interests, including investments, real property interests, and income.

Although there is no statutory requirement for the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) to post SEIs online, in 2010, the FPPC adopted a regulation requiring it to post the SEIs of all elected officers who, in their elected capacities, are required to file their SEIs with the FPPC. As a result, the FPPC now posts SEIs for all constitutional officers, legislators, judges, members of county boards of supervisors, mayors, and city councilmembers. Additionally, the FPPC has chosen to post the SEIs of FPPC Commissioners and legislative candidates. When a person holding one of these positions files an SEI on paper, the FPPC must manually scan the SEI and redact certain information (such as addresses and signatures) before the SEI can be posted on the FPPC website.

This bill requires public officials, candidates, and specified others, including Legislative staff, for whom the FPPC is the filing officer, to file their original SEIs electronically with the FPPC using the FPPC's electronic filing system, instead of on paper. Additionally, this bill requires the FPPC, in addition to redacting a person's signature from their SEI when making it public, to redact the person's mailing address, telephone number, and email address, as specified.

Legislative History:

Assembly Elections.....	7-0	Senate Elections & CA.....	7-0
Assembly Appropriations	15-0	Senate Judiciary.....	11-0
Assembly Floor	77-0	Senate Appropriations	(SR 28.8)
Assembly Concurrence.....	76-0	Senate Floor	38-0

[AB 1784 \(Pellerin & Wendy Carrillo\)](#)

Chapter 355, Statutes of 2024

Primary elections: candidate withdrawals.

[Amends Sections 8003, 8022, 8024, 8040, 8800, 8809, 10225, 10229, 10407, 10516, and 10604 of, and adds Section 8020.5 to, the Elections Code]

Since 1913, California law has prohibited a person from filing nomination papers for more than one office at the same election. Notwithstanding this longstanding prohibition, in December 2023, a Sacramento Superior Court judge ordered the Secretary of State (SOS) to place a person on the ballot as a candidate for the 20th Congressional District in California even though that same person was appearing on the ballot as a candidate for the 32nd Assembly District. The judge's ruling concluded that the prohibition on filing nomination papers for more than one office at a primary election applies only to the process for the independent nomination of candidates. In the decision, the judge acknowledged that the ruling "may result in voter confusion and the disenfranchisement of voters if [the candidate] is ultimately elected for both offices but does not retain one." This bill clarifies that a person may not file nomination papers for more than one office at a primary election.

California law generally prohibits a person from withdrawing as a candidate at a primary election after filing a declaration of candidacy for an office at that primary election. This prohibition on candidate withdrawal, coupled with a prohibition on running for more than one office at a primary election, would prevent a candidate from being able to change plans and run for a different office once they have filed for one office at the primary election. This bill allows a person to withdraw their candidacy at a primary election up until the filing deadline, if the candidacy is for an office other than a statewide office, thereby providing a candidate with some flexibility if circumstances change such that the candidate wishes to run for a different office at the primary election.

This bill includes a provision that specifies that the position of member of a political party county central committee is not an "office," for the purpose of the prohibition on a person filing declarations of candidacy for more than one office at a primary election. This provision is consistent with a longstanding interpretation by the SOS that the position of member of a county central committee is not an "office" for the purpose of the prohibition on filing nomination papers for more than one office at a primary election.

Legislative History:

Assembly Elections.....	8-0	Senate Elections & CA.....	7-0
Assembly Appropriations.....	14-0	Senate Appropriations	(SR 28.8)
Assembly Floor	65-0	Senate Floor	40-0
Assembly Concurrence.....	62-0		

[AB 1807 \(Cervantes\)](#)
Chapter 809, Statutes of 2024
County of Riverside Citizens Redistricting.

[Amends Sections 21543, 21544, and 21545 of the Elections Code]

"Redistricting" is the process by which the boundaries of districts of a governmental body are adjusted. Redistricting generally occurs at the beginning of each decade following the decennial federal census, when new district lines are adopted based on census data so that the populations of each district of a governmental body are roughly equal. Over the course of the decade, districts can become significantly unequal in population due to differential growth rates in various locations of a jurisdiction. Redistricting is the way this inequality is corrected.

The Legislature has enacted a number of bills to require specified counties to establish redistricting commissions, including [AB 1307 \(Cervantes\), Chapter 403, Statutes of 2022](#), which creates the Riverside County Citizens Redistricting Commission (Riverside Commission). The Legislature has also passed bills to create redistricting commissions in six other counties. While the provisions of these bills creating county-level redistricting commissions are broadly similar, there have been slight variations among those bills. In particular, two bills approved by the Legislature in 2023 included new provisions that were not found in earlier redistricting commission bills. This bill incorporates some of those provisions into the state law governing the operations of the Riverside Commission.

Specifically, this bill prohibits a member of the Riverside Commission from having an *ex parte* communication (i.e., a communication that occurs outside of a public meeting) with an individual regarding redistricting matters, except as specified. Additionally, this bill prohibits commissioners from engaging in certain activities during and for a period of time after their service, including restrictions on receiving noncompetitively bid contracts and from making campaign contributions to or endorsing candidates for elective county office. Finally, this bill requires the commission to translate various redistricting materials, including outreach materials and agendas, into any language into which the commission is required to arrange for a live translation of commission hearings.

Last year, the Legislature approved and Governor Newsom signed [AB 764 \(Bryan\), Chapter 343, Statutes of 2023](#), which made various changes to state laws governing local redistricting. One provision of AB 764 adopted standardized criteria to be used when drawing districts for local

jurisdictions. This bill deletes the criteria that state law requires the Riverside Commission to use when drawing district lines, and instead requires the Riverside Commission to use the criteria from AB 764 by incorporating that criteria by reference.

Legislative History:

Assembly Elections.....	6-2	Senate Elections & CA	6-1
Assembly Local Government.....	7-1	Senate Local Government.....	5-2
Assembly Appropriations	11-4	Senate Appropriations	5-2
Assembly Floor	58-13	Senate Floor	32-8

[AB 2001 \(Gallagher\)](#)

Chapter 97, Statutes of 2024
Political Reform Act of 1974.

[Amends Sections 84504.2, 84504.4, 84616, 85400, and 91011 of, and repeals Section 82052.5 of, the Government Code]

Existing law generally requires candidates and political committees that are involved in state elections, and that raise or spend \$25,000 or more, to file their campaign disclosure reports electronically with the Secretary of State (SOS). Disclosure reports that are filed electronically with the SOS generally are available online for public display immediately after being filed. Local candidates and committees, however, are not subject to the same rules. While existing law permits a local government to require disclosure reports to be filed online or electronically for an elected officer, candidate, or committee that raises or spends more than \$1,000, many local government agencies do not have this requirement or do not have electronic filing available. Accordingly, many local campaign finance disclosure reports are filed only in paper format, or are filed by fax or email and are not immediately available for public review online when filed.

In an effort to improve access to local campaign disclosure reports, [AB 2151 \(Gallagher\), Chapter 214, Statutes of 2020](#), required a local governmental agency that receives campaign finance disclosure filings in paper format to post copies of those filings on its website within 72 hours of the filing deadline. Since AB 2151 went into effect, the Fair Political Practices Commission has received questions from local agencies about their duties in situations where the law is not clear. In particular, the deadline for a local agency to post a filing on its website is unclear when that filing is received after the filing deadline. Additionally, local agencies are unclear whether AB 2151 requires them to post filings that are erroneously filed with their agencies.

This bill expands the requirements of AB 2151 to require disclosure reports that are filed by email or by fax to be posted online. Additionally, it clarifies that when a campaign disclosure is filed late with a local agency, the local agency must post that filing online within 72 hours of receipt of the filing. Finally, this bill clarifies that a local government agency is not required to post a filing that

was required to be filed only with a different agency or person, and requires the agency to notify the filer of the error.

This bill additionally makes various minor, technical, and clarifying changes to the Political Reform Act of 1974.

Legislative History:

Assembly Elections.....	8-0	Senate Elections & CA.....	7-0
Assembly Appropriations.....	14-0	Senate Appropriations	(SR 28.8)
Assembly Floor	72-0	Senate Floor	40-0

[AB 2041 \(Bonta\)](#)

Chapter 372, Statutes of 2024

Political Reform Act of 1974: campaign funds: security expenses. Urgency.

[Amends Section 89519 of, and repeals and adds Section 89517.5 of, the Government Code]

The Political Reform Act (PRA) strictly regulates the use of campaign funds by candidates, elected officials, and others who control the expenditure of those funds and generally requires expenditures of campaign funds to be directly or reasonably related to a political, legislative, or governmental purpose. In recognition of the fact that public officials may face threats to their security due to their political, legislative, or governmental activities, current law includes a specific exception to the otherwise generally-applicable rules governing the expenditure of campaign funds. A candidate or elected official may use up to \$5,000 in campaign funds to pay, or reimburse the state, for the costs of installing and monitoring a home or office electronic security system if the following circumstances are met: 1) the candidate or elected officer has received threats to their physical safety, 2) the threats arise from their activities, duties, or status as a candidate or elected officer, and 3) the threats have been reported to and verified by law enforcement.

Unfortunately, there has been an increase in threats and harassment against public officials, their families, and their staff. In an effort to address these concerns, this bill allows campaign funds to be used for costs related to security expenses, as defined, for a potential threat to safety that arises from a candidate’s or elected officer’s activities, duties, or status as a candidate or elected officer to protect a candidate, elected officer, or the immediate family or staff of a candidate or elected officer, as specified. Additionally, this bill permits campaign funds to be spent on the reasonable costs of providing personal security, and raises the spending cap to \$10,000 in campaign funds over the lifetime of a candidate or elected officer.

This bill contains an urgency clause and took effect on September 22, 2024.

Legislative History:

Assembly Elections.....	7-0	Senate Elections & CA.....	7-0
Assembly Appropriations	13-0	Senate Appropriations	(SR 28.8)
Assembly Floor	72-0	Senate Floor	34-5
Assembly Concurrence.....	68-0		

[AB 2127 \(Berman\)](#)

Chapter 378, Statutes of 2024

Voter registration: California New Motor Voter Program.

[Amends and repeals Section 2275 of the Elections Code]

[AB 1461 \(Gonzalez\), Chapter 729, Statutes of 2015](#), known as the California New Motor Voter (NMV) program, provides for automatic voter registration at the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) of every person who has a driver’s license (DL) or state identification card and who is eligible to register to vote, unless that person opts out. Under the NMV program, a DMV customer who attests to their eligibility and does not opt out is automatically registered to vote.

Challenges with the implementation of AB 1461 and other issues related to California’s compliance with the federal National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) led to a lawsuit that was filed and settled in 2018. According to court documents, violations to the initial settlement agreement led to delays in registrations for thousands of voters. In response to those violations, the settlement agreement was updated to require further changes to the voter registration process at the DMV.

