

AMENDED IN SENATE AUGUST 30, 2001

AMENDED IN SENATE JULY 9, 2001

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 31, 2001

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 1, 2001

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2001–02 REGULAR SESSION

**ASSEMBLY BILL**

**No. 1536**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Cardenas**  
*(Coauthor: Senator Perata)*

February 23, 2001

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An act to add and repeal Article 2 (commencing with Section 69540) of Chapter 5 of Title 8 of the Government Code, relating to superior courts, *and making an appropriation therefor.*

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1536, as amended, Cardenas. Truancy.

Existing law provides for making habitually truant minors a ward of the juvenile court.

This bill would provide that, as a pilot project, one division of the juvenile court in Los Angeles County selected by the Judicial Council shall be devoted solely to issues involving truancy, to be known as the "truancy court," which would have jurisdiction over the parents or guardians of a truant, as well as the truant, but shall exercise such jurisdiction only upon referral by specified agencies. The bill would also specify the staff of the truancy court, provide that hearings of the truancy court be conducted throughout Los Angeles County, provide for the coordination of the pilot project by the Los Angeles Countywide

Justice Coordinating Council, and provide for the repeal of the pilot project on January 1, 2004. The bill would require the Juvenile Division of the Los Angeles Superior Court to prepare and submit a specified evaluation of the pilot project to the Legislature by April 15, 2004.

The bill would impose a state-mandated local program by imposing new duties on the juvenile court in Los Angeles County.

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, including the creation of a State Mandates Claims Fund to pay the costs of mandates that do not exceed \$1,000,000 statewide and other procedures for claims whose statewide costs exceed \$1,000,000.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to these statutory provisions.

*The bill would appropriate \$750,000 from the General Fund to the Judicial Council for disbursement in accordance with the purposes of the bill.*

Vote: ~~majority~~ 2/3. Appropriation: ~~no~~ yes. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: yes.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

1 SECTION 1. Article 2 (commencing with Section 69540) is  
2 added to Chapter 5 of Title 8 of the Government Code, to read:

3  
4 Article 2. Truancy Court Pilot Project

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6 69540. As a pilot project, one division of the juvenile court in  
7 Los Angeles County selected by the Judicial Council shall be  
8 devoted solely to issues involving truancy in violation of Section  
9 601 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, to be known as the  
10 “truancy court.”

11 69541. (a) The truancy court shall have jurisdiction over the  
12 parents or guardians of a truant, as well as the truant, but shall  
13 exercise such jurisdiction only upon referral by the truant’s school,  
14 the School Attendance Review Board, and the Los Angeles



1 County Truancy Mediation Program, following their diligent  
2 attempts to resolve the minor's truancy problem.

3 (b) Truancy court hearings shall be conducted in juvenile  
4 courts geographically located throughout Los Angeles County to  
5 ensure that all residents of the county have access to the truancy  
6 court without placing an undue hardship on the minors and their  
7 families who appear in the court. ~~In no instance, shall a minor or~~  
8 ~~his or her family be required to attend a truancy court hearing that~~  
9 ~~is conducted in a juvenile court that is located more than 20 miles~~  
10 ~~from the residence of the minor and his or her family.~~ *The truancy*  
11 *court shall ensure that no minor and his or her parent or parents*  
12 *or legal guardian or guardians shall be required to attend a*  
13 *truancy court hearing that is conducted in a court which is located*  
14 *more than 30 miles from the juvenile court nearest the residence*  
15 *of the minor and his or her parent or parents or legal guardian or*  
16 *guardians. The truancy court may take steps to ensure that the*  
17 *minor and his or her parent or parents or legal guardian or*  
18 *guardians are provided transportation assistance to access the*  
19 *truancy court without undue hardship.*

20 69542. The truancy court shall be staffed by a team of  
21 professionals, including a district attorney, public defender, school  
22 district liaison, probation officer, mental health professional,  
23 special education expert, and case manager who volunteer for  
24 assignment to the truancy court, to consider and discuss the  
25 circumstances of each case and attempt to reach consensus on the  
26 action plan prior to a court hearing.

27 69543. The Los Angeles Countywide Criminal Justice  
28 Coordinating Committee shall coordinate the pilot project.

29 69544. This article shall be repealed on January 1, 2004.

30 SEC. 2. The Juvenile Division of the Los Angeles Superior  
31 Court shall prepare and submit to the Legislature on or before  
32 April 15, 2004, an evaluation of the Truancy Court Pilot Project.  
33 This evaluation shall identify outcome measures to determine the  
34 effectiveness of the pilot project which shall include, but not be  
35 limited to, all of the following, to the extent that data is available:

- 36 (a) The number of cases handled by the truancy courts.
- 37 (b) The attendance rates or other appropriate outcome
- 38 measures for youth handled by the truancy court compared to
- 39 youth handled by other juvenile courts in Los Angeles.



1 (c) Quantification of the annual per capita costs of the truancy  
2 court compared to the costs of handling truancy matters in other  
3 juvenile courts in Los Angeles.

4 SEC. 3. Notwithstanding Section 17610 of the Government  
5 Code, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that this  
6 act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to local  
7 agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made pursuant  
8 to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4 of Title  
9 2 of the Government Code. If the statewide cost of the claim for  
10 reimbursement does not exceed one million dollars (\$1,000,000),  
11 reimbursement shall be made from the State Mandates Claims  
12 Fund.

13 SEC. 4. *The sum of seven hundred fifty thousand dollars*  
14 *(\$750,000) is hereby appropriated from the General Fund to the*  
15 *Judicial Council for disbursement in accordance with the*  
16 *purposes of this act.*

