

Assembly Bill No. 1813

CHAPTER 194

An act to amend Sections 6254.21 and 6254.24 of the Government Code, relating to public officials.

[Approved by Governor August 27, 2010. Filed with
Secretary of State August 27, 2010.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1813, Lieu. Public officials: personal information.

(1) Existing law requires a person, business, or association, upon receiving the written demand of an elected or appointed official, to remove the official's home address or telephone number from public display on the Internet within 48 hours of the delivery of the demand, and to continue to ensure that information is not reposted on the same Internet Web site, a subsidiary site, or any other Internet Web site maintained by the recipient of the written demand, with specified exceptions. Existing law includes a public safety official within the definition of an elected or appointed official for these purposes, and defines public safety official to include specified peace officer classifications. Existing law makes a violation of these provisions a misdemeanor or a felony under certain circumstances.

This bill would specify that the requirement to remove the information described above from public display on the Internet includes information provided to cellular telephone applications. The bill would also expand the definition of public safety officer for these purposes, and include within that definition retired members of specified employee classifications. By expanding the definition of a crime, this bill would create a state-mandated local program.

(2) Existing law provides that a person who maliciously, with the intent to obstruct justice or the administration of the laws, or with the intent to inflict physical harm, discloses the residence address or telephone number of public safety officials, as defined, or that of the spouse or children of these persons, is guilty of a misdemeanor. A violation of these provisions that results in bodily harm to the public safety official, or the spouse or child of that person, is a felony.

The bill would expand the definition of public safety officer for these purposes, and include within that definition retired members of specified employee classifications. By expanding the definition of a crime, this bill would create a state-mandated local program.

(3) Upon adoption by a county board of supervisors, existing law requires a county elections official to make confidential certain personal information of a public safety officer, upon application by the public safety officer made under penalty of perjury.

The bill would expand the definition of public safety officer for these purposes, and include within that definition retired members of specified employee classifications. By increasing the duties of local officials, and expanding the scope of the crime of perjury, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

(4) 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 with regard to certain mandates no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

With regard to any other mandates, this bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs so mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to the statutory provisions noted above.

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

SECTION 1. Section 6254.21 of the Government Code is amended to read:

6254.21. (a) No state or local agency shall post the home address or telephone number of any elected or appointed official on the Internet without first obtaining the written permission of that individual.

(b) No person shall knowingly post the home address or telephone number of any elected or appointed official, or of the official's residing spouse or child, on the Internet knowing that person is an elected or appointed official and intending to cause imminent great bodily harm that is likely to occur or threatening to cause imminent great bodily harm to that individual. A violation of this subdivision is a misdemeanor. A violation of this subdivision that leads to the bodily injury of the official, or his or her residing spouse or child, is a misdemeanor or a felony.

(c) (1) (A) No person, business, or association shall publicly post or publicly display on the Internet the home address or telephone number of any elected or appointed official if that official has made a written demand of that person, business, or association to not disclose his or her home address or telephone number.

(B) A written demand made under this paragraph by a state constitutional officer, a mayor, or a Member of the Legislature, a city council, or a board of supervisors shall include a statement describing a threat or fear for the safety of that official or of any person residing at the official's home address.

(C) A written demand made under this paragraph by an elected official shall be effective for four years, regardless of whether or not the official's term has expired prior to the end of the four-year period.

(D) (i) A person, business, or association that receives the written demand of an elected or appointed official pursuant to this paragraph shall remove the official's home address or telephone number from public display on the Internet, including information provided to cellular telephone applications,

within 48 hours of delivery of the written demand, and shall continue to ensure that this information is not reposted on the same Internet Web site, subsidiary site, or any other Internet Web site maintained by the recipient of the written demand.

(ii) After receiving the elected or appointed official's written demand, the person, business, or association shall not transfer the appointed or elected official's home address or telephone number to any other person, business, or association through any other medium.

(iii) Clause (ii) shall not be deemed to prohibit a telephone corporation, as defined in Section 234 of the Public Utilities Code, or its affiliate, from transferring the elected or appointed official's home address or telephone number to any person, business, or association, if the transfer is authorized by federal or state law, regulation, order, or tariff, or necessary in the event of an emergency, or to collect a debt owed by the elected or appointed official to the telephone corporation or its affiliate.

(E) For purposes of this paragraph, "publicly post" or "publicly display" means to intentionally communicate or otherwise make available to the general public.