Subsequently, [AB 796 \(Berman\), Chapter 314, Statutes of 2021](#), codified various terms and best practices regarding the transmission of voter registration information from the settlement agreement to address non-compliance with the NVRA and improve functionality of the NMV program. AB 796 also required the Secretary of State (SOS) to establish a taskforce to advise the SOS and DMV on the effectiveness of the NMV program, with that taskforce scheduled to sunset on January 1, 2025. However, there are several provisions of AB 796 that will not go into effect until July 2025, after the taskforce has expired. Accordingly, this bill extends the operation of the NMV taskforce established by the SOS from January 1, 2025 to January 1, 2030.

Legislative History:

Assembly Elections.....	6-1	Senate Elections & CA.....	6-1
Assembly Appropriations	10-4	Senate Transportation	11-4
Assembly Floor	59-7	Senate Appropriations	(SR 28.8)
		Senate Floor	31-9

[AB 2355 \(Wendy Carrillo & Cervantes\)](#)

Chapter 260, Statutes of 2024

Political Reform Act of 1974: political advertisements: artificial intelligence.

[Amends Sections 84504, 84504.1, 84504.2, 84504.3, 84054.4, and 84504.5 of, and adds Section 84514 to, the Government Code]

The use of false and deceptive information in campaigns to influence election outcomes is not a new phenomenon. Laws aimed at curbing such practices and preserving the integrity of elections have a long history in California. In 1850, the First Session of the California State Legislature created penalties for election misconduct, including for "deceiving [an elector] and causing him to vote for a different person for any office than such elector desired or intended to vote for."

Advancements in technology have made it increasingly simple to produce false and misleading media that closely resembles authentic content. Moreover, platforms like social media have facilitated the rapid dissemination of deceptive media to large audiences at minimal cost. Given these developments, the potential threat posed by manipulated media to future elections' integrity may be more significant than in the past.

This bill requires a political advertisement, as specified, that is published or distributed by a political committee, to include a disclaimer if content in the ad was generated or substantially altered using artificial intelligence.

Legislative History:

Assembly Elections.....	7-1	Senate Elections & CA.....	6-0
Assembly Privacy & Con. Pro.	9-1	Senate Judiciary.....	11-0
Assembly Judiciary	9-1	Senate Appropriations	7-0
Assembly Appropriations	13-0	Senate Floor	40-0
Assembly Floor	64-0		
Assembly Concurrence.....	75-0		

[AB 2582 \(Pellerin\)](#)

Chapter 109, Statutes of 2024

Elections omnibus bill.

[Amends Sections 2119 and 10223 of, amends and repeals Section 17506 of, adds Sections 10226.3 and 10226.5 to, repeals Sections 331 and 332 of, repeals Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 3400) and Chapter 6 (commencing with Section 3500) of Division 3 of, and repeals and adds Section 10226 of, the Elections Code]

Current law requires declarations of candidacy and nomination papers to be in “substantially” the form specified in the Elections Code, however, there may be variations in the format of these

documents among local jurisdictions. The lack of uniformity in nomination documents adds complexity for county elections officials who coordinate and administer municipal elections on behalf of the cities within their jurisdiction. Accordingly, AB 2582 streamlines the local candidate filing process by requiring the Secretary of State to establish uniform candidate filing forms to be used by all elections officials, including those administering municipal elections.

Existing law establishes specific procedures for new residents and new citizens to register and vote. However, there have been many election reforms that have modernized election procedures and processes, such as conditional voter registration (CVR), also known as same day registration. According to county elections officials, voters who are new residents and new citizens generally now use same day voter registration to register and vote. Accordingly, AB 2582 repeals obsolete Elections Code sections related to new resident and new citizen voting that are no longer relevant with the enactment of CVR.

Additionally, this bill makes other minor and technical changes to provisions of the Elections Code.

Legislative History:

Assembly Elections.....	8-0	Senate Elections & CA.....	7-0
Assembly Appropriations.....	15-0	Senate Appropriations	(SR 28.8)
Assembly Floor	75-0	Senate Floor	40-0

[AB 2631 \(Mike Fong\)](#)
Chapter 201, Statutes of 2024
Local agencies: ethics training.

[Amends Section 53235 of the Government Code]

In 2005, following a series of incidents related to inappropriate uses of local tax dollars, the Legislature enacted [AB 1234 \(Salinas\), Chapter 700, Statutes of 2005](#), which established new ethics training requirements for certain local government officials, among other provisions. In October 2006, the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) announced that it had launched a free online training program, hosted on the FPPC’s website, which allowed local officials to satisfy the requirements of AB 1234. A local official who completes the online training course is provided with a certificate of completion to submit to the official’s agency as documentation that the official completed the required training. According to information from the FPPC, it began hosting this local ethics training system without additional resources, and it did not request additional personnel to support the program when it was implemented.

Last session, the Legislature approved and the Governor signed [AB 2158 \(Mike Fong\), Chapter 279, Statutes of 2022](#), which extended the local ethics training requirements of AB 1234 to all members of the governing board of a school district, county board of education, or the governing

body of a charter school, whether or not the member receives any type of compensation, salary, stipend, or reimbursement of expenses. According to the Senate Appropriations Committee analysis of that bill, it adds more than 2,000 additional agencies to those that must comply with local ethics training requirements. The AB 2158 ethics training requirements do not kick-in for most, if not all of the affected school officials until 2025. Once those requirements are fully in effect, they are expected to significantly increase demand for the FPPC’s online local ethics training program.

The FPPC has indicated that its existing ethics training system is in need of maintenance, and it was built using a system that cannot be updated to meet current technological standards. The FPPC additionally notes that the existing system cannot accommodate the added workload that will result when AB 2158 goes into effect.

This bill requires the FPPC to maintain a local ethics training course that local officials can take to satisfy their obligations to complete ethics training. Additionally, the enacted state budget for the 2024-25 fiscal year included an appropriation to the FPPC to update the FPPC’s ethics training system and to provide ongoing support for the operation of that system.

Legislative History:

Assembly Elections.....	8-0	Senate Elections & CA.....	7-0
Assembly Appropriations.....	11-0	Senate Appropriations	(SR 28.8)
Assembly Floor	70-0	Senate Floor	38-0

[AB 2642 \(Berman & Gipson\)](#)
Chapter 533, Statutes of 2024
Elections: intimidation. Urgency.

[Adds Article 5 (commencing with Section 18580) to Chapter 6 of Division 18 of the Elections Code]

Both federal and state laws seek to protect election workers and voters from bad actors. There are civil and criminal federal laws that make it illegal to intimidate, threaten or coerce someone for voting or attempting to vote, as well as federal statutes that make it illegal to intimidate, threaten or coerce people who are urging or helping others to vote. Under state law, it's a felony for a person to use or threaten to use force, violence, coercion, or intimidation against another person to vote or refrain from voting, and for a person to interfere with the officers holding an election or conducting a canvass, or a voter exercising their right to vote.

This bill supplements existing state anti-intimidation laws by providing new tools to protect election workers and voters. According to the author and sponsors, although federal law allows civil suits to be filed by voters and election workers who suffer election-related harassment and threats, this bill will provide more robust civil protections in state law that explicitly acknowledge

that both election workers and voters are covered. Specifically, this bill prohibits a person from intimidating, threatening, or coercing, or attempting to intimidate, threaten, or coerce, any other person for engaging in specified election-related activities, and authorizes an aggrieved person, an officer holding an election or conducting a canvass, or the Attorney General (AG) to file a civil action to enforce those prohibitions.

Additionally, this bill allows a victim to sue for monetary damages and recover reasonable attorney’s fees, expert fees, and litigation expenses. Moreover, this bill creates a presumption that a person who carries a firearm or imitation firearm around election facilities or workers is engaged in intimidation, threats, or coercion that is prohibited by this bill. This bill also allows the AG, Secretary of State, and elections officials to obtain injunctive relief to prevent voter intimidation and threats, thereby bolstering the state’s ability to protect voters and election workers before harms occur.

This bill contains an urgency clause and took effect on September 24, 2024.

Legislative History:

Assembly Elections.....	6-2	Senate Elections & CA.....	6-1
Assembly Judiciary	9-3	Senate Judiciary.....	9-2
Assembly Appropriations.....	11-4	Senate Appropriations	5-2
Assembly Floor	59-10	Senate Floor	31-8
Assembly Concurrence.....	60-13		

[AB 2655 \(Berman & Pellerin\)](#)

Chapter 261, Statutes of 2024

Defending Democracy from Deepfake Deception Act of 2024.

[Amends Section 35 of the Code of Civil Procedure, and adds Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 20510) to Division 20 of the Elections Code]

The use of false and deceptive information in campaigns to influence election outcomes is not a new phenomenon. Laws aimed at curbing such practices and preserving the integrity of elections have a long history in California. In 1850, the First Session of the California State Legislature created penalties for election misconduct, including for "deceiving [an elector] and causing him to vote for a different person for any office than such elector desired or intended to vote for."

Advancements in technology have made it increasingly simple to produce false and misleading media that closely resembles authentic content. Moreover, platforms like social media have facilitated the rapid dissemination of deceptive media to large audiences at minimal cost. Given these developments, the potential threat posed by manipulated media to future elections' integrity may be more significant than in the past.

This bill requires large online platforms, as defined, to remove materially deceptive and digitally modified or created content related to elections, or to label that content, during specified periods before and after an election, if the content is reported to the platform.

Past legislative efforts have addressed concerns about manipulated media's use to deceive voters during elections. Those laws, however, are limited, and are designed primarily to target the harms to *candidates* that may result from the distribution of manipulated media of those candidates. In contrast, this bill aims to regulate materially deceptive and digitally altered media depicting not only candidates, but also elections officials and elected officials who are not candidates. Additionally, this bill targets media that portrays elections materials and equipment in materially deceptive ways. The author and supporters of this bill believe that these provisions will safeguard against deceitful media that could undermine trust in the electoral process.

Legislative History:

Assembly Elections.....	6-1	Senate Elections & CA.....	6-1
Assembly Judiciary.....	9-0	Senate Judiciary.....	9-2
Assembly Appropriations.....	11-1	Senate Appropriations.....	5-2
Assembly Floor.....	56-1	Senate Floor.....	31-9
Assembly Concurrence.....	59-8		

[AB 2724 \(Reyes\)](#)

Vetoed

High school pupils: voter registration.

[Amends Section 49041 of, and adds Section 51225.85 to, the Education Code]

In 2009, the Legislature approved and the Governor signed [AB 30 \(Price\), Chapter 364, Statutes of 2009](#), which allowed a person who is 17-years of age to pre-register to vote, provided the person otherwise meets all eligibility requirements. [SB 113 \(Jackson\), Chapter 619, Statutes of 2014](#), lowered the age at which a person can pre-register to 16-years-old. The implementation of these policies was contingent upon the deployment of a new statewide voter registration database (VoteCal). In September 2016, the Secretary of State certified VoteCal, thereby rendering these policies effective. This bill would have required, commencing with the 2026-27 school year, the governing board of a school district, a county board of education, a state special school, and the governing body of a charter school, to ensure that pupils receive, at least once before the pupil completes grade 11, information on how to properly pre-register to vote.

