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AB-32 Tribal judges. (2025-2026)

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CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE— 2025–2026 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

NO. 32

Introduced by Assembly Member Soria
(Coauthors: Assembly Members Pacheco, Ramos, and Schiavo)

December 02, 2024

An act to amend Section 2166.7 of the Elections Code, to amend Section 217.1 of the Penal Code, and to amend Section 1808.4 of the Vehicle Code, relating to public officials.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 32, as introduced, Soria. Tribal judges.

Existing law makes it a crime for a person to assault, among other people, a judge of any local, state, or federal court of record in retaliation for or to prevent the performance of their official duties, as specified. Existing law requires a county elections official to, upon application by a public safety officer, make confidential that officer's residence address, telephone number, and email address appearing on the affidavit of voter registration, as specified. Existing law requires, upon request of specified persons, including an active or retired judge, that the person's home address that appears in a record of the Department of Motor Vehicles be made confidential.

This bill would additionally make it a crime for a person to assault a judge or former judge of a tribal court in retaliation for or to prevent the performance of their official duties, as specified. The bill would clarify that a tribal judge of a federally recognized California Indian tribe can request to make their records confidential pursuant to the above-described provisions. By expanding the scope of an existing crime, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

Existing constitutional provisions require that a statute that limits the right of access to the meetings of public bodies or the writings of public officials and agencies be adopted with findings demonstrating the interest protected by the limitation and the need for protecting that interest.

This bill would make legislative findings to that effect.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: yes

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 2166.7 of the Elections Code is amended to read:

2166.7. (a) If authorized by the county board of supervisors, a county elections official shall, upon application of a public safety officer, make confidential that officer's residence address, telephone number, and email address appearing on the affidavit of registration, in accordance with the terms and conditions of this section.

(b) The application by the public safety officer shall contain a statement, signed under penalty of perjury, that the person is a public safety officer as defined in subdivision (f) and that a life-threatening circumstance exists to the officer or a member of the officer's family. The application shall be a public record.

(c) The confidentiality granted pursuant to subdivision (a) shall terminate no more than two years after commencement, as determined by the county elections official. The officer may submit a new application for confidentiality pursuant to subdivision (a), and the new request may be granted for an additional period of not more than two years.

(d) Any person granted confidential voter status under subdivision (a) shall:

(1) Provide a valid mailing address and be considered a vote by mail voter for all subsequent elections or until the county elections official is notified otherwise by the Secretary of State or in writing by the voter. A voter requesting termination of vote by mail status thereby consents to placement of the voter's residence address, telephone number, and email address in the roster of voters.

(2) The elections official, in producing any list, roster, or index, shall exclude voters with a confidential voter status.

(3) Within 60 days of moving to a new county, if available in the new county, apply for confidential voter status pursuant to subdivision (a). The elections official of the new county, upon notice of the confidential voter moving into the county, shall do all of the following:

(A) Contact the confidential voter and provide information regarding the application for confidential voter status in the new county.

(B) Honor the confidential voter status from the former county for 60 days from the date of notice.

(C) Pursuant to paragraph (2), exclude the confidential voter in any list, roster, or index during the 60-day period.

(D) Remove the confidential voter status if the new voter has not obtained or cannot obtain confidential voter status pursuant to this section in the new county during the 60-day period.

(e) No action in negligence may be maintained against any government entity or officer or employee thereof as a result of the disclosure of the information that is the subject of this section unless by a showing of gross negligence or willfulness.

(f) "A public safety officer" has the same meaning as defined in subdivision (a), (d), (e), (f), or (j) of Section 7920.535 of the Government Code. *A "public safety officer" also includes a tribal judge of a federally recognized California Indian tribe.*

SEC. 2. Section 217.1 of the Penal Code is amended to read:

217.1. (a) Except as provided in subdivision (b), every person who commits any assault upon the President or Vice President of the United States, the Governor of any state or territory, any justice, judge, or former judge of any local, state, *tribal*, or federal court of record, any commissioner, referee, or other subordinate judicial officer of any court of record, the secretary or director of any executive agency or department of the United States or any state or territory, or any other official of the United States or any state or territory holding elective office, any mayor, city council member, county supervisor, sheriff, district attorney, prosecutor or assistant prosecutor of any local, state, or federal prosecutor's office, a former prosecutor or assistant prosecutor of any local, state, or federal prosecutor's office, public defender or assistant public defender of any local, state, or federal public defender's office, a former public defender or assistant public defender of any local, state, or federal public defender's office, the chief of police of any municipal police department, any peace officer, any juror in any local, state, or federal court of record, or the immediate family of any of these officials, in retaliation for or to prevent the performance of the victim's official duties, shall be punished by imprisonment in the county jail not exceeding one year or by imprisonment pursuant to subdivision (h) of Section 1170.

