

Date of Hearing: April 21, 2026

Fiscal: No

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON PRIVACY AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

Rebecca Bauer-Kahan, Chair

AB 1837 (Mark González) – As Amended March 12, 2026

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

SUBJECT: Video imaging of parking violations

SYNOPSIS

To this point, California has taken an incremental approach at phasing in automated enforcement of certain laws. In 1994, the Legislature authorized automated rail crossing enforcement systems, recognizing the potentially fatal consequences of the relevant violations. Over the following years, the trend moved to red-light cameras on a trial basis that was then made permanent. Likewise, speed cameras, in certain jurisdictions and subject to certain conditions, have been allowed. Initially, as it pertains to this bill, a very limited pilot was authorized in San Francisco to install cameras on public transit vehicles, for the first time explicitly authorizing automated enforcement of parking violations. However, this program was limited to transit-only lanes. A similar trial was authorized in connection with the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District (AC Transit). Both programs came with requirements to report back to the Legislature on the impact of the programs. In 2021, the pilot was expanded statewide with a 5-year sunset date and reporting requirements. This bill proposes eliminating the sunset date altogether.

The privacy protections in the current program limit the retention period for the videos, provide clear limitations on the use of the images captured by these cameras, and, with the Committee amendments, require the blurring of any passively captured cars or people. However, as with other tools of surveillance, prohibitions in state law related to how the equipment is used do not necessarily guarantee compliance or sufficient protection. As a result, a system that captures images of cars or faces for any law enforcement purpose, including parking violations, puts the privacy of individuals at risk.

To better understand the impact on people's privacy, the required evaluation for the current program included an assessment of the effectiveness of the privacy provisions. Unfortunately, not all transportation districts have conducted the required evaluations and for some of those that have, the evaluations lack any real detail or analysis. As a result, the Committee amendments described in Comment #5 extend the sunset for seven years, instead of removing it altogether, and clarify that additional detail needs to be included in evaluations, for those that have not yet done them.

This bill is co-sponsored by California Transit Association, Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit District, Alameda Contra Costa Transit District, and Streets for All. In addition, the bill enjoys the support of a number of other transit districts and agencies. There is no registered opposition.

This bill was previously heard by the Transportation Committee, where it passed on a 14-1 vote.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Authorizes a public transit operator to install automated forward facing parking control devices on city-owned or district-owned public transit vehicles for the purpose of video imaging of parking violations occurring in transit only traffic lanes and at transit stops until January 1, 2027. (Veh. Code § 40240 (a).)
- 2) Authorizes a transit operator in the City and County of San Francisco to install automated forward facing parking control devices on city-owned or district-owned public transit vehicles for the purpose of video imaging of parking violations occurring in transit only traffic lanes. (Veh. Code § 40240 (a).)
- 3) States that citations shall only be issued for violations captured during the posted hours of operation for a transit-only traffic lane. Requires designated employees to review video image recordings for the purpose of determining whether a parking violation occurred in a transit-only traffic lane and permits alleged violators to review the video image evidence of the alleged violation during normal business hours at no cost. (Veh. Code § 40420.)
- 4) Authorizes designated employees to review video image recordings for the purpose of determining whether a parking violation occurred in a transit-only traffic lane and permits alleged violators to review the video image evidence of the alleged violation during normal business hours at no cost. (Veh. Code § 40240(c).)
- 5) Requires automated forward facing parking control devices to be angled and focused so as to capture video images of parking violations and not unnecessarily capture identifying images of other drivers, vehicles, and pedestrians. (Veh. Code § 40240(a).)
- 6) Requires that prior to issuing notices of parking violations in transit-only lanes using bus-mounted video equipment, the City and County of San Francisco and Alameda-Contra Costa Transit commence a program to issue only warning notices for 60 days and make a public announcement of the program at least 60 days prior to commencement of issuing notices of parking violations. (Veh. Code § 40240(b).)
- 7) Defines a “transit-only traffic lane” to mean any designated transit-only lane on which use is restricted to mass transit vehicles, or other designated vehicles including taxis and vanpools, during posted times. (Veh. Code § 40240(g)(2).)

THIS BILL:

- 1) Makes permanent a previously authorized pilot program that allows transit agencies to enforce parking violations in transit-only lanes and at transit stops using video images.
- 2) Requires a public transit operator to issue warning notices when it uses video images for enforcement of a violation that it has not previously used video imaging to enforce, specifically for parking in transit-only lanes and at transit stops
- 3) Requires a transit operator that implements an automated enforcement system to enforce parking violations, who did not have an automated enforcement system in operation at any time prior to January 1, 2027, to provide the Transportation, Privacy, and Judiciary Committees of the Legislature an evaluation report that contains the following information:

- a. The enforcement system's effectiveness.
- b. Impact on privacy.
- c. Impact on traffic outcomes.
- d. Cost to implement.
- e. Change in citations issued.
- f. Generation of revenue two years after the implementation of the system.

