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Assembly
California Legislature
Committee on Rules

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SANCHEZ, KATE
ZBUR, RICK CHAVEZ

ARAMBULA, JOAQUIN (D-ALT)
TA, TRI (R-ALT)

Thursday, August 20, 2026
Upon Call of the Chair
State Capitol, Room 126

CONSENT AGENDA

BILL REFERRALS

1. Bill Referrals

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RESOLUTIONS

2. HR-140 (Wicks) Children's Get Offline and Get Outdoors Month. (refer/hear)

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REQUEST TO ADD URGENCY CLAUSE

3. SB 259 (Wahab) Elections: vote by mail ballots

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TRI TA (R-ALT.)

Memo

To: Rules Committee Members
From: Michael Erke, Bill Referral Consultant
Date: 8/19/2026
Re: Consent Bill Referrals

Attached is a bill referral recommendation.

REFERRAL OF BILLS TO COMMITTEE

08/20/2026

Pursuant to the Assembly Rules, the following bills were referred to committee:

Assembly Bill No.

Committee:

HR 140

RLS.

House Resolution

No. 140

Introduced by Assembly Member Wicks

August 19, 2026

House Resolution No. 140—Relative to Children’s Get Offline and Get Outdoors Month.

1 WHEREAS, Research shows that free play is an essential part
2 of healthy childhood development because it improves children’s
3 abilities to plan, organize, get along with others, regulate emotions,
4 and cope with stress, and it aids in the development of language,
5 math, and social skills; and

6 WHEREAS, Statistics show that the amount of free play time
7 for children has been declining for decades due to tightly structured
8 family and school schedules, fewer safe places to play, less societal
9 willingness to let children spend time with other children
10 unsupervised, and rising social media use and screen time; and

11 WHEREAS, The American Academy of Pediatrics links
12 increases in depression and anxiety to a lack of unstructured
13 playtime and recommends that children spend at least 60 minutes
14 each day in open-ended play; and

15 WHEREAS, The widespread adoption of smartphones and social
16 media platforms has happened faster than with any other
17 communication technology in history and, according to the
18 American Academy of Pediatrics, children are spending an average
19 of seven hours each day on entertainment media, including
20 smartphones, television, and other electronic devices; and

21 WHEREAS, Major depressive episodes, anxiety, self-harm, and
22 suicide have become increasingly prevalent among American
23 teenagers; and

1 WHEREAS, The impact of excessive screen time and social
2 media use goes beyond mental health, impacting attention and
3 behavior problems, academic performance, sleep, exercise, and
4 in-person socialization; and

5 WHEREAS, Jonathan Haidt, a social psychologist and author
6 of *The Anxious Generation*, has asserted that a “great rewiring of
7 childhood” has taken place in which play-based childhood has
8 been replaced by phone-based childhood, and has shone a spotlight
9 on the rapid decline of teen mental health in the years since
10 smartphones and social media platforms became mainstream; and

11 WHEREAS, In May 2026, Congresswoman Jennifer McClellan
12 of Virginia introduced bipartisan legislation, the Promoting
13 Childhood Independence and Resilience Act of 2026, to boost
14 childhood independence, encourage children to participate in
15 reasonable independent activities, and promote outdoor in-person
16 socialization without screens; and

17 WHEREAS, The U.S. Department of Health and Human
18 Services has prioritized reducing the amount of time that children
19 spend on screens, citing it as a key health improvement priority;
20 now, therefore, be it

21 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California*, That the
22 Assembly encourages children’s playtime free from screens,
23 recognizes the importance of improving awareness of the impact
24 that social media and excessive screen time has on child
25 development, and supports complementary efforts at the state,
26 national, and global levels to protect children’s offline and outdoors
27 play; and be it further

28 *Resolved*, That the Assembly proclaims August 2026 as
29 Children’s Get Offline and Get Outdoors Month to draw attention
30 to the benefits of reduced screen time on children’s mental,
31 behavioral, and physical health and to highlight the need for
32 continued guardrails on social media and technology for all
33 children; and be it further

34 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
35 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

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Date of Hearing: August 20, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON RULES
Blanca Pacheco, Chair
HR 140 (Wicks) – As Introduced August 19, 2026

SUBJECT: Children’s Get Offline and Get Outdoors Month.