(b) Notwithstanding subdivision (a), every person who attempts to commit murder against any person listed in subdivision (a) in retaliation for or to prevent the performance of the victim's official duties, shall be confined in the state prison for a term of 15 years to life. The provisions of Article 2.5 (commencing with Section 2930) of Chapter 7 of Title 1 of Part 3 shall apply to reduce any minimum term of 15 years in a state prison imposed pursuant to this section, but that person shall not otherwise be released on parole prior to that time.

(c) For the purposes of this section, the following words have the following meanings:

(1) "Immediate family" means spouse, child, stepchild, brother, stepbrother, sister, stepsister, mother, stepmother, father, or stepfather.

(2) "Peace officer" means any person specified in subdivision (a) of Section 830.1 or Section 830.5.

SEC. 3. Section 1808.4 of the Vehicle Code is amended to read:

1808.4. (a) For all of the following persons, the person's home address that appears in a record of the department is confidential if the person requests the confidentiality of that information:

(1) Attorney General.

(2) State Public Defender.

(3) A Member of the Legislature.

(4) An active or retired judge or court ~~commissioner~~ *commissioner, including a tribal judge of a federally recognized California Indian tribe.*

(5) A district attorney.

(6) A public defender.

(7) An attorney employed by the Department of Justice, the office of the State Public Defender, or a county office of the district attorney or public defender.

(8) A city attorney, city prosecutor, or an attorney who submits verification from their public employer that the attorney represents the city in matters that routinely place the attorney in personal contact with persons under investigation for, charged with, or convicted of, committing criminal acts, if that attorney is employed by a city attorney or city prosecutor.

(9) A nonsworn police dispatcher.

(10) A child abuse investigator or social worker, working in child protective services within a social services department.

(11) An active or retired peace officer, as defined in Chapter 4.5 (commencing with Section 830) of Title 3 of Part 2 of the Penal Code.

(12) An employee of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Division of Juvenile Facilities, or the Prison Industry Authority specified in Sections 20403 and 20405 of the Government Code.

(13) A nonsworn employee of a city police department, a county sheriff's office, the Department of the California Highway Patrol, a federal, state, or local detention facility, or a local juvenile hall, camp, ranch, or home, who submits agency verification that, in the normal course of the employee's employment, the employee controls or supervises inmates or is required to have a prisoner in the employee's care or custody.

(14) A county counsel assigned to child abuse cases.

(15) An investigator employed by the Department of Justice, a county district attorney, or a county public defender.

(16) A member of a city council.

(17) A member of a board of supervisors.

(18) A federal prosecutor, criminal investigator, or National Park Service Ranger working in this state.

(19) An active or retired city enforcement officer engaged in the enforcement of the Vehicle Code or municipal parking ordinances.

(20) An employee of a trial court.

(21) A psychiatric social worker employed by a county.

(22) A police or sheriff department employee designated by the chief of police of the department or the sheriff of the county as being in a sensitive position. A designation pursuant to this paragraph shall, for purposes of this section, remain in effect for three years subject to additional designations that, for purposes of this section, shall remain in effect for additional three-year periods.

(23) A state employee in one of the following classifications:

(A) Licensing-Registration Examiner, Department of Motor Vehicles.

(B) Motor Carrier Specialist I, Department of the California Highway Patrol.

(C) Museum Security Officer and Supervising Museum Security Officer.

(D) Licensing Program Analyst, State Department of Social Services.

(24) (A) The spouse or child of a person listed in paragraphs (1) to (23), inclusive, regardless of the spouse's or child's place of residence.

(B) The surviving spouse or child of a peace officer, as defined in Chapter 4.5 (commencing with Section 830) of Title 3 of Part 2 of the Penal Code, if the peace officer died in the line of duty.

(C) The surviving spouse or child of a judge or court commissioner, if the judge or court commissioner died in the performance of their duties.

(D) (i) Subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C) do not apply if the person listed in those subparagraphs was convicted of a crime and is on active parole or probation.

(ii) For requests made on or after January 1, 2011, the person requesting confidentiality for their spouse or child listed in subparagraph (A), (B), or (C) shall declare, at the time of the request for confidentiality, whether the spouse or child has been convicted of a crime and is on active parole or probation.

