



SENATOR
RICARDOLARA
LEGISLATIVE FACTSHEET

Privacy Protection Act Senate Bill 244

Summary:

SB 244 will protect the personal information of all individuals that is collected or obtained by state and local agencies for administration of public programs.

Background:

Every day, state and local agencies gather and store personal information to process applications from members of the public and to administer programs and deliver services. While state and federal privacy protection laws provide many safeguards for state residents, their private information may be vulnerable to new threats, and misuse of this information could have devastating consequences.

This “good government” bill reinforces and strengthens longstanding principles in federal and state law by ensuring that state and local agencies can focus on their mission of providing critical services to the state’s residents. It ensures that all residents, regardless of religion, health condition, gender, gender identity, citizenship, immigration status or status as a survivor of crime feel comfortable interacting with government agencies, with an expectation that their information will be confidential.

California’s civil rights laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, age, disability, medical condition, marital status, and sexual orientation. SB 244 builds on those principles by protecting the personal information of all Californians.

Problem:

Over the past 15 years, California has charted a notable path forward for immigrant integration that today includes laws that authorize health care for all children, professional licenses, driver’s licenses, college grants, loans, and in-state tuition for eligible residents regardless of their status. This leadership is due in large part to collaboration and bipartisanship between members of both parties who recognize the significance and value of integrating our immigrant populations.

With some of the most inclusive laws, our state has consistently sought to fully incorporate and protect all residents regardless of their religion, gender, gender

identity, health condition, immigration, citizenship, or status as a crime survivor. These laws provide public services and programs that offer access to professional or business licenses, driver’s licenses, financial aid, and health care. The intent of these laws was to ensure that all residents have access to critical services and can contribute to and participate fully in our economy. The misuse of private information gathered for the purpose of administering these programs would undermine the public safety and health goals of our laws.

Solution:

SB 244 prohibits state and local agencies from collecting or recording information that isn’t necessary to administer a program, and from disclosing records containing personal information for purposes not directly related to administering those services and programs. Under the provisions in this bill, schools and government agencies would be empowered to focus on their missions and ensure that personal information is protected to the greatest degree allowed by law.

These provisions align with the spirit and intent of our current laws, which are intended to protect all Californians regardless of religion, health condition, gender, gender identity, citizenship or immigration status, or status as a crime survivor. Importantly, this measure will ensure that people can continue to seek state programs and services without the fear of retaliation.

This act strikes an appropriate balance between the public’s right to access information about the conduct of their government agencies and the need to protect the personal information of private individuals who participate in public programs or receive public services.

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