4) Repeals the evaluation requirement on January 1, 2031.

COMMENTS:

1) **Author's statement.** According to the author:

The only way to keep Californians moving is by ensuring public transportation is on time and uninterrupted. I am proud to AB 1837 will ensure those who choose to park in designated bus lanes are cited for their action. Disrupting the flow of these lanes is not only about delaying commuters' schedules, but also about the safety of the passengers and transit workers. By keeping these lanes clear, our neighbors don't have to cross dangerous gaps in the street, or that busses have access to the sidewalk for disabled riders who require use of ADA ramps.

2) **Background.** While some counties may have installed automated traffic enforcement systems at an earlier date, legislative authorization for automated enforcement procedures relating to traffic violations began in 1994 with SB 1802.¹ That bill authorized the use of "automated rail crossing enforcement systems" to enforce prohibitions on drivers from passing around or under rail crossings while the gates are closed.² Those systems functioned by photographing the front license plate and the driver of vehicles who proceeded around closed rail crossing gates in violation of the Vehicle Code provisions. The drivers of photographed vehicles, in turn, received citations for their violations.

In 1995, the Legislature authorized a three-year trial for red light camera enforcement programs. (SB 833, Kopp, Ch. 922, Stats. 1995.) Using similar technology, that program used sensors connected to cameras to take photographs of the front license plate and driver upon entering an intersection on a red light. That program was permanently extended in 1998 by SB 1136 (Kopp, Ch. 54, Stats. 1998).

In 2007, the Legislature authorized a four-year pilot project where San Francisco was authorized to install video cameras on city-owned public transit vehicles for the purpose of video imaging parking violations occurring in transit-only traffic lanes. (AB 101, Ma, Ch. 377, Stats. 2007.) Three years later, the Legislature authorized a five-year statewide pilot project to allow local public agencies to use automated parking enforcement systems for street sweeping-related violations. (AB 2567, Bradford, Ch. 471, Stats. 2010.) In 2011, the Legislature extended San Francisco's automated transit-only lane enforcement program for an additional year and required the City and County to provide a report to the Transportation and Judiciary Committees of the Legislature no later than March 1, 2015, describing the effectiveness of the pilot program and its impact on privacy. (AB 1041, Ma, Ch. 325, Stats. 2011.) Following the receipt of that report, San

¹ Rosenthal; Ch. 1216, Stats. 1994

² Veh. Code § 22451.

San Francisco's transit-only lane enforcement program was permanently extended in AB 1287 (Chiu, Ch. 485, Stats. 2015).

The following year, AB 1051 (Hancock, Ch. 427, Stats. 2016) authorized AC Transit to operate an automated transit-only lane enforcement program similar to San Francisco's with a sunset on January 1, 2022. AC Transit was required to provide to the Transportation, Privacy and Consumer Protection, and Judiciary Committees of the Legislature an evaluation report of the enforcement system's effectiveness, impact on privacy, cost to implement, and generation of revenue, no later than January 1, 2021.³

In 2021, AB 917 (Bloom, Ch. 709, Stats. 2021) extended the sunset to January 1, 2027, and opened the pilot to anyone in the state.

3) Privacy protections contained in this bill. This Committee regularly expresses significant concerns about the widespread use of surveillance technology, including in a recent informational hearing on mass surveillance. In fact, for the last 50 years, legislators in California, along with privacy experts, have been ringing alarm bells about the dangers of increasing government, and private, surveillance. In 1972, at the Legislature's urging, the people of California used the initiative process to add "privacy" to the list of "inalienable rights" in the state constitution.⁴ Proponents noted the initiative was specifically designed to preserve Californians' private lives and fundamental rights in the face of technological advances. They argued: "The right of privacy is the right to be left alone. . . . It prevents government and business interests from collecting and stockpiling unnecessary information about us and from misusing information gathered for one purpose in order to serve other purposes. . . ."⁵

Because this bill authorizes the use of a surveillance tool on cars, drivers, and passersby, the primary concern of this Committee is to ensure that there are sufficient privacy protections. Toward that end, the existing pilot program contains the following protections:

- Requires the devices to be angled and focused to capture video images of parking violations and not unnecessarily capture identifying images of other drivers, vehicles, and pedestrians.
- Establishes a retention period of up to six months from the date the information was first obtained, or 60 days after final disposition of the citation, whichever date is later, after which time the information shall be destroyed.
- Requires that video image evidence from forward facing automated enforcement devices that does not contain evidence of a parking violation occurring in a transit-only traffic lane or at a transit stop shall be destroyed within 15 days after the information was first obtained.
- Generally, prohibits video image data and records collected from being used or processed by an automated license plate recognition system.

