

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 510

Introduced by Assembly Members Rodriguez and Williams

February 23, 2015

An act to add and repeal Section 53122 of the Government Code, relating to emergency services.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 510, as introduced, Rodriguez. Emergency services: 911 emergency communication system.

The Warren-911-Emergency Assistance Act requires a local public agency to adopt a plan to implement a 911 emergency telephone response system, and establishes the State 911 Advisory Board to advise on specified subjects relating to the state's 911 emergency telephone response system.

Existing law requires the Office of Emergency Services to determine annually, on or before October 1, a surcharge rate that it estimates will produce sufficient revenue to fund the current fiscal year's 911 costs, as specified.

Existing law also requires the office to develop a plan and timeline of target dates for testing, implementing, and operating a Next Generation 911 emergency communication system, including text to 911 service, throughout this state. Existing law requires the office, in determining the surcharge rate, to additionally include costs it expects to incur, consistent with the plan and timeline, to plan, test, implement, and operate Next Generation 911 technology and services, including text to 911 service. Existing law requires the office, at least one month before determining the surcharge rate, to prepare a summary of the calculation of the proposed surcharge and make it available to the

Legislature and the 911 Advisory Board, and on the office’s Internet Web site.

This bill would require the office, by January 1, 2017, to conduct a comprehensive review of California’s 911 emergency communications system, including all public safety answering points, available technology, funding needs, and telephone and equipment limitations, and provide a report on its findings to the Legislature, to include specified information and recommendations.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: no.

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

1 SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the
2 following:

3 (a) There are gaps in public safety protection. Also, accurate
4 caller location information is vital for 911 calls and the safety of
5 Californians.

6 (b) Problems with the current 911 systems include: (1)
7 misrouting a call to an entirely incorrect public safety answering
8 point (PSAP), sometimes in a different city or region, and (2)
9 delivery of inaccurate caller location information to the proper
10 PSAP.

11 (c) In many areas, approximately 70 to 80 percent of 911 calls
12 are made by wireless devices, and in many cases the exact location
13 of the caller is not immediately known. Calls are generally
14 forwarded to a California Highway Patrol PSAP. The caller is
15 queried, the location determined, and the call transferred to a local
16 dispatch center. This often results in delays in the arrival of
17 emergency medical services responders and the provision of
18 important medical care. On some occasions errors in this process
19 have resulted in serious injury or death.

20 (d) The 911 system is technology dependent, which over the
21 years has steadily improved. There are, however, significant
22 problems with the 911 system and planning, and recent
23 developments in technology and decisions made by the Federal
24 Communications Commission (FCC) require the state to reassess
25 policies and practices.

1 (e) On January 29, 2015, the FCC voted to adopt rules to help
2 emergency responders to better locate wireless callers to 911. The
3 FCC press release stated:

4 “These updates to the Commission’s Enhanced 911 (E911) rules
5 respond to Americans’ increasing use of wireless phones to call
6 911, especially from indoors, where traditional 911 location
7 technologies often do not work effectively or at all. The new rules
8 take advantage of technological developments that will allow for
9 more accurate location information to be transmitted with indoor
10 911 calls.

11 The Commission’s E911 rules require wireless providers to
12 automatically transmit to 911 call centers information on the
13 location of wireless 911 callers, within certain parameters for
14 accuracy. These rules, which were adopted in 1996 and underwent
15 their last major revision in 2010, enabled wireless providers to
16 meet this accuracy standard based solely on the measured
17 performance of outdoor wireless 911 calls. However calling habits
18 are changing. Many Americans are replacing landlines with
19 wireless phones, with more than two out of five U.S. households
20 now relying solely on wireless. Most 911 calls are currently made
21 from wireless phones, and most wireless calls are made from
22 indoors. This increases the likelihood that wireless 911 calls will
23 come from indoor environments where traditional location accuracy
24 technologies, optimized for outdoor calling, may not work.

25 To close this gap in performance, the Commission today updated
26 its E911 rules to include requirements focused on indoor location
27 accuracy. The new rules are intended to help first responders locate
28 Americans calling for help from indoors, including challenging
29 environments such as large multi-story buildings, where responders
30 are often unable to determine the floor or even the building where
31 the 911 call originated.

32 The new rules establish clear and measurable timelines for
33 wireless providers to meet indoor location accuracy benchmarks,
34 both for horizontal and vertical location information. The
35 Commission noted that no single technological approach will solve
36 the challenge of indoor location, and no solution can be
37 implemented overnight. The new requirements therefore enable
38 wireless providers to choose the most effective solutions and allow
39 sufficient time for development of applicable standards,

1 establishment of testing mechanisms, and deployment of new
2 location technology.

3 The new rules were informed by extensive input from
4 stakeholders, including public safety organizations, wireless
5 providers, technology vendors, state and local governments, and
6 public interest groups. The Commission emphasized that its
7 ultimate objective in this proceeding is for all Americans – whether
8 they are calling 911 from urban or rural areas, from indoors or
9 outdoors – to receive the support they need in times of emergency.
10 Today’s action takes affirmative steps to make that happen.”

11 (f) It is imperative that the State of California perform a review
12 of its 911 emergency communications system policies and
13 procedures, to make changes that reflect technology available now
14 and in the near future, and to make plans to improve the 911 system
15 in order to protect lives.

16 SEC. 2. Section 53122 is added to the Government Code, to
17 read:

18 53122. (a) The Office of Emergency Services shall, by January
19 1, 2017, conduct a comprehensive review of California’s 911
20 emergency communications system, including all public safety
21 answering points, available technology, funding needs, and
22 telephone and equipment limitations, and provide a report on its
23 findings to the Legislature. The report shall provide information
24 regarding the accuracy of calls made by mobile devices made in
25 different areas of the state and shall include office
26 recommendations for future investment in services and
27 coordination with private and public groups needed to improve
28 service and accuracy.

29 (b) (1) A report to be submitted pursuant to subdivision (a)
30 shall be submitted in compliance with Section 9795.

31 (2) Pursuant to Section 10231.5, this section is repealed on
32 January 1, 2020.