On September 27, 2024, Governor Newsom vetoed this bill. In his [veto message](#), the Governor stated, “While I support the author's goal of encouraging young people to pre-register to vote and applaud the work of the bill's sponsors, I have concerns about creating an additional school mandate for this purpose at this time. Schools already have the ability to fulfill the requirements

of this bill without creating a new mandate. In California, we strive to make registering and pre-registering to vote as streamlined as possible for all citizens.”

Legislative History:

Assembly Education	6-0	Senate Education	5-0
Assembly Elections.....	8-0	Senate Elections & CA	6-1
Assembly Appropriations.....	13-1	Senate Appropriations	5-2
Assembly Floor	66-2	Senate Floor	31-8
Assembly Concurrence.....	71-2		

[AB 2803 \(Valencia\)](#)

Chapter 576, Statutes of 2024

Campaign expenditures: criminal convictions: fees and costs.

[Amends Sections 89513 and 89514 of the Government Code]

The Political Reform Act (PRA) strictly regulates the use of campaign funds, and contributions deposited into a campaign account are deemed to be held in trust for expenses associated with the election of a candidate or for expenses associated with holding office. PRA provisions restricting the "personal use" of campaign funds are designed to prevent candidates, elected officials, and others who control the expenditures of campaign funds from benefiting privately from their campaign activities. Therefore, existing law requires expenditures of campaign funds to be reasonably related to a political, legislative, or governmental purpose, or directly related to a political, legislative, or governmental purpose in situations where the expenditure confers a substantial personal benefit on any individual with authority to approve the expenditure of campaign funds. A substantial personal benefit means an expenditure of campaign funds which results in a direct personal benefit with a value of more than \$200.

Additionally, the PRA generally provides that attorney's fees and other costs related to administrative, civil, or criminal litigation may be paid with campaign funds if the litigation arises directly out of a candidate's or elected officer's activities, duties, or status as a candidate or elected officer, including an action to halt defamation, defense of an action to halt defamation, defense of an action brought for a violation of state or local campaign, disclosure, or election laws, litigation to secure a place on the ballot, or an election recount. The PRA additionally allows state and local candidates and elective officers to establish a separate account (a legal defense account) to defray attorney's fees and other related legal costs incurred if they are subject to civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings arising directly out of the conduct of an election campaign, the electoral process, or the performance of their governmental activities and duties. However, campaign funds may not be used to pay for fines, penalties, judgments, or settlements relating to an improper use of campaign funds.

[SB 71 \(Leyva\), Chapter 564, Statutes of 2019](#), further restricted the use of campaign funds by requiring a candidate or elected officer to reimburse any campaign funds or legal defense funds for legal expenses related to a claim of sexual assault, sexual abuse, or sexual harassment against the candidate or officer if the candidate or officer is held liable for the violation. Additionally, SB 71 prohibits the use of campaign funds or legal defense funds to pay penalties or settlements related to a claim of sexual assault, sexual abuse, or sexual harassment by a candidate or elected officer.

This bill prohibits a candidate or elected officer from using campaign funds to pay for or reimburse a fine, penalty, judgement, settlement, or attorney's fees and other legal costs in connection with litigation that results in a felony conviction involving fraud, or a conviction for a felony involving certain public trust crimes, as specified.

Legislative History:

Assembly Elections.....	8-0	Senate Elections & CA	7-0
Assembly Appropriations	15-0	Senate Appropriations	(SR 28.8)
Assembly Floor	71-0	Senate Floor	40-0
Assembly Concurrence.....	71-1		

[AB 2839 \(Pellerin & Berman\)](#)

Chapter 262, Statutes of 2024

Elections: deceptive media in advertisements. Urgency.

[Amends Section 35 of the Code of Civil Procedure, and adds Section 20012 to the Elections Code]

The use of false and deceptive information in campaigns to influence election outcomes is not a new phenomenon. Laws aimed at curbing such practices and preserving the integrity of elections have a long history in California. In 1850, the First Session of the California State Legislature created penalties for election misconduct, including for "deceiving [an elector] and causing him to vote for a different person for any office than such elector desired or intended to vote for."

Advancements in technology have made it increasingly simple to produce false and misleading media that closely resembles authentic content. Moreover, platforms like social media have facilitated the rapid dissemination of deceptive media to large audiences at minimal cost. Given these developments, the potential threat posed by manipulated media to future elections' integrity may be more significant than in the past.

This bill prohibits the distribution of campaign advertisements and other election communications that contain media that has been digitally altered in a deceptive way, except as specified. This bill additionally allows a court to issue injunctive relief prohibiting the distribution

of such content, and to award general or special damages against a person that distributed the content, except as specified.

This bill contains an urgency clause and took effect on September 17, 2024. On October 2, 2024, a federal district court issued a preliminary injunction that enjoined most of the provisions of AB 2839 from enforcement. At the time of the preparation of this report, that injunction remains in effect.

Legislative History:

Assembly Elections.....	6-1	Senate Elections & CA.....	6-0
Assembly Judiciary	8-2	Senate Judiciary.....	10-1
Assembly Appropriations	11-3	Senate Appropriations	5-2
Assembly Floor	59-4	Senate Floor	32-6
Assembly Concurrence.....	63-8		

[AB 2951 \(Cervantes & Low\)](#)
Chapter 424, Statutes of 2024
Voter registration: cancellation.

[Amends, repeals, and adds Section 2201 to the Elections Code]

In 2002, the federal government enacted the federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA) to improve the administration of federal elections. Among other provisions, HAVA required every state to implement a statewide voter registration database, which serves as the official list of eligible voters for any federal election held within the state. California’s database—known as VoteCal—was fully deployed in 2016.

Although VoteCal maintains official voter registration information for voters in all 58 California counties, each county elections official is responsible for maintaining the registrations of voters who are registered in that official’s county.

[AB 2841 \(Low\), Chapter 807, Statutes of 2022](#), required county elections officials to notify a voter by mail between 15 and 30 days before canceling that person’s voter registration for one of four specified reasons (mental incompetency, felony imprisonment, death, and certain changes of address). The author and proponents of AB 2841 argued that these pre-cancellation notices would help protect against erroneous cancellations due to faulty data or false matches between different agencies’ records. AB 2841 had a delayed implementation date, and went into effect at the beginning of this year.

In January of this year, the Secretary of State (SOS) sent a memorandum to county elections officials outlining the process for voter registration cancellations under AB 2841. In that memo, the SOS noted that VoteCal cancels a voter’s registration automatically when it is determined

that there is a match between death records and a registration record in VoteCal. Accordingly, until changes are made to VoteCal, counties may be unable to send a cancellation notice to the voter *before* that cancellation occurs. Instead, the memo indicated that until VoteCal is modified, counties would need to send a *post-cancellation* notice rather than sending a notice 15 to 30 days before the cancellation of the registration.

This bill permits a county elections official, in cases where a voter has died, to send the notices mandated by AB 2841 either 15 to 30 days *before* canceling the voter’s registration, or up to 15 days *after* canceling the registration. This “before or after” option will be available to counties from January 1, 2025, to June 30, 2025, after which time the notices would be required to be sent prior to cancellation.

Legislative History:

Assembly Elections.....	N/R	Senate Elections & CA.....	6-1
Assembly Appropriations.....	N/R	Senate Appropriations.....	(SR 28.8)
Assembly Floor.....	N/R	Senate Floor.....	31-8
Assembly Elections (AR 77.2).....	8-0		
Assembly Concurrence.....	73-0		

[AB 3123 \(Jones-Sawyer\)](#)

Chapter 755, Statutes of 2024

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority: board code of conduct: lobbying rules.

[Amends Sections 130051.18, 130600, 130605, 130610, 130615, 130620, 130625, 130635, 130640, 130655, 130660, 130675, 130680, 130685, 130705, 130710, 130715, 130720, 130725, and 130730 of, adds Section 130607 to, repeals Sections 130665, 130690, and 130700 of, and repeals and adds Sections 130051.17, 130051.20, and 130670 of, the Public Utilities Code]

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LA Metro) is a public agency governed by a 14-member board that is responsible for planning, building, and operating a public transportation system in Los Angeles County. LA Metro was created in 1992 through the consolidation of the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission and the Southern California Rapid Transit District. Among other provisions, the legislation creating LA Metro included a requirement for the board to adopt an ordinance that limited the acceptance of gifts by LA Metro officials. The language of that requirement was similar to restrictions found in the Political Reform Act (PRA) that apply generally to the acceptance of gifts by any public official, including by members and employees of local agencies like LA Metro. Because the provisions of the PRA also apply to LA Metro, members and employees of LA Metro are subject to two different sets of rules governing the acceptance of gifts—those found in the PRA, and the unique gift rules found in the Public Utilities Code that apply only to LA Metro. While these rules are similar, they are not identical, potentially creating confusion and challenges for compliance.

The bills creating LA Metro also required the board to adopt an ordinance regulating lobbying of LA Metro, and provided a general framework for that ordinance. That framework appears to be loosely based on rules found in the PRA that govern lobbying at the state level, though it applies to lower levels of activity and to more indirect methods of lobbying than the PRA’s regulation of lobbying at the state level.

In 1997, concerns about the operations of LA Metro and failures to reform its practices and procedures led to several bills being introduced to address problems and deficiencies in the agency. [SB 89 \(Hayden\), Chapter 657, Statutes of 1997](#), restricted entities that sought or entered into contracts with LA Metro from making campaign contributions of more than \$10 to LA Metro board members, employees, and their immediate families. SB 89 also prohibited former LA Metro board members and employees from accepting employment with any entity that was awarded specified contracts.

The restrictions on campaign contributions by LA Metro contractors that were contained in SB 89 appear to have been modeled after a provision of the PRA that is commonly known as the “Levine Act.”

Also in 1997, the Legislature enacted [AB 584 \(Villaraigosa\), Chapter 900, Statutes of 1997](#), which required LA Metro to appoint an inspector general and established a code of conduct for LA Metro. Among other provisions, AB 584 included even more rules restricting gifts to LA Metro board members and their staff, restricted honoraria to board members and their staff, and prohibited board members and their staff from participating in LA Metro decisions in which they know or have reason to know that they have a financial interest.

This bill streamlines provisions of law governing the operations of LA Metro, aligning those provisions to more closely mirror rules established by the PRA.

