Commission on State Mandates
Filed Date
11/02/2026

November 2, 2026

26-LDM-15

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RE: Legislatively Determined Mandate
Elections (Senate Bill 1164; Statutes 2026, Chapter 338)

Dear Director Stephenshaw and Executive Director Gmur:

Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), a statewide association of California's rural counties, hereby requests to initiate a Joint Request for Legislatively Determined Mandate (LDM) pursuant to Government Code section 17573 regarding the above-captioned statute.

The Department of Finance, in its August 13, 2026, bill analysis (attached), opposed the bill because it "may potentially create a state-reimbursable mandate."

By copy of this letter to the Commission on State Mandates, RCRC requests acknowledgement that the statute of limitations to file a test claim is tolled as of the date of this notice pursuant to Government Code section 17573, subdivision (b). While this matter is pending, RCRC or the Department of Finance shall notify the Commission of actions taken as set forth below, in accordance with subdivision (g) of Section 17573:

- Provide the Commission with a copy of any communications regarding development of a joint request under this section and a copy of a joint request when it is submitted to the Legislature.
- Notify the Commission of the date of (A) the Legislature's action on a joint request in the Budget Act, or (B) the Department's decision not to submit a joint request.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions, or would like to schedule a meeting to discuss the next steps in the LDM process.

Very truly yours,

TAYLOR W. KAYATTA, Deputy General Counsel
Rural County Representatives of California

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE BILL ANALYSIS

AMENDMENT DATE: 07/02/2026
POSITION: Oppose
SPONSOR: The California Democracy Partnership

BILL NUMBER: SB 1164
AUTHOR: Cervantes, Sabrina

BILL SUMMARY: Elections.

This bill replaces the California Voting Rights Act of 2001 and will prohibit political subdivisions or state agencies from implementing policies that result in voter suppression.

FISCAL SUMMARY

The Secretary of State indicates implementation of this measure requires 3.0 permanent positions and $859,000 General Fund in 2026-27 and $570,000 in 2027-28 and ongoing to modify voting systems and related technologies.

The Department of Justice indicates implementation of this measure requires 9.0 permanent positions and $1.3 million General Fund in 2026-27, and approximately $2.3 million General Fund in 2027-28 and ongoing.

Any request for additional resources will be evaluated as part of the annual budget development process.

This bill may create a state-reimbursable mandate because it requires a new program or higher level of service for local governments, in violation of this bill, to obtain prior approval from the Attorney General before implementing changes related to the administration of elections.

COMMENTS

The Department of Finance is opposed to this bill because it results in General Fund costs not included in the 2026 Budget Act and it may potentially create a state-reimbursable mandate.

Existing law requires the courts to protect and remedy Californians when their protections under the California Voting Rights Act are violated.

This bill makes the following changes to the California Voting Rights Act:

- Adds requirements to the review process for political subdivisions wanting to change their method of election;
- Increases reimbursement caps for parties seeking reimbursement from political subdivisions;
- Defines and prohibits voter suppression;
- Enables the Attorney General to sue for violations of this voting act and outlines the process for doing so;

Analyst/Principal	Date	Program Budget Manager	Date
(242) Romine, Jessie		Jarvis, Amy	

Department Deputy Director Date

Governor's Office: By: Date: Position Approved / Position Disapproved

COMMENTS (continued)

- Requires political subdivisions that have been found liable for violating voting rights within the previous 10 years to preapprove proposed election related changes with the Attorney General;
- Outlines a process for the Attorney General to approve election related changes for local governments previously found to have violated voting rights;
- Requires a political subdivision which has been subject to a voting rights judgement and is now wanting to revert to a previous method of election to first obtain approval from the county superior court; and
- Requires the Secretary of State to examine, test, and certify election methods adopted due to voting rights act judgements.

According to the author, this bill will secure Californians' voting rights by enshrining into state law protections that were previously defended by federal legislation, including prohibitions on vote dilution, voter suppression, and voter discrimination.

Code/Department Agency or Revenue Type	SO LA CO RV	(Fiscal Impact by Fiscal Year) (Dollars in Thousands) PROP 98	FC	2026-2027	FC	2027-2028	FC	2028-2029	Fund Code
0890/Secty State	SO	No	C	859	C	570	C	570	0001
0820/Justice	SO	No	C	1,300	C	2,300	C	2,300	0001
8885/Comm St Mndt	SO	No	C	0	C	0	C	0	0001

DECLARATION OF SERVICE BY EMAIL

I, the undersigned, declare as follows:

I am a resident of the County of Sacramento and I am over the age of 18 years, and not a party to the within action. My place of employment is 980 Ninth Street, Suite 300, Sacramento, California 95814.

On November 9, 2026, I served the:

- **Current Mailing List dated November 5, 2026**
- **Notice of Receipt of Letter of Intent to Initiate a Joint Request for a Legislatively Determined Mandate and Tolling of the Statute of Limitations issued November 9, 2026**
- **Letter of Intent to Initiate a Joint Request for a Legislatively Determined Mandate filed by the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) on November 2, 2026**

  Elections, 26-LDM-15
  Statutes 2026, Chapter 338 (SB 1164)
  Rural County Representatives of California, Requester

by making it available on the Commission's website and providing notice of how to locate it to the email addresses provided on the attached mailing list.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct, and that this declaration was executed on November 9, 2026 at Sacramento, California.

Jill Magee
_____

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COMMISSION ON STATE MANDATES

Mailing List

Last Updated: 11/5/26

Claim Number: 26-LDM-15

Matter: Elections

Requester: Rural County Representatives of California

TO ALL PARTIES, INTERESTED PARTIES, AND INTERESTED PERSONS:

Each commission mailing list is continuously updated as requests are received to include or remove any party or person on the mailing list. A current mailing list is provided with commission correspondence, and a copy of the current mailing list is available upon request at any time. Except as provided otherwise by commission rule, when a party or interested party files any written material with the commission concerning a claim, it shall simultaneously serve a copy of the written material on the parties and interested parties to the claim identified on the mailing list provided by the commission. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 2, § 1181.3.)

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