



association of california  
school administrators

September 21, 2023

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
Governor, State of California  
1021 O Street, Suite 9000  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Senate Bill 553 (Cortese). Workplace violence prevention plan.  
Request for Veto**

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the organizations represented on this floor alert, we write to express our respectful opposition to Senate Bill 553 (Cortese) and request your veto of this measure related to workplace violence prevention plans. We fully support providing a safe worksite for both employees and those members of the public who are present on our county, special district, and school district facilities. However, we remain deeply concerned about this bill for the circumvention of existing administrative remedies and regulatory processes, as well as the fiscal burden of an unfunded mandate.

First, the expansion of temporary restraining order (TRO) filing authority to union representatives could undermine other existing administrative processes that are available currently to address employee safety concerns outside of the judicial system. SB 553 would require employers to conduct investigations in an expedited time frame to provide evidence which is beyond the means of many public employers' staffing capacity. In addition, there are other types of restraining orders to provide similar protections without creating conflicts with an employer's deliberative investigations into reported issues. It is not clear to our organizations why this additional authority and disruption is needed or appropriate.

Second, unlike private industries that have cost recovery mechanism, local fee authority does not allow for cost recovery to accommodate new administrative burdens. For school districts alone, the initial workplace violence prevention plan training component for just one hour would be approximately \$19 million in Proposition 98 dollars. This does not include the direct administrative costs for developing and revising the plan and associated record keeping. Making matters worse, the bill states

there is no mandate reimbursement eligibility for the new requirements imposed by SB 553.

Finally, from a broader standpoint, we believe the deliberative, stakeholder-inclusive regulatory process that created the draft guidance on this topic should be allowed to continue. Efforts to circumvent regulatory drafting efforts may not result in meaningful policy changes and could create unintended consequences for the various impacted parties.

In closing, local agencies take employee safety seriously. There are existing requirements across various statutes for public employers to provide workplace protections specific to those job duties or job settings. SB 553 would not necessarily result in an immediate resolution to current workplace violence problems in certain industries but does represent a drain on current public resources. For these reasons, we respectfully request that you veto SB 553. If you have any questions regarding our position please contact Dorothy Johnson, Legislative Advocate, Association of California School Administrators, at (916) 329-3807.

Sincerely,




Dorothy Johnson  
Legislative Advocate  
Association of California School Administrators



Aaron Avery  
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Legislative Director  
California School Boards Association

cc: The Honorable David Cortese, California State Senate  
Mary Hernandez, Chief Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of Governor  
Newsom