Legislative History:

Assembly Transportation	11-2	Senate Transportation	12-3
Assembly Elections	6-0	Senate Elections & CA	6-1
Assembly Appropriations	11-4	Senate Appropriations	(SR 28.8)
Assembly Floor	57-10	Senate Floor	26-11
Assembly Concurrence.....	50-14		

[AB 3184 \(Berman\)](#)

Chapter 437, Statutes of 2024

Elections: signature verification statements, unsigned ballot identification statements, and reports of ballot rejections. Urgency.

[Amends Sections 2194, 3019, and 15377 of, and adds and repeals Chapter 4.5 (commencing with Section 15390) of Division 15 of, the Elections Code]

Under California law, a vote by mail (VBM) ballot must be verified by the elections official before it can be counted. That verification includes a comparison of the signature on the ballot identification envelope with signatures that are part of the voter’s registration record to confirm that the voter who was issued the VBM ballot is the voter who completed and returned the ballot.

It is not uncommon for a VBM ballot to be returned in an envelope that is missing the voter’s signature or with a signature that doesn’t compare to signatures in the voter’s record. In the last several years, the Legislature has taken a number of steps to reduce the number of VBM ballots that are rejected for these reasons.

Notably, [AB 477 \(Mullin\), Chapter 726, Statutes of 2015](#) and [SB 759 \(McGuire\), Chapter 446, Statutes of 2018](#), created processes for a voter to verify their VBM ballot if the voter failed to sign the VBM ballot return envelope, or if the signature on that envelope did not compare to the signatures in the voter’s registration record. These processes are commonly referred to as “cure processes,” and the forms used by voters to verify their ballots as a part of these processes are commonly referred to as “cure forms.” Existing law provides that a voter must be permitted to complete either cure process until at least 5 p.m. two days prior to election certification.

Elections officials are not required to certify election results on a specific day, but instead must certify results no later than a specified deadline. As a result, the deadline for a voter to complete these cure processes varies depending on when the county where the voter is registered certifies its election results.

For this year’s presidential general election only, this bill provides a uniform certification deadline—and a uniform deadline for voters to complete the cure process—in all California counties. Specifically, this bill prohibits counties from certifying this year’s general election before the 28th day after the election, except as specified, and requires all counties to allow voters to cure problems with their VBM ballots until the 26th day after the election.

This bill also deletes a provision of existing law that requires the Secretary of State (SOS) to publish a report on the SOS’s website for local elections that contains the number of rejected VBM ballots and the reasons for those rejections, and makes various minor, technical, and clarifying changes to provisions state law related to the VBM ballot cure processes.

This bill contains an urgency clause and took effect on September 22, 2024.

Legislative History:

Assembly Elections.....	8-0	Senate Elections & CA.....	7-0
Assembly Appropriations.....	15-0	Senate Appropriations.....	(SR 28.8)
Assembly Floor.....	71-0	Senate Elections & CA (SR 29.10).....	5-0
Assembly Elections (AR 77.2).....	8-0	Senate Floor.....	31-0
Assembly Concurrence.....	76-0		

[AB 3197 \(Lackey\)](#)

Chapter 120, Statutes of 2024
Elections.

[Amends Sections 100 and 13307 of the Elections Code]

In an effort to provide candidates for local elective office with a lower-cost option for distributing candidate statements to voters, [AB 2010 \(Ridley-Thomas\), Chapter 128, Statutes of 2016](#), permits local agencies to allow candidates for local elective office to submit candidate statements that are electronically distributed, but are not included in the voter information guides that are mailed to voters. AB 2010 provided that candidates would be permitted to submit candidate statements for electronic distribution only if the governing body of the local agency for which the election was held permitted such distribution.

In many cases, however, local agencies do not conduct their own elections. Instead, it is relatively common for county elections officials to conduct elections on behalf of other local jurisdictions, including cities, school districts, and special districts. The requirement that the governing body of a local agency must first authorize electronic candidate statements before that can be offered to candidates as an option, however, can create inconsistencies when a county elections official conducts elections for multiple other jurisdictions at the same time. To create greater consistency and provide greater access by candidates to electronically distributed candidate statements, this bill deletes the requirement that the governing body must authorize candidates for elective office in the agency to submit candidates' statements for the purpose of electronic distribution.

Existing law requires the gathering of signatures from a specified number of registered voters on election petitions and papers for various reasons, including the nomination of certain candidates, the qualification of ballot measures, and the qualification of political parties. The signatures on those petitions and papers must be verified by the elections official, who compares the signatures on the petitions and papers to the signatures that are part of the voter registration records for the voters who purportedly signed the petition or paper. While petitions related to city elections are submitted to the city elections official (generally the city clerk), county elections officials generally perform verification of signatures on election petitions and papers since the county elections officials are responsible for maintaining voter registration rolls, and thus are the keeper of the records needed to verify signatures. This bill allows a county elections official to require

the use of a standardized form for all elections petitions and papers circulated in the county related to elections for local government, as specified.

Legislative History:

Assembly Elections.....	8-0	Senate Elections & CA.....	7-0
Assembly Floor	72-0	Senate Floor	39-0
Assembly Concurrence.....	75-0		

[AB 3284 \(Committee on Elections\)](#)

Chapter 854, Statutes of 2024

Elections omnibus bill.

[Amends Sections 2166.7, 2227, 2269, 7204, 9170, 10703, and 21594 of, and repeals Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 20301) of Division 20 of, the Elections Code]

Existing law generally limits access to voter registration records, but there are a number of programs that provide a greater level of confidentiality for certain voters’ registration records. [SB 1131 \(Newman\), Chapter 554, Statutes of 2022](#), created one such program for election workers who face life threatening circumstances. This bill adds cross-references to that new voter registration confidentiality program in various sections of the Elections Code.

Subdivision (c) of Section 7204 of the Elections Code established rules governing the election of county central committee members for the Democratic Party in the City and County of San Francisco that were in effect only for the June 2012 statewide primary election. This bill repeals that inoperative language.

Subdivision (c) of Section 10703 of the Elections Code allowed certain special elections to be conducted as all-mailed ballot elections pursuant to either of two different pilot projects that ended on January 1, 2021. Because those pilot projects have ended and are no longer a part of the Elections Code, subdivision (c) of Section 10703 of the Elections Code is obsolete. This bill repeals that obsolete language.

Until 1996, the Elections Code included provisions that limited the use of surplus campaign funds. Those provisions, however, were repealed by the voters through the passage of Proposition 208 at the November 5, 1996, statewide general election. Another provision of law that remains in the Elections Code—Section 20301—specifies that the repealed provisions related to the use of surplus campaign funds shall not be construed to impose reporting obligations or to apply to the expenditure of campaign funds in conjunction with pending litigation. That provision is obsolete in light of the fact that the section of law to which it refers has been repealed. This bill repeals that obsolete language.

Various provisions of the Elections Code contain erroneous or outdated cross-references to other provisions of state law. This bill corrects those cross-references.

Legislative History:

Assembly Elections.....	8-0	Senate Elections & CA.....	7-0
Assembly Floor.....	73-0	Senate Floor.....	40-0
Assembly Concurrence.....	76-0		

Senate Bills

[SB 299 \(Limón & Menjivar\)](#)

Vetoed

Voter registration: California New Motor Voter Program.

[Amends Sections 2262, 2265, 2267, 2274, and 2276 of, and adds Section 2265.1 to, the Elections Code]

[AB 1461 \(Gonzalez\), Chapter 729, Statutes of 2015](#), known as the California New Motor Voter (NMV) program, provides for automatic voter registration at the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) of every person who has a driver's license (DL) or state identification card and who is eligible to register to vote, unless that person opts out. Under the NMV program, a DMV customer who attests to their eligibility and does not opt out is automatically registered to vote. The NMV program became operative in April 2018.

This bill would have made significant modifications to the NMV program by applying different program filters that determine how the DMV interacts with each applicant. Specifically, SB 299 would have created a non-citizen filter that would have prevented a person from being offered the opportunity to register to vote if the person provided the DMV with a document that demonstrates the person is not a citizen. Additionally, this bill would have required the NMV program to use a voter registration status filter through which an individual's current voter registration status (registered or not registered) would determine how the individual moves through the NMV program. This bill additionally would have authorized the Secretary of State (SOS) to promulgate regulations to establish a list of individuals that are preapproved for voter registration from the list of individuals who were eligible to register to vote but chose not to do so through the NMV program, if certain conditions were met.

On September 29, 2024, Governor Newsom vetoed this bill. In his [veto message](#), the Governor stated, "While the goal of streamlining voter registration is commendable, this bill raises several concerns. It would place the DMV in the role of determining voter eligibility, a function more suitable for elections officials. Additionally, the proposed system would capture those who have already declined to register, a decision that should be respected as a matter of personal prerogative.

"Furthermore, the introduction of a 'pre-registration' system would require costly and complex changes to the current Motor Voter system. These changes would result in significant ongoing costs, estimated in the tens of millions, which are not accounted for in the 2024 Budget Act... It is important to remain disciplined when considering bills with significant fiscal implications that are not included in the budget, such as this measure. For these reasons, I cannot sign this bill."

Legislative History:

Senate Health.....	N/R	Assembly Elections.....	6-0
Senate Appropriations	N/R	Assembly Transportation	10-4
Senate Floor	N/R	Assembly Appropriations	11-3
Senate Elections & CA (SR 29.10).....	5-1	Assembly Floor	56-12
Senate Concurrence	29-9		

[SB 863 \(Allen\)](#)

Chapter 449, Statutes of 2024
Measures proposed by the Legislature.

[Amends Section 9040 of the Elections Code]

There are several situations in which the Legislature can propose measures that will appear on the statewide ballot for voters’ consideration. The two most common types of legislative ballot measures are constitutional amendments that are proposed by the Legislature, and bills that propose to authorize the issuance of general obligation bonds.

When a legislative ballot measure qualifies to appear on the ballot, Section 9040 of the Elections Code generally requires the measure to appear on the first statewide election that occurs at least 131 days after the adoption of the proposal by the Legislature. Because that law governing the timing of when legislative ballot measures are submitted to voters is found in state statute, that law can also be waived or modified for a specific legislative ballot measure through the enactment of another statute.

In the case of a legislative ballot measure that is put on the ballot through the passage of a bill that must be signed by the Governor—like a bill proposing a general obligation bond—the text of the bill itself may also include language that overrides Section 9040 of the Elections Code and provides for the measure to be submitted to the voters at an election other than the one where it would appear if Section 9040 applied.

Certain legislative ballot measures, however, are placed on the ballot using mechanisms other than bills. When the Legislature proposes a constitutional amendment, for example, it does so through the passage of a resolution (referred to as an Assembly Constitutional Amendment or Senate Constitutional Amendment, depending on the house in which it was introduced). Because a state statute (like Elections Code Section 9040) can only be amended or waived through the enactment of another statute, a resolution that places a proposed constitutional amendment on the ballot cannot also override the provisions of Elections Code Section 9040 that specify the election at which the voters will consider that measure.