SUMMARY: Proclaims August 2026 as Children’s Get Offline and Get Outdoors Month to draw attention to the benefits of reduced screen time on children’s mental, behavioral, and physical health, and to highlight the need for continued guardrails on social media and technology for all children. Specifically, **this resolution** makes the following legislative findings:

- 1) Research shows that free play is an essential part of healthy childhood development because it improves children’s abilities to plan, organize, get along with others, regulate emotions, and cope with stress, and it aids in the development of language, math, and social skills.
- 2) Statistics show that the amount of free play time for children has been declining for decades due to tightly structured family and school schedules, fewer safe places to play, less societal willingness to let children spend time with other children unsupervised, and rising social media use and screen time.
- 3) The American Academy of Pediatrics links increases in depression and anxiety to a lack of unstructured playtime and recommends that children spend at least 60 minutes each day in open-ended play.
- 4) The widespread adoption of smartphones and social media platforms has happened faster than with any other communication technology in history and, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics, children are spending an average of seven hours each day on entertainment media, including smartphones, television, and other electronic devices.
- 5) Major depressive episodes, anxiety, self-harm, and suicide have become increasingly prevalent among American teenagers. The impact of excessive screen time and social media use goes beyond mental health, impacting attention and behavior problems, academic performance, sleep, exercise, and in-person socialization.
- 6) In May 2026, Congresswoman Jennifer McClellan of Virginia introduced bipartisan legislation, the Promoting Childhood Independence and Resilience Act of 2026, to boost childhood independence, encourage children to participate in reasonable independent activities, and promote outdoor in-person socialization without screens.
- 7) The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has prioritized reducing the amount of time that children spend on screens, citing it as a key health improvement priority.
- 8) The Assembly encourages children’s playtime free from screens, recognizes the importance of improving awareness of the impact that social media and excessive screen time has on child development, and supports complementary efforts at the state, national, and global levels to protect children’s offline and outdoors play.

FISCAL EFFECT: This resolution is keyed non-fiscal by Legislative Counsel.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

None on file

Opposition

None on file

Analysis Prepared by: Michael Erke / RLS. / (916) 319-2800

STANDING COMMITTEES
APPROPRIATIONS
ENERGY, UTILITIES AND
COMMUNICATIONS
GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION
JUDICIARY

California State Senate

STATE SENATOR

DR. AISHA WAHAB

TENTH SENATE DISTRICT

ASSISTANT MAJORITY LEADER

STANDING COMMITTEE
BUSINESS, PROFESSIONS
AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
CHAIR

SPECIAL COMMITTEE
INTERNATIONAL SPORTING EVENTS:
OLYMPICS AND WORLD CUP SOCCER
VICE CHAIR



August 19, 2026

Assemblymember Blanca Pacheco, Chair
Assembly Rules Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 6250
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 259 (Wahab) Urgency Clause Request

Dear Assemblymember Pacheco:

I am writing to respectfully request approval to add an urgency clause to SB 259, which will create a new felony offense for any person in charge of a completed vote-by-mail ballot who willfully interferes with, or causes interference in, the return of the ballot to local elections officials.

To ensure that these protections are in place before the November 2026 General Election, it is necessary that this act take effect immediately.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Aisha Wahab".