(2) An official whose home address or telephone number is made public as a result of a violation of paragraph (1) may bring an action seeking injunctive or declarative relief in any court of competent jurisdiction. If a court finds that a violation has occurred, it may grant injunctive or declarative relief and shall award the official court costs and reasonable attorney's fees. A fine not exceeding one thousand dollars (\$1,000) may be imposed for a violation of the court's order for an injunction or declarative relief obtained pursuant to this paragraph.

(3) An elected or appointed official may designate in writing the official's employer, a related governmental entity, or any voluntary professional association of similar officials to act, on behalf of that official, as that official's agent with regard to making a written demand pursuant to this section. A written demand made by an agent pursuant to this paragraph shall include a statement describing a threat or fear for the safety of that official or of any person residing at the official's home address.

(d) (1) No person, business, or association shall solicit, sell, or trade on the Internet the home address or telephone number of an elected or appointed official with the intent to cause imminent great bodily harm to the official or to any person residing at the official's home address.

(2) Notwithstanding any other law, an official whose home address or telephone number is solicited, sold, or traded in violation of paragraph (1) may bring an action in any court of competent jurisdiction. If a jury or court finds that a violation has occurred, it shall award damages to that official in an amount up to a maximum of three times the actual damages but in no case less than four thousand dollars (\$4,000).

(e) An interactive computer service or access software provider, as defined in Section 230(f) of Title 47 of the United States Code, shall not be liable under this section unless the service or provider intends to abet or

cause imminent great bodily harm that is likely to occur or threatens to cause imminent great bodily harm to an elected or appointed official.

(f) For purposes of this section, “elected or appointed official” includes, but is not limited to, all of the following:

- (1) State constitutional officers.
- (2) Members of the Legislature.
- (3) Judges and court commissioners.
- (4) District attorneys.
- (5) Public defenders.
- (6) Members of a city council.
- (7) Members of a board of supervisors.
- (8) Appointees of the Governor.
- (9) Appointees of the Legislature.
- (10) Mayors.
- (11) City attorneys.
- (12) Police chiefs and sheriffs.
- (13) A public safety official, as defined in Section 6254.24.
- (14) State administrative law judges.
- (15) Federal judges and federal defenders.
- (16) Members of the United States Congress and appointees of the President.

(g) Nothing in this section is intended to preclude punishment instead under Sections 69, 76, or 422 of the Penal Code, or any other provision of law.

SEC. 2. Section 6254.24 of the Government Code is amended to read: 6254.24. As used in this chapter, “public safety official” means the following parties, whether active or retired:

(a) A peace officer as defined in Sections 830 to 830.65, inclusive, of the Penal Code, or a person who is not a peace officer, but may exercise the powers of arrest during the course and within the scope of their employment pursuant to Section 830.7 of the Penal Code.

(b) A public officer or other person listed in Sections 1808.2 and 1808.6 of the Vehicle Code.

(c) An “elected or appointed official” as defined in subdivision (f) of Section 6254.21.

(d) An attorney employed by the Department of Justice, the State Public Defender, or a county office of the district attorney or public defender, the United States Attorney, or the Federal Public Defender.

(e) A city attorney and an attorney who represent cities in criminal matters.

(f) An employee of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation who supervises inmates or is required to have a prisoner in his or her care or custody.

(g) A sworn or nonsworn employee who supervises inmates in a city police department, a county sheriff’s office, the Department of the California Highway Patrol, federal, state, or a local detention facility, and a local

juvenile hall, camp, ranch, or home, and a probation officer as defined in Section 830.5 of the Penal Code.

(h) A federal prosecutor, a federal criminal investigator, and a National Park Service Ranger working in California.

(i) The surviving spouse or child of a peace officer defined in Section 830 of the Penal Code, if the peace officer died in the line of duty.

(j) State and federal judges and court commissioners.

(k) An employee of the Attorney General, a district attorney, or a public defender who submits verification from the Attorney General, district attorney, or public defender that the employee represents the Attorney General, district attorney, or public defender in matters that routinely place that employee in personal contact with persons under investigation for, charged with, or convicted of, committing criminal acts.

(l) A nonsworn employee of the Department of Justice or a police department or sheriff's office that, in the course of his or her employment, is responsible for collecting, documenting, and preserving physical evidence at crime scenes, testifying in court as an expert witness, and other technical duties, and a nonsworn employee that, in the course of his or her employment, performs a variety of standardized and advanced laboratory procedures in the examination of physical crime evidence, determines their results, and provides expert testimony in court.

SEC. 3. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution for certain costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school district because, in that regard, 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.

However, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that this act contains other costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.