As a result, when the Legislature desires to place a specific constitutional amendment on a ballot at an election other than the election where the measure would appear under Section 9040 of

the Elections Code, it generally has done so by passing a separate bill that specifies the election at which that measure will appear.

This bill allows the Legislature to designate the statewide election at which a legislative constitutional amendment or constitutional revision will appear on the ballot in the text of the legislative measure that places that constitutional amendment or revision on the ballot, provided that the designated election is at least 131 days away.

Legislative History:

Senate Elections & CA.....	6-1	Assembly Elections.....	6-2
Senate Floor	30-7	Assembly Floor	55-16
Senate Concurrence	31-9		

[SB 904 \(Dodd\)](#)

Chapter 866, Statutes of 2024
Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit District.

[Amends Section 20355.1 of the Public Contract Code, and amends Sections 105012, 105096, 105104, 105115, 105181, and 105336 of, adds Section 105045 to, and repeals Section 105105 of, the Public Utilities Code]

Existing state law provides for an initiative process in some, but not all, special districts. Specifically, Section 9300 of the Elections Code provides that ordinances may be enacted in special districts through the initiative process, except in districts that meet one of five enumerated conditions. One of those conditions is that the initiative process is not available in a district “formed under a law that does not provide a procedure for elections.” State law does not further elaborate on what it means for a law to provide “a procedure for elections,” nor is there relevant case law that interprets the meaning of that phrase.

The Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit District (SMART) is a special district established in state law that is authorized to provide passenger rail service in the counties of Sonoma and Marin. SMART is governed by a board of directors consisting of 12 appointed members. The state law that provided for the formation of SMART specifies a number of actions that require the approval of SMART’s voters, including imposing a retail transactions and use tax, incurring bonded indebtedness under certain circumstances, and dissolving the district. It could be argued that the statutory provisions for SMART voters to consider those questions are “a procedure for elections,” and that district initiatives in SMART are thereby authorized by Section 9300 of the Elections Code. On the other hand, the governing board of SMART is appointed, rather than elected, so the district does not hold regularly-scheduled district elections for the purpose of electing governing board members. This fact may support an argument that the law governing SMART does *not* provide a procedure for elections.

This bill expressly specifies that special taxes may be imposed through the initiative process in SMART if the proposed initiative measure complies with specified requirements. This bill additionally revises SMART procurement rules and makes other changes to state law governing SMART operations.

Legislative History:

Senate Transportation	11-4	Assembly Transportation	11-3
Senate Elections & CA	6-1	Assembly Elections	6-2
Senate Appropriations	(SR 28.8)	Assembly Appropriations	11-3
Senate Floor	29-8	Assembly Floor	56-15
Senate Concurrence	31-9		

[SB 907 \(Newman\)](#)

Vetoed

Orange County Board of Education: members.

[Adds Sections 1000.5 and 1007.5 to the Education Code]

The Orange County Board of Education (OCBOE) provides educational opportunities for Orange County students, promotes student achievement, and offers leadership, services, and resources for Orange County school districts, educators, and the community. Under current law a county board of education must have five or seven members. Accordingly, the OCBOE currently consists of five members who represent the five trustee areas of the county. A county committee on school district organization (county committee) can propose changes to the number of board members or trustee area boundaries upon request by the county board of education. If the county committee wants to change the number of board members, a public hearing is held, followed by a vote. If the resolution is approved, it becomes an order of election presented to the county's electors at the next board of education election.

This bill would have increased the size of the OCBOE to seven members, instead of five members, beginning after the next redistricting process following the 2030 decennial federal census. Additionally, this bill would have required elections for the OCBOE to be consolidated with the statewide general election in November of each even-numbered year, beginning in 2026. The term of office of all incumbent officers would have been extended accordingly, as necessary, until the successor takes office after the new election date.

On September 28, 2024, Governor Newsom vetoed this bill. In his [veto message](#), the Governor stated that “I appreciate the author's intent to increase representation on the OCBOE. However, there are local processes for altering the number of members on a county board of education and changing when local elections are held. State circumvention of these local procedures, especially with respect to a single county board of education, should be avoided absent

extraordinary circumstances. Unfortunately, I am not convinced those circumstances exist in the context of this legislation. For these reasons, I cannot sign this bill.”

Legislative History:

Senate Education	5-2	Assembly Elections.....	6-2
Senate Elections & CA	5-1	Assembly Education	5-2
Senate Appropriations	5-2	Assembly Appropriations	11-3
Senate Floor	30-9	Assembly Floor	58-17
Senate Concurrence	29-6		

[SB 948 \(Senator Limón & Assemblymember Zbur\)](#)

Chapter 125, Statutes of 2024

Political Reform Act of 1974: contribution limitations.

[Amends Sections 85317 and 85318 of the Government Code]

Under existing state law, when a candidate for elective state or local office receives campaign contributions, those contributions generally must be deposited into a campaign contribution account that has been established for the specific election at which the candidate is running and for the specific office that the candidate is seeking.

If a candidate receives a campaign contribution in connection with seeking an office at a specific election, but does not spend the funds from that contribution on that specific campaign, state law generally allows the transfer of those campaign funds to another campaign committee, with certain restrictions. If the candidate wants to transfer funds for use in a subsequent election for the *same* elective office, state law allows the candidate to “carry over” the funds from one account to the next without having to attribute the funds that are transferred to specific contributors. State law also allows a candidate to transfer funds to a controlled committee for a future election to a *different* elective office, but requires the candidate, when transferring the funds, to attribute the transferred contributions to specific contributors. Additionally, any transferred contributions in that situation are subject to any relevant contribution limits for the elective office that the candidate is seeking.

While the rules governing transfers of campaign funds between campaign committees for the same candidate are clear in certain circumstances, the rules are less clear in other situations. In particular, the rules for transferring campaign contributions that were raised by a candidate for a *general* election are unclear in some circumstances if the candidate does not appear on the ballot at that general election.

State law allows a candidate to receive campaign contributions for a general election for an office before the primary election occurs, but only if the candidate sets aside those contributions and uses them only for the general election. If a candidate who has raised money for a general

election is defeated in the primary election or withdraws from the general election, then the general election contributions must be refunded to the contributors, as specified.

If a candidate does not appear on the general election ballot because the candidate was elected outright in the primary election, however, the rules that govern the use of the funds raised by the candidate for that general election are less clear. Similarly, if a candidate does not appear on the general election ballot because the candidate withdrew before the *primary* election (and thus, the candidate neither was defeated at the primary election nor withdrew from the general election), the rules governing the use of campaign funds raised for the general election are unclear.

This bill specifies that a candidate who receives campaign contributions for an election but doesn't file to run in the primary election, or who wins an election outright in the primary election without the need for a general election, can transfer campaign funds raised for the general election to a committee for a subsequent election. When transferring contributions under this bill, the candidate would be required to attribute those contributions to specific contributors, and the contributions would be subject to any relevant contribution limits.

Legislative History:

Senate Elections & CA	7-0	Assembly Elections.....	8-0
Senate Floor	37-0	Assembly Floor	76-0
Senate Concurrence	40-0		

[SB 977 \(Laird\)](#)

Chapter 450, Statutes of 2024

County of San Luis Obispo Redistricting Commission.

[Adds Chapter 6.2 (commencing with Section 21520) to Division 21 of the Elections Code]

Prior to 2017, state law generally permitted a county or a city to create an advisory redistricting commission, but did not expressly permit local jurisdictions to create commissions that had the authority to establish district boundaries. Instead, the authority to establish district boundaries for a local jurisdiction generally was held by the governing body of that jurisdiction.

In 2016, however, the Legislature passed and the Governor signed [SB 1108 \(Allen\), Chapter 784, Statutes of 2016](#), which permitted a county or a general law city to establish a redistricting commission, subject to certain conditions. Separately, the Legislature has enacted a number of bills to require specified counties to establish redistricting commissions. [SB 958 \(Lara\), Chapter 781, Statutes of 2016](#), required the establishment of a Citizens Redistricting Commission in Los Angeles County. Similarly, [AB 801 \(Weber\), Chapter 711, Statutes of 2017](#), required the establishment of a Citizens Redistricting Commission in San Diego County. These commissions

were in place for redistricting following the 2020 federal decennial census, and drew the district lines for those counties’ supervisorial districts.

Since the 2020 redistricting process, the Legislature has enacted bills to create redistricting commissions in Riverside County ([AB 1307 \(Cervantes\), Chapter 403, Statutes of 2022](#)), Fresno County ([AB 2030 \(Arambula\), Chapter 407, Statutes of 2022](#)), Kern County ([AB 2494 \(Salas\), Chapter 411, Statutes of 2022](#)), Orange County ([AB 34 \(Valencia\), Chapter 315, Statutes of 2023](#)), and Sacramento County ([SB 314 \(Ashby\), Chapter 389, Statutes of 2023](#)). All of those commissions will be created for the next redistricting process following the 2030 census.

This bill creates a citizens redistricting commission in San Luis Obispo County that is similar to the ones created in other counties through prior legislation, but with some differences from those commissions. This bill charges the San Luis Obispo County citizens redistricting commission with adjusting the boundaries of county supervisorial districts in future redistricting processes.

Legislative History:

Senate Elections & CA.....	6-1	Assembly Elections.....	6-2
Senate Local Government.....	5-2	Assembly Local Government.....	6-0
Senate Appropriations	5-2	Assembly Appropriations	11-3
Senate Floor	31-8	Assembly Floor	60-15
Senate Concurrence	31-9		

[SB 1027 \(Menjivar\)](#)

Chapter 180, Statutes of 2024

Political Reform Act of 1974: disclosures.

[Amends Sections 84101 and 84615 of the Government Code]

When the Political Reform Act (PRA) was originally enacted, members of the public who wished to view campaign disclosure statements and reports generally had to visit a government office to view or obtain copies of those documents. In 1997, however, the Legislature passed and Governor Pete Wilson signed [SB 49 \(Karnette\), Chapter 866, Statutes of 1997](#), which established the Online Disclosure Act of 1997. SB 49 required the Secretary of State (SOS) to implement an online filing and disclosure system for reports and statements required to be filed under the PRA, as specified.

While SB 49 required most of the information that is included in disclosure reports and statements filed under the PRA to be posted online, it prohibited certain street address information contained in those reports from being posted online. Additionally, due to concerns that the posting of campaign bank account number information online could lead to misuse, the PRA was amended to prohibit bank account numbers from being included with the data made available on the Internet.

One campaign disclosure statement that is required to be filed under the PRA—a statement of organization, also known as the Form 410—must be filed with the SOS by any campaign committee that receives campaign contributions of \$2,000 or more in a calendar year. Among other information, a committee’s statement of organization must include the name of the financial institution where the committee’s campaign bank account is located and the committee’s bank account number.

The Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) adopted regulations in 2022, with a delayed implementation date of January 1, 2024, that requires the statement of organization to contain the names of persons other than the committee’s treasurer who are authorized to obtain the committee’s bank records. This regulation was intended to help the FPPC and other government agencies obtain bank records of campaign committees for campaign audits and investigations when committee treasurers are unavailable or unable to provide those records. When the FPPC was considering this regulation, stakeholders expressed concern that the easy availability of the names of persons authorized to obtain committee bank records could increase the potential for fraudulent activity.

This bill provides for the redaction of a campaign committee’s banking information from disclosure reports that are made available to the public.

Legislative History:

Senate Elections & CA	7-0	Assembly Elections	8-0
Senate Judiciary.....	11-0	Assembly Judiciary	12-0
Senate Appropriations	(SR 28.8)	Assembly Appropriations	15-0
Senate Floor	39-0	Assembly Floor	72-0

[SB 1111 \(Min\)](#)

Chapter 324, Statutes of 2024

Public officers: contracts: financial interest.

[Amends, repeals, and adds Section 1091 of the Government Code]

Public officials in California are subject to two main conflict of interest laws that are intended to prevent public officials from using their official positions for personal financial benefit. The Political Reform Act (PRA) generally prohibits a public official from using the person’s official position to influence any governmental decision, as defined, in which the official has a financial interest. The PRA's conflict of interest rules also prohibit public officials from participating in decisions that have a material financial effect, as specified, on the official's spouse or dependent child.

[Government Code Section 1090](#) (Section 1090), on the other hand, applies only to contracting decisions. Section 1090 generally prohibits a public official or employee from making a contract in the person’s official capacity in which the person has a financial interest. In addition, a public body or board is prohibited from making a contract in which any member of the body or board has a financial interest, even if that member does not participate in the making of the contract. For the purposes of Section 1090, an official or employee also has an interest in the property and income of the person’s spouse.

California's existing conflict of interest laws are designed to prevent public officials from using their governmental positions to enrich themselves financially. As a result, those laws regulate situations where a public official's actions may have a direct financial impact on the official. Because actions that affect the financial interests of a public official's spouse or dependent child may have a corresponding impact on the official, existing conflict of interest laws generally recognize that the financial interests of an official's spouse or dependent child can create a conflict of interest for the official.

This bill seeks to protect against situations where a public official’s finances are not affected by the person’s official actions, but where the official’s ability to act in a disinterested manner may be called into question due to the effect that the action will have on the finances of the official’s child. Specifically, beginning in 2026, this bill requires a public officer to recuse themselves from voting on a contract made by the officer's governmental entity if the officer's child is an officer or director of, or has substantial ownership in, a party to a contract entered into by the body or board of which the officer is a member, if the child’s interest is known to the public officer.

Legislative History:

Senate Local Government.....	6-0	Assembly Elections.....	8-0
Senate Elections & CA.....	6-0	Assembly Local Government.....	6-0
Senate Appropriations	7-0	Assembly Appropriations	14-0
Senate Floor	37-0	Assembly Floor	75-0
Senate Concurrence	33-0		

[SB 1155 \(Hurtado\)](#)

Vetoed

Political Reform Act of 1974: postgovernment employment restrictions.

[Amends Section 87406 of the Government Code]

The Political Reform Act (PRA) restricts the post-governmental activities of certain former public officials. These restrictions are commonly known as a "revolving door ban." For instance, the PRA prohibits certain officials, for one year after leaving state service, from representing any other person by appearing before or communicating with, for compensation, their former agency in an attempt to influence agency decisions that involve the making of general rules (such as

regulations or legislation), or to influence certain proceedings involving a permit, license, contract, or transaction involving the sale or purchase of property or goods. The one-year ban generally serves to prevent former officials, including legislators, from taking advantage of their relationships with former colleagues and subordinates for the benefit of third parties by prohibiting former officials from having direct communications with their former agency in an attempt to influence decisions. The one-year ban applies regardless of whether a former official is registered as a lobbyist; even if a former official does not qualify as a lobbyist under the PRA, that person nonetheless can violate the revolving door ban by making appearances or communications before their former agency in the year after the person leaves office.

This bill would have established a new one year ban for a head of a state administrative agency, which includes elected state officers and appointed officials who receive a salary. Under existing law, an elected state officer is banned for one year from appearing or communicating, for compensation, before any state administrative agency in an attempt to influence agency decisions. Under this bill, elected state officers who were the head of a state administrative agency would also be banned from lobbying the Legislature for a year after leaving office. Additionally, current law prohibits a designated employee, and any officer (including an appointed officer), employee, or consultant of state administrative agency from appearing or communicating, for compensation, before the former state agency for which they worked. In the case of appointed heads of state administrative agencies, this bill additionally would have prohibited them from lobbying other state administrative agencies or the Legislature for one year after leaving office.

On September 29, 2024, Governor Newsom vetoed this bill. In his [veto message](#), the Governor stated, “This bill seeks to expand the existing ‘one-year ban,’ which prohibits certain officials from lobbying their former agency after leaving office, to include lobbying the Legislature or other state agencies. Notably, this bill would not extend these same restrictions to members of the Legislature. I am supportive of efforts to increase transparency and accountability in our governmental institutions, but we need equivalent rules and restrictions across the branches of our government. I am committed to legislation next year that includes the same revolving door requirement for members of the Administration as well as the Legislature. Absent uniform requirements, this bill falls short of its stated intent to ensure integrity in the policymaking process.”

Legislative History:

Senate Elections & CA	6-0	Assembly Elections.....	8-0
Senate Appropriations	(SR 28.8)	Assembly Appropriations	14-0
Senate Floor	39-0	Assembly Floor	77-0
Senate Concurrence	40-0		

[SB 1156 \(Hurtado\)](#)

Chapter 458, Statutes of 2024

Groundwater sustainability agencies: conflicts of interest: financial interest disclosures.

[Adds Section 87200.5 to the Government Code]

As part of the Political Reform Act’s (PRA) comprehensive scheme to prevent conflicts of interest by state and local public officials, existing law identifies certain elected and other high-level state and local officials who must file statements of economic interests (SEIs), disclosing certain information regarding income, investments, and other financial data. Similarly, candidates for those positions must file SEIs. Other state and local public officials and employees are required to file SEIs if the position they hold is designated in an agency's conflict of interest code. A position is required to be designated in an agency's conflict of interest code when the position entails the making or participation in the making of governmental decisions that may foreseeably have a material financial effect on the decision maker's financial interests.

In 2013, [AB 409 \(Quirk-Silva\), Chapter 643, Statutes of 2013](#), permitted the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) to develop and operate an online system for filing SEIs. While AB 409 permitted the FPPC to establish an electronic system for filing SEIs, it was up to each individual filer to decide whether to use that system or to file an SEI on paper.

A groundwater sustainability agency (GSA) is a public entity and its membership is typically composed of local public agencies, such as water districts. As a public entity, a GSA is required to adopt a conflict of interest code and any person participating in a decision making role at a GSA is subject to the PRA and required to file an SEI. The SEI is filed either with the county (if the GSA is in only one county) or with the FPPC (if the GSA is in multiple counties) and existing law requires that information to be disclosed to the public once it has been filed.

This bill explicitly requires members of the board of directors and the executive of a GSA to file their SEIs with the FPPC using the FPPC’s online filing system for SEIs. Additionally, the bill defines the term “executive” to mean the executive director, general manager, or other equivalent position of the GSA. Other GSA designated employees will continue to file their SEIs either with the county or with the FPPC as required.

Legislative History:

Senate Natural Resources & Water	11-0	Assembly Elections.....	8-0
Senate Elections & CA.....	7-0	Assembly Appropriations	14-0
Senate Appropriations	(SR 28.8)	Assembly Floor	75-0
Senate Floor	39-0		
Senate Concurrence	33-0		

[SB 1170 \(Menjivar\)](#)

Vetoed

Political Reform Act of 1974: campaign funds.

[Amends Section 89513 of the Government Code]

The Political Reform Act (PRA) strictly regulates the use of campaign funds, and contributions deposited into a campaign account are deemed to be held in trust for expenses associated with the election of a candidate or for expenses associated with holding office. PRA provisions restricting the "personal use" of campaign funds are designed to prevent candidates, elected officials, and others who control the expenditures of campaign funds from benefiting privately from their campaign activities. In general, the PRA requires most campaign expenditures to be reasonably related to a political, legislative, or governmental purpose. Expenditures of a candidate's or officer's campaign funds that confer a substantial personal benefit on that candidate or officer, however, must meet a higher standard, and be directly related to a political, legislative, or governmental purpose.

Existing law allows campaign funds to be used to pay for health care benefits for a campaign's employees or independent contractors, however, current law explicitly prohibits campaign funds from being used to pay for other health-related expenses, including health club dues, special dietary foods, or medical check-ups. This bill would have authorized campaign funds to be used to pay a candidate's reasonable and necessary mental health care expenses to address mental health issues that arise from campaign-related circumstances or events, as specified.

On September 22, 2024, Governor Newsom vetoed this bill. In his [veto message](#), the Governor stated, "Under current statute, the Political Reform Act prohibits the use of campaign funds for health-related expenses. This bill would create new exceptions to that prohibition and open the door for new expansions that go beyond what a reasonable donor would expect. For this reason, I cannot sign this bill."

Legislative History:

Senate Elections & CA	6-0	Assembly Elections	6-0
Senate Floor	31-8	Assembly Appropriations	11-3
Senate Concurrence	31-9	Assembly Floor	60-11

[SB 1174 \(Min\)](#)

Chapter 990, Statutes of 2024
Elections: voter identification.

[Adds Section 10005 to the Elections Code]

In California, an individual registering to vote declares under penalty of perjury that the information provided on their voter registration form is true and correct. The voter registration form includes questions related to a person's eligibility to vote, date of birth, California driver's license (DL) or identification card number, and the last four numbers of the registrant's social security number (SSN), if it is available.

Under federal law, if a first-time voter does not provide a DL or state identification number or the last four digits of their SSN when they register to vote, they must provide identification prior to being eligible to vote in a federal election. If a first-time voter is voting in person they will be asked to show a form of identification when they go to a polling location. If a first-time voter is voting by mail and did not provide a form of identification with their vote by mail (VBM) ballot, the county elections official must reach out to the voter to request and receive the required proof of identification prior to processing and counting the ballot. If the first-time voter does not provide the necessary identification, the VBM ballot will not be processed.

On October 17, 2023, the Huntington Beach city council voted to place a city charter amendment, known as Measure A, on the March 5, 2024 ballot. Measure A, in part, adds provisions to the charter stating that beginning in 2026, the city may verify the eligibility of electors by voter identification. Huntington Beach voters approved Measure A.