Dr. Aisha Wahab
State Senator, 10th District

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PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

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SUBSTANTIVE

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO SENATE BILL NO. 259

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY SEPTEMBER 9, 2025

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY SEPTEMBER 5, 2025

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JULY 10, 2025

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 19, 2025

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 13, 2025

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 24, 2025

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 8, 2025

AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 24, 2025



RN2620926

SENATE BILL

No. 259

Introduced by Senator Wahab

(Principal coauthor: Assembly Member Lowenthal)

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Connolly, Garcia, Haney, and Kalra)

Amendment 1

February 3, 2025

~~An act to add Chapter 40 (commencing with Section 22949.82) to Division 8 of the Business and Professions Code, relating to consumer protection. An act to amend Section 18577 of the Elections Code, relating to elections, and declaring the urgency thereof, to take effect immediately.~~

Amendment 2

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 259, as amended, Wahab. ~~Fair Online Pricing Act. Elections: vote by mail ballots.~~

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

SB 259

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SUBSTANTIVE

Existing law makes it a misdemeanor for any person having charge of a completed vote by mail ballot to interfere with a ballot's return to the local elections official.

This bill would additionally make it a misdemeanor for any person having charge of a vote by mail ballot to interfere, as defined, with a ballot's delivery to a voter. The bill would make it a felony for a person with authority to direct one or more persons subject to their supervision or authority to interfere with a ballot's return to the local elections official or delivery to a voter. By expanding the scope of an existing crime, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

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.

This bill would declare that it is to take effect immediately as an urgency statute.

~~The California Consumer Privacy Act of 2018 grants to a consumer various rights with respect to personal information, as defined, that is collected by a business, as defined, including the right to request that a business delete personal information about the consumer that the business has collected from the consumer and to direct a business that sells or shares personal information about the consumer to third parties not to sell or share the consumer's personal information.~~

~~This bill, the Fair Online Pricing Act, would, subject to specified exceptions, prohibit a price offered to a consumer through the consumer's online device, as defined, from being generated in whole, or in part, based on any of certain input data, including the presence or absence of any software on the online device.~~

~~Vote: majority $\frac{2}{3}$. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: ~~no~~-yes. State-mandated local program: ~~no~~-yes.~~

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

- + SECTION 1. Section 18577 of the Elections Code is amended
- + to read:
- + 18577. (a) Any person having charge of a completed vote by
- + mail ballot who willfully interferes or causes interference with its
- + return to the local elections official having jurisdiction over the

Amendment 3

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

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SB 259

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+ election is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment
+ in the county jail not exceeding six months, by a fine not exceeding
+ ten thousand dollars (\$10,000), or by both the fine and
+ imprisonment.

+ *(b) Any person having charge of a vote by mail ballot who*
+ *willfully interferes or causes interference with its delivery to a*
+ *voter is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment in*
+ *the county jail not exceeding six months, by a fine not exceeding*
+ *ten thousand dollars (\$10,000), or by both the fine and*
+ *imprisonment.*

+ *(c) Any person with authority who directs one or more other*
+ *persons subject to their supervision or authority to engage in the*
+ *conduct prohibited by subdivision (a) or (b) is guilty of a felony,*
+ *punishable by imprisonment pursuant to subdivision (h) of Section*
+ *1170 of the Penal Code for two, three, or four years.*

+ *(d) For purposes of this section, "interference" includes, but*
+ *is not limited to, providing unauthorized access to, breaking the*
+ *chain of custody for, or tampering with a vote by mail ballot, or,*
+ *having been designated to return a ballot under Section 3017,*
+ *failing to return that ballot to the applicable elections official.*

+ *SEC. 2. 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.*

+ *SEC. 3. This act is an urgency statute necessary for the*
+ *immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety within*
+ *the meaning of Article IV of the California Constitution and shall*
+ *go into immediate effect. The facts constituting the necessity are:*

+ *In order for the important election security protections in this*
+ *act to apply to the November 3, 2026, statewide general election,*
+ *it is necessary that this act take effect immediately.*

1 ~~SECTION 1. This act shall be known, and may be cited, as the~~
2 ~~Fair Online Pricing Act.~~