³ Veh. Code § 40240.5.

⁴ California Proposition 11 (1972), "Constitutional Right to Privacy Amendment."

⁵ *Right of Privacy California Proposition 11*, UC L. SF SCHOLARSHIP REPOSITORY (1972), pp. 26–27, https://repository.uclawsf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1761&context=ca_ballot_props.

- Requires that video image records remain confidential and shall only be used for the parking enforcement program.
- Exempts any footage captured from disclosure under the Public Records Act and allows public agencies to use and allow access to the data only for parking enforcement.

As detailed in comment #5, the Committee amendments add the additional requirement that any unnecessarily captured images of other drivers, vehicles, or pedestrians be blurred.

4) Inadequate evaluations. The California Constitution provides that all people have inalienable rights, including the right to pursue and obtain privacy.⁶ Attaching surveillance cameras to the front of mass transit vehicles erodes that right, as does virtually all surveillance technology. In the case of this pilot project, the privacy implications of equipping large numbers of transit vehicles with forward-facing video cameras that record not only other vehicles, but also individuals on sidewalks and commercial and residential property adjacent to the roadway should not be taken lightly. While the Legislature endeavors to ensure that relevant statutes include stringent privacy requirements, without robust evaluation and feedback, it is difficult to know whether those protections are sufficient.

To better understand the impact on people's privacy, the required evaluation included an assessment of the effectiveness of the privacy provisions. Unfortunately, not all transportation districts have conducted the required evaluations and for some of those that have, the evaluations lack any real detail or analysis. As an example, Alameda Contra Costa Transit District, a co-sponsor of the bill, notes in their support letter:

The necessity of this technology is evident in AC Transit's current deployment, now operating on 100 buses across Alameda County. On-time performance has improved by nearly six percent on routes using the cameras and citation trends show that the technology effectively discourages illegal parking. Additionally, the law requires AC Transit to report to the Legislature on the program's impact on privacy. *As noted in our recent report, individuals cited under the law have not raised any privacy concerns.* [Emphasis added.]

Crucially, the statute governing the pilot project evaluations requires public transit operators, including the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District, conduct an evaluation report on the enforcement system's effectiveness, *impact on privacy*, impact on traffic outcomes, cost to implement, change in citations issued, and generation of revenue. While it may be that the statute lacks sufficient detail, it does not state that the evaluation of privacy should hinge only on whether a person who has been cited has raised any privacy concerns.

As a result of the quality of the evaluations along with the missing reports, the Committee amendments extend the sunset for seven years, instead of removing it altogether, and clarify that additional detail needs to be included in evaluations, for those that have not yet done them.

5) Amendments. The author has agreed to the following committee amendments, detailed below, that extend the sunset for seven years, rather than eliminating it; prohibit a district from joining the pilot in its last two years; increase privacy protections; and add additional requirements to the evaluation. The specific amendments are as follows:

⁶ Cal. Const., art. I, Sec. 1.

40240.

(a) (1) A public transit operator, as defined in Section 99210 of the Public Utilities Code, may install automated forward facing parking control devices on city-owned or district-owned public transit vehicles, as defined by Section 99501 of the Public Utilities Code, for the purpose of video imaging of parking violations occurring in transit-only traffic lanes and at transit stops. Citations shall be issued only for violations captured during the posted hours of operation for a transit-only traffic lane or during the scheduled operating hours at transit stops.

(2) The devices shall be angled and focused so as to capture video images of parking violations and not unnecessarily capture identifying images of other drivers, vehicles, and pedestrians. The devices shall record the date and time of the violation at the same time as the video images are captured. Transit agencies may share the relevant data, video, and images of parking violations collected by automated forward facing parking control devices with the local parking enforcement entity and local agency in the jurisdiction where the violation occurred. A transit operator, ~~including the City and County of San Francisco and the Alameda Contra Costa Transit District,~~ may only install forward facing cameras pursuant to this section if the examiner or issuing agency, as described in Section 40215, includes options to reduce or waive the payment of a parking penalty if the examiner or issuing agency determines that the person is an indigent person as defined in Section 40220.

