

Senate Bill No. 839

CHAPTER 311

An act to add Section 8594.5 to the Government Code, relating to emergency alerts.

[Approved by Governor September 25, 2010. Filed with Secretary of State September 27, 2010.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 839, Runner. Emergency Alert System: law enforcement officers.

Existing law requires the California Highway Patrol to activate the Emergency Alert System at the request of an authorized person at a law enforcement agency if a child 17 years of age or younger, or an individual with a proven mental or physical disability, has been abducted and is in imminent danger of serious bodily injury or death, and other conditions are met.

This bill would require the California Highway Patrol, at the request of an authorized person at a law enforcement agency, to activate the Emergency Alert System and issue a blue alert, as defined, if a law enforcement officer has been killed, suffers serious bodily injury, or is assaulted with a deadly weapon, the suspect has fled the scene of the offense, and other specified conditions are met. This bill would also require the California Highway Patrol to include information describing blue alerts on its Internet Web site.

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

SECTION 1. Section 8594.5 is added to the Government Code, to read:

8594.5. (a) For purposes of this section, "blue alert" means a quick response system designed to issue and coordinate alerts following an attack upon a law enforcement officer as described in subdivision (b).

(b) In addition to the circumstances described in Section 8594, upon the request of an authorized person at a law enforcement agency that is investigating an offense described in paragraph (1), the California Highway Patrol shall activate the Emergency Alert System and issue a blue alert if all of the following conditions are met:

(1) A law enforcement officer has been killed, suffers serious bodily injury, or is assaulted with a deadly weapon, and the suspect has fled the scene of the offense.

(2) A law enforcement agency investigating the offense has determined that the suspect poses an imminent threat to the public or other law enforcement personnel.

(3) A detailed description of the suspect's vehicle or license plate is available for broadcast.

(4) Public dissemination of available information may help avert further harm or accelerate apprehension of the suspect.

(5) The California Highway Patrol has been designated to use the federally authorized Emergency Alert System for the issuance of blue alerts.

(c) The blue alert system incorporates a variety of notification resources and developing technologies that may be tailored to the circumstances and geography of the underlying attack. The blue alert system shall utilize the state-controlled Emergency Digital Information System, local digital signs, focused text, or other technologies, as appropriate, in addition to the federal Emergency Alert System, if authorized and under conditions permitted by the federal government.

(d) On or before December 31, 2011, the California Highway Patrol shall augment the department's public Internet Web site to include a blue alert link that describes the "blue alert" process, objectives, and available quick responses. The Internet Web site shall explain that the term blue alert will communicate that a law enforcement officer has been attacked or killed and that the scope of an alert will be tailored to the circumstances of the offense and available technologies.