On April 15, 2024, the Attorney General and Secretary of State filed a lawsuit in the Orange County Superior Court against the city of Huntington Beach that alleges that Measure A "...unlawfully conflicts with and is preempted by state law" and asks the court for a permanent injunction barring the city from implementing or enforcing provisions of Measure A that permit the city to verify the eligibility of electors by voter identification.

This bill prohibits a local government, as defined, from enacting or enforcing any charter provision, ordinance, or regulation requiring a person to present identification for the purpose of voting or submitting a ballot at any polling place, vote center, or other location where ballots are cast or submitted, unless required by state or federal law.

Legislative History:

Senate Elections & CA.....	6-1	Assembly Elections.....	6-2
Senate Local Government.....	4-2	Assembly Local Government.....	7-2
Senate Floor	30-8	Assembly Floor	57-16

[SB 1181 \(Glazer\)](#)

Chapter 785, Statutes of 2024
Campaign contributions: agency officers.

[Amends Section 84308 of the Government Code]

The Levine Act, named after its author Assemblymember Mel Levine, restricts campaign contributions made to officers of state and local agencies by parties to a proceeding pending before those agencies. Enacted in 1982, the Levine Act was a response to reports that members of a state agency sought to raise money from individuals and entities that had permit requests pending before the agency. The Levine Act is unique among the provisions of the Political Reform Act (PRA) in that it is the only area in which a campaign contribution can be the basis for a disqualifying conflict of interest.

The Levine Act is narrowly drafted to apply only to proceedings involving licenses, permits, or other entitlements for use. Additionally, until recently, the Levine Act only applied to decisions made by agencies with membership that was *not* directly elected by voters.

In 2022, the Legislature passed and Governor Newsom signed [SB 1439 \(Glazer\), Chapter 848, Statutes of 2022](#), which made substantial changes to the Levine Act. Perhaps most notably, SB 1439 broadened the reach of the Levine Act by making it applicable to local agencies whose members are directly elected by the voters. As a result, since January 1, 2023, the restrictions of the Levine Act have applied to every county board of supervisors, city council, and school board in the state, along with special districts that were not previously subject to the law.

Supporters of SB 1439 argued that the changes made by that bill were important for protecting against quid pro quo corruption and its appearance in the types of governmental decisions – licensing, permitting, and contracting – that pose a high risk of pay-to-play exchanges because the impacts of those decisions are disproportionately felt by the parties that are seeking the award of those licenses, permits, and contracts.

Affected entities have raised considerable questions and concerns about the implementation of SB 1439 since it was signed into law. Separately, the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) has grappled with a number of issues in connection with the implementation of SB 1439. The FPPC has issued more than a dozen advice letters concerning the provisions of the Levine Act since the passage of SB 1439, and has conducted multiple trainings and webinars related to SB 1439 and its requirements.

This bill makes various changes to the "Levine Act," as amended by SB 1439. Notably, this bill exempts various types of proceedings from the types of actions that are subject to the Levine Act's restrictions; provides that the Levine Act's restrictions do not apply to a city attorney or county counsel who is providing legal advice to their agency, and who does not have the authority

to make a final decision in the proceeding; and extends the period of time during which an officer may return a contribution that would otherwise require disqualification under the Levine Act.

Legislative History:

Senate Elections & CA	6-0	Assembly Elections	7-0
Senate Appropriations	(SR 28.8)	Assembly Appropriations	13-0
Senate Floor	37-0	Assembly Floor	74-0
Senate Concurrence	40-0		

[SB 1243 \(Dodd\)](#)

Chapter 1017, Statutes of 2024
Campaign contributions: agency officers.

[Amends Section 84308 of the Government Code]

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This bill makes various changes to the "Levine Act," as amended by SB 1439. Notably, this bill increases the campaign contribution threshold that triggers the applicability of the Levine Act from \$250 to \$500; provides that a person is not a "participant" under the Levine Act if their financial interest in the decision results solely from an increase or decrease in membership dues; exempts various types of proceedings from the types of actions that are subject to the Levine Act's restrictions; and provides, for the purposes of the Levine Act, that contributions of an agent shall not be aggregated with contributions from a party or a participant.

Legislative History:

Senate Elections & CA	4-1	Assembly Elections.....	6-1
Senate Floor	30-2	Assembly Floor	71-0
Senate Concurrence	40-0		

[SB 1328 \(Bradford\)](#)
Chapter 605, Statutes of 2024
Elections. Urgency.

[Amends Sections 2550, 13004, 13004.5, 15209, 17301, 17302, 17305, 17306, 18564, 19201, 19205, and 19281 of, adds Section 327.5 to, and adds Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 17600) to Division 17 of, the Elections Code]

The Legislature has approved various bills to ensure California has the most rigorous and stringent voting system and voting equipment standards and approval procedures. Notably, [SB 360 \(Padilla\), Chapter 602, Statutes of 2013](#), made significant changes to procedures and criteria for the certification and approval of a voting system, required the Secretary of State (SOS) to adopt and publish voting system standards and regulations governing the use of voting systems, and required those standards to meet or exceed federal voluntary voting system guidelines (VVSG) set forth by the United States Election Assistance Commission (EAC) or its successor agency, as specified.

Accordingly, in 2014, California established its own standards – California voting system standards (CVSS) – for electronic components of voting systems which were derived from the EAC’s VVSG versions 1.1 and 2.0. The CVSS provides a set of specifications and requirements to which voting systems are required to be tested to determine if they provide all the basic functionality, accessibility, and security capabilities required of voting systems. All voting technology, including, but not limited to voting systems, electronic pollbooks, and remote

accessible vote by mail (RAVBM) systems, are required to be certified for use prior to being sold or used in any California election.

In counties that use electronic voting systems, state law requires elections officials to provide paper ballots at the polling place. State law additionally prohibits any part of a voting system from being connected to the Internet at any time, and California's voting system standards prohibit voting systems from having the capability to communicate individual votes or vote totals over public communications networks or from having wireless communications capabilities.

This bill updates, revises, and expands existing procedures and requirements related to election technology to keep pace with the evolution of voting technologies. Notably, this bill authorizes the SOS to impose additional conditions of approval as deemed necessary by the SOS for the certification of electronic poll books, ballot manufacturers and finishers, ballot on demand systems, voting systems, and RAVBM systems before their use in an election. Additionally, this bill requires a county elections official to keep paper cast vote records and certain electronic data for the same minimum number of months other election materials must be kept, and clarifies that it is a felony to knowingly provide unauthorized access, or break the chain of custody, to certified voting technology and finished or unfinished ballot cards.

This bill contains an urgency clause and took effect on September 25, 2024.

Legislative History:

Senate Elections & CA	7-0	Assembly Elections	7-1
Senate Public Safety	5-0	Assembly Public Safety.....	8-0
Senate Appropriations	7-0	Assembly Appropriations	11-0
Senate Floor	36-0	Assembly Floor	66-2
Senate Concurrence	38-1		

[SB 1337 \(Gonzalez\)](#)

Vetoed

Elections: form of petitions.

[Amends Sections 101, 104, 107, and 9020 of, and repeals and adds Section 9010 of, the Elections Code]

[SB 47 \(Allen\), Chapter 563, Statutes of 2019](#), requires individuals who are asked to sign state or local initiative, referendum, or recall petitions to be provided with information about the committee that is paying for the petition to be circulated, if any, and the top campaign contributors to that committee, as specified. Those disclosures, which must comply with various formatting and legibility requirements, are referred to as an “Official Top Funders” disclosure. SB 47 permits the Official Top Funders disclosure to appear on the petition itself, or on a separate sheet that is required to be shown to individuals who are asked to sign the petition.

The author and supporters of this bill argue that paid signature gatherers who are circulating state referendum petitions have misled voters about who is funding the campaign to overturn state law, thus necessitating changes to state law to ensure that potential petition signers are provided with accurate information about those funding signature gathering drives for state referendum measures. Accordingly, for state referendum petitions only, this bill would have required the Official Top Funders disclosure to appear on the petition itself, thereby eliminating the option for those circulating referendum petitions to provide that information on a separate document instead. This bill also would have required the Official Top Funders disclosure on state referendum petitions to be updated more frequently; while existing law generally requires the disclosure to be updated monthly while the petition is being circulated, this bill would have required the disclosure to be updated within five business days of any change in the listed top contributors. This bill additionally would have required state referendum petitions to comply with other formatting and content requirements.

On September 25, 2024, Governor Newsom vetoed this bill. In his [veto message](#), the Governor stated that while he shared the author’s goal of increasing transparency in elections, the changes proposed by this bill “are overly burdensome and may have the unintended consequence of making our state referendum process less accessible.”

Legislative History:

Senate Elections & CA	6-1	Assembly Elections.....	6-2
Senate Appropriations	(SR 28.8)	Assembly Appropriations	10-4
Senate Floor	28-9	Assembly Floor	55-17
Senate Concurrence	28-11		

[SB 1441 \(Allen\)](#)

Chapter 479, Statutes of 2024

Examination of petitions: time limitations and reimbursement of costs.

[Amends Section 7924.110 of the Government Code]

Under the California Public Records Act (CPRA), public records are open to inspection by the public at all times during the office hours of the agency, unless exempted from disclosure. A public record is defined as any writing containing information relating to the conduct of the public’s business prepared, owned, used, or retained by any public agency regardless of physical form or characteristics. As an exception to the general rule, the CPRA expressly provides that certain records related to election petitions are not public records. For example, current law specifies that a statewide, county, city, or district initiative, referendum, or recall petition is not a public record. Additionally, the CPRA provides that those same election petition records are not open to inspection, except to specified public officials or, if a petition is found to be insufficient, by the proponent of the petition in order to determine which signatures were disqualified and

the reasons for the rejections. The CPRA provides that an examination of petition records by a petitioner must commence within 21 days of their certification of insufficiency. However, existing law does not specify when such an examination must be completed.

According to the author and sponsor, the need for this bill is due to a petition review that occurred in Los Angeles County that resulted in litigation with recall proponents from a failed effort to recall the Los Angeles County District Attorney. Due to litigation, the petition review lasted 14 months, costing the county approximately \$1.5 million in additional staffing and resources, and diverted substantial resources and staffing away from other election support activities, such as examination of other initiative and referendum petitions at the state and local levels, updating of voter records, and preparing for the November 2022 General Election.

To address the situation that occurred in Los Angeles County, this bill requires proponents of a petition that failed due to insufficient signatures to conclude their examination of the petition’s insufficiency within 60 days, as specified. Additionally, this bill requires certain costs incurred by the county elections official due to the examination to be paid by the petition proponents.

Legislative History:

Senate Judiciary.....	9-2	Assembly Judiciary	9-3
Senate Elections & CA	6-1	Assembly Elections.....	6-2
Senate Appropriations	(SR 28.8)	Assembly Appropriations	10-4
Senate Floor	31-8	Assembly Floor	60-17
Senate Concurrence	31-8		

[SB 1450 \(Allen\)](#)

Chapter 480, Statutes of 2024
Elections.