3 ~~SEC. 2. Chapter 40 (commencing with Section 22949.82) is~~
4 ~~added to Division 8 of the Business and Professions Code, to read:~~

Amendment 4

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

SB 259

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SUBSTANTIVE

Page 2 5 ~~CHAPTER 40. DEVICE-BASED PRICING~~
6
7
8 22949.82. (a) “Coupon” means any method by which a
9 consumer receives a discount on the purchase of any item that is
10 funded, produced, sponsored, promoted, or furnished, either
11 directly or indirectly, by a business, including, but not limited to,
12 a paper coupon, a digital coupon, or an instant redeemable coupon.
13 (b) “Discount” means any reduction from the regular or
14 advertised price offered to consumers on a temporary or conditional
15 basis.
16 (c) “Hardware state” means a condition or mode of existence
17 of a system, component, or simulation, including, but not limited
18 to, battery life, number of wireless connections detected, hardware
19 performance characteristics, and age of the device, data that is
20 erased when an online device is restarted or powered down, and
21 data that is retained when an online device is restarted or powered
22 down.
23 (d) “Online device” means a physical object that has built-in
24 resources that allow it to communicate through the internet or a
25 short-range wireless technology and react to interface conditions,
26 including, but not limited to, a laptop computer, a desktop
27 computer, a tablet, a smartphone, or other smart hardware.

Page 3 1 22949.82.1. (a) A price offered to a consumer through the
2 consumer’s online device shall not be generated in whole, or in
3 part, based on any of the following input data:
4 (1) (A) The hardware or hardware state of the online device.
5 (B) This paragraph shall not prohibit the generation of a price
6 offered to a consumer based on the hardware or hardware state of
7 the online device for the following purposes:
8 (i) Repairs or maintenance of the online device.
9 (ii) Calculating a trade-in value of the online device.
10 (2) The presence or absence of any software on the online
11 device.
12 (3) (A) Geolocation data of the online device, when used to set
13 a price based on inferences about the consumer made from this
14 data.
15 (B) Subparagraph (A) shall not prohibit the use of geolocation
16 data of the online device and the consumer’s location to generate
17 a price for reasons not specified in subparagraph (A), including,
18 but not limited to, either of the following:

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PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

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SB 259

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Page 3 19 ~~(i) To determine pricing based on the real-time demand for the~~
20 ~~product or service in the consumer's vicinity, if the product or~~
21 ~~service is provided immediately upon request.~~
22 ~~(ii) To provide accurate pricing information based on price~~
23 ~~variances at different physical locations, due to legitimate cost~~
24 ~~differentials associated with providing a good or service to different~~
25 ~~consumers or state or local government taxes, duties, or other fees~~
26 ~~imposed by state or local government on the transaction.~~
27 ~~(b) Nothing in this chapter shall prohibit any coupon, discount,~~
28 ~~or other bona fide rebate, sale, or promotion that is separate from~~
29 ~~the price, that reduces the price of goods or services, that is issued~~
30 ~~or offered to the general public on the same terms, and does not~~
31 ~~incorporate input data as specified in subdivision (a).~~
32 ~~22949.82.2. The duties and obligations imposed by this chapter~~
33 ~~are cumulative with any other duties or obligations imposed under~~
34 ~~other law and shall not be construed to relieve any party from any~~
35 ~~duties or obligations imposed under other law, including, but not~~
36 ~~limited to, duties or obligations related to the accurate advertising,~~
37 ~~displaying, or offering of prices.~~
38 ~~SEC. 3. The Legislature finds and declares that cellular~~
39 ~~broadcast technology is a critical service, especially during a state~~
40 ~~of emergency, and that this technology is inherently privacy~~
Page 4 1 ~~preserving as it does not use personal data, and as a unilateral~~
2 ~~one-to-many system that does not rely on the geolocation of an~~
3 ~~individual consumer's device, is not encompassed by the broadly~~
4 ~~understood term "geolocation" for purposes of this act.~~

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