(f) Notwithstanding Article 1 (commencing with Section 7922.500) and Article 2 (commencing with Section 7922.525) of Chapter 1 of Part 3 of Division 10 of Title 1 of the Government Code, or any other law, the video image records are confidential. **Public Local** agencies shall use and allow access to these records only for the purposes authorized by this article, *these records shall not be used or accessed for general law enforcement purposes or by Federal authorities, and shall not use biometric identifying technology, including but not limited to facial recognition technology that identifies specific individuals, without a court order from a federal or California court of competent jurisdiction. Any images of other drivers, non-relevant vehicle license plates, or pedestrians unnecessarily captured, shall be blurred.*

(h) This section shall remain in effect only until ***December 31, 2034, January 1, 2027,*** and as of that date is repealed. ***A public transit operator may not implement a program after December 31, 2032 to comply with the requirements of section 40240.5.***

40240.5.

(a) A public transit operator that implements an automated enforcement system to enforce parking violations, who has not ***submitted that required evaluation of their program,*** ~~had an automated enforcement system in operation at any time prior to January 1, 2027,~~ pursuant to this article, shall provide to the transportation, privacy, and judiciary committees of the Legislature an evaluation report of the enforcement system's effectiveness, impact on privacy, impact on traffic outcomes, cost to implement, change in citations issued, and generation of-revenue ***that includes the precise data and methodology used to draw the conclusions contained in the report,*** two years after the implementation of the system.

(b) A report submitted pursuant to this section shall be submitted in compliance with Section 9795 of the Government Code.

(c) Pursuant to Section 10231.5 of the Government Code, this section is repealed on January 1, ~~2031~~**2035**.

40241.

(f) This section shall remain in effect only until **December 31, 2034**, ~~January 1, 2027~~, and as of that date is repealed.

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT: Streets for All, co-sponsors of the bill, write in support:

AB 1837 extends and expands the authorization for public transit agencies to use video imaging technology to enforce parking violations that obstruct transit operations. The bill allows transit agencies to use forward-facing cameras on transit vehicles to identify vehicles illegally blocking transit-only lanes and transit stops.

Across California, illegally parked vehicles frequently block transit lanes and bus stops. These obstructions slow buses and force riders to board in unsafe conditions, increasing crash risks. Current authorization for automated enforcement is set to expire, limiting agencies' ability to continue using this tool.

AB 1837 addresses this issue by extending authorization for automated video enforcement and expanding it to cover additional violations next to stopped vehicles. The bill also requires a 60-day warning period before citations are issued for newly enforced violations.

Reliable transit is essential to reducing car dependency and building a safer and more reliable transportation system for millions of people. This technology also eases the mental toll of the bus operator job, which increases operator retention at a critical time of bus driver shortages. By helping keep bus lanes and bus stops clear of illegal parking, AB 1837 supports faster transit service for our transit riders.

California Transit Association, also co-sponsors, notes:

AB 917 (Bloom, 2021) authorized transit agencies statewide to install forward-facing cameras on their transit vehicles to collect images of parking violations that occur in transit-only lanes and at transit stops. The images are then sent to a locality's parking enforcement division or to local law enforcement who review the violation and, if warranted, issue a parking citation through the mail to the registered vehicle owner. Existing law allows a reviewing agency to decline to issue a ticket if the video shows evidence of a hardship, contains privacy protections (at no point do transit agencies have access to personally identifying information), and sets noticing requirements for a newly enacted program, as well as a 60-day warning period. Parking citations do not negatively impact a driver's record, carry the same fine as a parking ticket, and can be appealed. In 2021, we worked with the Committee to establish the law's existing provisions, which have since been modeled by several other pieces of legislation dealing with the use of cameras to enforce the rules of the road.

California has witnessed a growing number of cars on the state's roads in recent years, and with it an increase in drivers parking in designated transit-only lanes and at transit stops. Illegal parking in these zones compromises transit operators' ability to provide safe, reliable, and accessible public transit service. Until the vehicle relocates, transit-only lanes, general

traffic lanes, and transit stops are effectively rendered out of service. This reduces transit system reliability by slowing down transit vehicle speeds and negatively impacts transit riders. Data from recent reports from transit operators show that these programs deter this behavior and improve transit service. Additionally, the reports required under the law dictate that operators discuss their program's "impact on privacy." Each report submitted indicates individuals cited under the law have not raised any privacy concerns.

In addition to the service impacts, a partially blocked transit stop creates significant safety concerns. When a transit operator cannot reach the curb, riders are forced to negotiate the street and the gap that is created between the transit vehicle and the curb. This is a potentially dangerous maneuver for riders to make, and an impossible one for those with a disability or mobility limitations, including seniors.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Alameda-contra Costa Transit District (ac Transit) (Co-Sponsor)
California Transit Association (Co-Sponsor)
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Co-Sponsor)
Streets for All (Co-Sponsor)
California Public Parking Association
City and County of San Francisco
Monterey-Salinas Transit District
Sacramento Regional Transit District
San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA)
San Mateo County Transit District (SAMTRANS)
Santa Monica Department of Transportation

Opposition

None on file.

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