[Amends, repeals, and adds Section 4005 of, and adds Section 4008 to, the Elections Code]

[SB 450 \(Allen\), Chapter 832, Statutes of 2016](#), established the Voter’s Choice Act (VCA) and provided a new model for counties to administer elections that authorizes a county to conduct elections in which every registered voter is mailed a ballot and vote centers and ballot drop-off locations are available prior to and on election day, in lieu of operating polling places for the election, subject to certain conditions. Counties that seek to conduct elections pursuant to the VCA must comply with specified planning and outreach requirements. Following the enactment of SB 450, five counties elected to change their election model to the VCA for the 2018 elections. In 2020, 10 counties made the switch and in 2022, 12 more counties opted to conduct their elections using the VCA model. For the March 5, 2024 statewide presidential primary, 29 counties conducted their elections using the VCA model.

County elections officials are required to develop a plan for election administration under the VCA to determine the placement of vote centers and ballot drop-off locations, which must consider proximity to public transportation, voters with disabilities, language minority communities, and other factors. A county must establish specified advisory committees and hold a minimum number of meetings with certain populations to ensure plans are drafted in consultation with the public. SB 450 also required the Secretary of State (SOS) to establish a VCA taskforce to review elections conducted via the VCA model and provide recommendations within six months of each election, and required that taskforce to remain in operation until the end of 2021.

This bill makes various changes to the VCA. Notably, this bill modifies the direct contact requirements under a county's voter education and outreach plan. For example, the bill permits a county to make only one direct contact with each voter after the first six statewide elections conducted pursuant to the VCA, instead of the two contacts required by existing law, as specified. Additionally, this bill requires the county elections official to post information at each vote center regarding the availability of language assistance services provided by the county or SOS, including a language assistance hotline, requires each county with more than 500,000 registered voters to establish a voter education and outreach advisory committee, as specified, and revises the timeline for when various election advisory committees must meet. In addition, SB 1450 requires the SOS to reestablish a taskforce to review elections conducted pursuant to the VCA and provide comments and recommendations to the Legislature within six months of each election.

Legislative History:

Senate Elections & CA	6-0	Assembly Elections	6-0
Senate Appropriations	5-0	Assembly Appropriations	11-0
Senate Floor	32-0	Assembly Floor	67-0
Senate Concurrence	33-0		

[SB 1476 \(Blakespear\)](#)

Chapter 489, Statutes of 2024

Political Reform Act of 1974: State Bar of California.

[Amends Sections 82011, 82048, and 87311.5 of, and adds Section 87211 to, the Government Code]

The Political Reform Act (PRA) prohibits a public official from using the person's official position to influence a governmental decision in which the person has a financial interest. As part of the regulatory scheme designed to protect against conflicts of interest, a state or local agency generally is required to adopt a conflict of interest code that identifies all officials and employees within the agency who make governmental decisions based on the positions they hold. To help identify potential conflicts of interest, the PRA requires individuals in the designated positions to

disclose their financial interests as specified in the agency’s conflict of interest code on a form called the statement of economic interests (SEI), also commonly referred to as the “Form 700.”

While the PRA’s conflict of interest rules apply generally to state and local agencies, courts and other agencies in the judicial branch of government were expressly excluded from the definitions of the terms “state agency” and “local government agency” in the PRA when it was first adopted in 1974. As a result, those agencies and their officers and employees were not subject to the PRA’s conflict of interest rules. It appears that the judicial branch of government was excluded from the PRA’s conflict of interest provisions in part due to concerns that including the judiciary could present separation of powers issues.

Over time, amendments to the PRA have made judicial officers and employees subject to some aspects of the PRA’s regulatory scheme to protect against conflicts of interest, while still being sensitive to concerns about the separation of powers. While the judicial branch of government is subject to some aspects of the PRA’s conflict of interest and financial disclosure rules, those rules are not broadly applicable in their entirety to the judiciary.

The State Bar of California (State Bar) is a public corporation with the responsibility of licensing, regulation, and discipline of attorneys. The PRA requires the State Bar to adopt a conflict of interest code for trustees and designated employees in accordance with the PRA, and those trustees and employees must file SEIs under the PRA. However, those trustees and employees are not subject to the PRA’s conflict of interest rules but instead are subject to conflict of interest rules found in the Business and Professions Code. While those conflict of interest rules have similarities to the financial conflict of interest rules found in the PRA, they are not enforced by the Fair Political Practices Commission, and they also require recusal in other situations that are not covered by the PRA. Relatedly, because those officials are not subject to the PRA’s conflict of interest rules, the State Bar’s conflict of interest code is not required to include provisions that detail the circumstances under which trustees and designated employees are required to disqualify themselves from making governmental decisions.

This bill provides that trustees and designated employees of the State Bar are public officials for the purposes of the PRA, thereby making it clear that these officials are subject to the PRA’s conflict of interest rules and related restrictions that apply generally to public officials.

Legislative History:

Senate Elections & CA	7-0	Assembly Elections.....	8-0
Senate Judiciary.....	11-0	Assembly Judiciary	12-0
Senate Appropriations	(SR 28.8)	Assembly Appropriations	15-0
Senate Floor	37-0	Assembly Floor	72-0
Senate Concurrence	37-0		

[SB 1493 \(Blakespear\)](#)
Chapter 800, Statutes of 2024
Elections.

[Amend Section 9096 of the Elections Code]

Existing law requires the Secretary of State (SOS) to produce a state voter information guide (VIG) that contains specified information, including, but not limited to, arguments and rebuttals for and against each state ballot measure, and an analysis of each state ballot measure. The SOS must mail the state VIG to every postal address at which one or more persons are registered to vote starting the 29th day before a statewide election, except as specified.

Additionally, current law requires the SOS to mail a specified number of copies of the state VIG to certain individuals and institutions, such as one copy to each local elections official, five copies to each public library, and 12 copies to each public high school. This bill reduces the initial number of copies of the state VIG that the SOS is required to mail to specified individuals and educational institutions, as specified.

Legislative History:

Senate Elections & CA	7-0	Assembly Elections	8-0
Senate Appropriations	(<u>SR 28.8</u>)	Assembly Appropriations	14-0
Senate Floor	38-0	Assembly Floor	75-0

[SCA 1 \(Newman\)](#)
Resolution Chapter 204, Statutes of 2024
Elections: recall of state officers.

[Proposes an amendment to the Constitution of the State, by amending Sections 15 and 17 of Article II thereof, and by amending Section 10 of Article V thereof]

In late-2021 and early-2022, the Assembly Elections Committee held a series of joint informational hearings with the Senate Elections & Constitutional Amendments Committee to review California’s recall process following the September 2021 gubernatorial recall election.

One of the major takeaways from the committee’s hearings was that many recall reform proposals would require voter approval in order to take effect. In particular, proposals to make significant structural changes to the recall process at the state level generally require an amendment to the California Constitution. By contrast, changes to the process for recalling local elected officials and certain procedural changes to the state process can be made through statutory changes alone.

Based on information from the National Conference of State Legislatures, the Little Hoover Commission, and committee staff research, California is one of only two states (along with Colorado) that hold the recall and replacement elections simultaneously for any recall of a state official, with both questions appearing on the same ballot. Until 2023, *local* recall elections held in California generally were conducted in a similar manner to how *state* recall elections are conducted: namely, as a two-part election where voters were asked (1) whether the targeted official should be recalled, and (2) if the recall is successful, who should replace the recalled officer.

In 2022, however, the Legislature passed and Governor Newsom signed [AB 2582 \(Bennett\), Chapter 790, Statutes of 2022](#). For local jurisdictions that do not have a charter provision that provides for recall, AB 2582 removed the successor candidate question from the recall ballot, so that a recall election for a local officer only includes the question of whether the officer sought to be recalled shall be removed from office. Any vacancy created as the result of a successful recall election under AB 2582 is filled in the same manner as a vacancy in that office otherwise would be filled.

This measure would provide for a state recall election to include only the question of whether the elected officer sought to be recalled should be removed from office. Under this measure, if a state officer was successfully recalled, the office held by that officer would become vacant and to be filled in accordance with existing law, as specified. In the case of a gubernatorial recall, if the Governor was removed from office before the close of the nomination period for the next statewide election during the first two years of the Governor’s term, a special election would be held at the same time as the regularly-scheduled statewide primary election and, if necessary, the subsequent statewide general election to elect a person to replace the Governor.

As a constitutional amendment, this measure requires the approval of the voters in order to take effect. The provisions of this measure provide for it to be submitted to the voters at the November 3, 2026, statewide general election.

Legislative History:

Senate Elections & CA	6-1	Assembly Elections	6-2
Senate Appropriations	5-2	Assembly Appropriations	11-3
Senate Floor	31-7	Assembly Floor	59-17
Senate Concurrence	32-8		

Index of Chaptered Bills

<u>Bill Number</u>	<u>Lead Author</u>	<u>Chapter #</u>	<u>Page</u>
AB 453	Cervantes	195	4
AB 1170	Valencia	211	7
AB 1784	Pellerin	355	8
AB 1807	Cervantes	809	9
AB 2001	Gallagher	97	10
AB 2041	Bonta	372	11
AB 2127	Berman	378	12
AB 2355	Wendy Carrillo	260	13
AB 2582	Pellerin	109	13
AB 2631	Mike Fong	201	14
AB 2642	Berman	533	15
AB 2655	Berman	261	16
AB 2803	Valencia	576	18
AB 2839	Pellerin	262	19
AB 2951	Cervantes	424	20
AB 3123	Jones-Sawyer	755	21
AB 3184	Berman	437	23
AB 3197	Lackey	120	24
AB 3284	Committee on Elections	854	25
SB 863	Allen	449	28
SB 904	Dodd	866	29
SB 948	Limon	125	31
SB 977	Laird	450	32
SB 1027	Menjivar	180	33
SB 1111	Min	324	34
SB 1156	Hurtado	458	37
SB 1174	Min	990	39
SB 1181	Glazer	785	40
SB 1243	Dodd	1017	41
SB 1328	Bradford	605	42
SB 1441	Allen	479	44
SB 1450	Allen	480	45
SB 1476	Blakespear	489	46
SB 1493	Blakespear	800	48

Index of Chaptered Constitutional Amendments

<u>Bill Number</u>	<u>Lead Author</u>	<u>Res. Chapter #</u>	<u>Page</u>
SCA 1	Newman	204	48

Index of Vetoed Bills

<u>Bill Number</u>	<u>Lead Author</u>	<u>Page</u>
AB 544	Bryan	5
AB 884	Low	6
AB 2724	Reyes	17
SB 299	Limon	27
SB 907	Newman	30
SB 1155	Hurtado	35
SB 1170	Menjivar	38
SB 1337	Gonzalez	43