(iii) Neither the listed person's employer nor the department shall be required to verify, or be responsible for verifying, that a person listed in subparagraph (A), (B), or (C) was convicted of a crime and is on active parole or probation.

(E) (i) The department shall discontinue holding a home address confidential pursuant to this subdivision for a person specified in subparagraph (A), (B), or (C) who is the child or spouse of a person described in paragraph (4), (9), (11), (13), or (22) if the child or spouse is convicted of a felony in this state or is convicted of an offense in another jurisdiction that, if committed in California, would be a felony.

(ii) The department shall comply with this subparagraph upon receiving notice of a disqualifying conviction from the agency that employs or formerly employed the parent or spouse of the convicted person, or as soon as the department otherwise becomes aware of the disqualifying conviction.

(b) The confidential home address of a person listed in subdivision (a) shall not be disclosed, except to any of the following:

(1) A court.

(2) A law enforcement agency.

(3) The State Board of Equalization.

(4) An attorney in a civil or criminal action that demonstrates to a court the need for the home address, if the disclosure is made pursuant to a subpoena.

(5) A governmental agency to which, under any law, information is required to be furnished from records maintained by the department.

(c) (1) A record of the department containing a confidential home address shall be open to public inspection, as provided in Section 1808, if the address is completely obliterated or otherwise removed from the record.

(2) Following termination of office or employment, a confidential home address shall be withheld from public inspection for three years, unless the termination is the result of conviction of a criminal offense or a request to remove confidentiality protections has been made by an employing agency pursuant to paragraph (6). If the termination or separation is the result of the filing of a criminal complaint, a confidential home address shall be withheld from public inspection during the time in which the terminated

individual may file an appeal from termination, while an appeal from termination is ongoing, and until the appeal process is exhausted, after which confidentiality shall be at the discretion of the employing agency if the termination or separation is upheld. Upon reinstatement to an office or employment, the protections of this section are available.

(3) With respect to a retired peace officer, the peace officer's home address shall be withheld from public inspection permanently upon request of confidentiality at the time the information would otherwise be opened. The home address of the surviving spouse or child listed in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (24) of subdivision (a) shall be withheld from public inspection for three years following the death of the peace officer.

(4) The department shall inform a person who requests a confidential home address what agency the individual whose address was requested is employed by or the court at which the judge or court commissioner presides.

(5) With respect to a retired judge or court commissioner, the retired judge or court commissioner's home address shall be withheld from public inspection permanently upon request of confidentiality at the time the information would otherwise be opened. The home address of the surviving spouse or child listed in subparagraph (C) of paragraph (24) of subdivision (a) shall be withheld from public inspection for three years following the death of the judge or court commissioner.

(6) Following a termination of employment, the terminated individual's employing agency may request that the department remove the confidentiality protections of this section for the terminated individual if no appeal to the termination is filed or if the termination or separation is upheld. The employing agency shall certify in its request to the department that no appeal to the termination has been filed or that the termination or separation has been upheld. If the terminated individual files an appeal from termination, the individual's confidential home address shall be withheld from public inspection while the appeal from termination is ongoing and until the appeal process is exhausted. The department shall comply with a request made pursuant to this paragraph within 45 days of receipt. This paragraph shall not apply to terminations of employment resulting from the filing of a criminal complaint.

(d) A violation of subdivision (a) by the disclosure of the confidential home address of a peace officer, as specified in paragraph (11) of subdivision (a), a nonsworn employee of the city police department or county sheriff's office, a judge or court commissioner, as specified in paragraph (4) of subdivision (a), or the spouses or children of these persons, including, but not limited to, the surviving spouse or child listed in subparagraph (B) or (C) of paragraph (24) of subdivision (a), that results in bodily injury to the peace officer, employee of the city police department or county sheriff's office, judge or court commissioner, or the spouses or children of these persons is a felony.

SEC. 4. The Legislature finds and declares that Sections 1 and 3 of this act, which amend Section 2166.7 of the Elections Code and Section 1808.4 of the Vehicle Code, impose a limitation on the public's right of access to the meetings of public bodies or the writings of public officials and agencies within the meaning of Section 3 of Article I of the California Constitution. Pursuant to that constitutional provision, the Legislature makes the following findings to demonstrate the interest protected by this limitation and the need for protecting that interest:

Threats to, and attacks on, public officials, including judges, based on their official duties have been increasing. Individuals serving as judges on tribal courts have experienced similar threats to their personal safety. In order to extend to tribal judges the same level of protection as afforded to judges of courts of California, it is necessary to limit access to the personal information of tribal judges.

SEC. 5. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution.

REVISIONS:

Heading—Line 2.
