

CONCURRENCE IN SENATE AMENDMENTS

AB 715 (Zbur and Addis)

As Amended September 9, 2025

Majority vote

SUMMARY

Establishes an Office of Civil Rights (OCR) at the Government Operations Agency (GovOps), and establishes an Antisemitism Prevention Coordinator within the OCR; requires that all instruction be factually accurate, aligned to state curriculum, and consistent with accepted standards of professional responsibility, rather than advocacy, personal opinion, bias, or partisanship; requires that any organization contracted with a local education agency (LEA) to provide curriculum, instructional materials, or professional development which is found by an LEA or the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to have violated specified anti-discrimination statutes to reimburse all funds received for their services from the LEA, and notify every LEA with which they contract of this finding; and becomes operative only upon enactment of SB 48 of this Session, among other provisions.

Senate Amendments

- 1) Delete the contents of the bill as it passed the Assembly.

Office of Civil Rights:

- 2) Establish the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), under the administration of the Government Operations Agency (GovOps), and requires that the director be appointed by the Governor and subject to confirmation by the Senate. States that the purpose of the OCR is to work directly with LEAs to prevent and address discrimination and bias. Require that the OCR engage with, and seek advice from, its coordinators on actions it implements.
- 3) Require the OCR, in consultation with the California Department of Education (CDE), and under the supervision of the GovOps, to do all of the following:
 - a) Provide education and educational resources to identify and prevent antisemitism and other forms of discrimination and bias, and share relevant laws and regulations with educational state agencies, LEAs, and community stakeholders;
 - b) Annually submit a report to the GovOps, the SPI, the executive director of the State Board of Education (SBE), and the Legislature on the state of discrimination and bias in all LEAs. Require that the report include specific information on the type of discrimination or bias against a group protected by Education Code Section 220. Require that the report be posted on the CDE's website;
 - c) Recommend strategies to combat discrimination or bias against groups protected by Education Code Section 220 in LEAs, to the CDE and LEAs, including proactive strategies using a restorative justice approach with a focus on repairing harm, fostering empathy, and healing relationships; and

- d) Beginning on January 1, 2027, annually review a report the CDE would be required to provide to the OCR that includes a summary of all complaints that involve discrimination. Require that the summary include specific information on the type of discrimination or bias against groups protected by Section 220, any action taken by the CDE in response to each complaint and the timeline for that action, and the disposition of each complaint.
- e) Advise on subsequent action regarding complaints that involve discrimination, including either or both of the following:
 - i) Working with the CDE and the relevant county office of education (COE), if appropriate, to implement corrective actions that may include, but not be limited to, targeted and intensive assistance for teachers, administrators and staff to identify and proactively prevent antisemitism and other forms of discrimination and bias and on restorative justice practices; or
 - ii) Provide technical assistance to teachers, administrators, governing board or body members, or other school staff, upon the request of the SPI, district superintendent, county superintendent of schools, or the governing board or body of a LEA, in order to resolve discrimination issues at schoolsites.
- f) Provide assistance, in consultation with the office of the Attorney General (AG) and the CDE, on proper protocols to respond to discrimination complaints.
- g) Subject to an appropriation by the Legislature for this purpose, develop a training module, in consultation with the CDE, the executive director of the SBE, and the office of the AG, regarding the appropriate manner to process and resolve discrimination complaints. Require the training module to include, but not be limited to, information on timelines, appeals, and protocols regarding the interaction with pupils, parents, and school staff, in resolving complaints in a timely manner.

Antisemitism Prevention Coordinator:

- 4) Require the OCR to employ the Antisemitism Prevention Coordinator, to be appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate.
- 5) Require the Antisemitism Prevention Coordinator, in consultation with the CDE, and under the supervision of the GovOps, to do all of the following:
 - a) Develop, consult on, and provide antisemitism education to teachers, staff, governing board or body members, administrators, and other LEA personnel to identify and proactively prevent antisemitism;
 - b) Make recommendations, in coordination with the executive director of the SBE, to the Legislature, on legislation necessary for the prevention of antisemitism in educational settings;
 - c) Engage and advise on the actions taken by the OCR on issues relating to antisemitism

and the Jewish community;

- d) Engage with LEAs on the handling of antisemitism;
 - e) Track and report to the Legislature, the executive director of the SBE, and the SPI, complaints and resolutions or lack of resolutions of complaints made pursuant to Education Code Section 33315 relating to antisemitism in all LEAs; and
 - f) Engage with relevant community stakeholders, as determined by the Antisemitism Prevention Coordinator, in the execution of their duties.
- 6) Require that the United States National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism published by the Biden Administration on May 25, 2023 be a basis to inform the work of the Antisemitism Prevention Coordinator on how to identify, respond to, and counter antisemitism.
 - 7) States the intent of the Legislature to enact future legislation to do both of the following:
 - a) Establish coordinators to be employed within the office to prevent and address discrimination and bias; and
 - b) Enact the duties and responsibilities of the coordinators.
 - 8) Require that the reports or summaries not contain any personally identifying information about any individual, and that the information in the report be sufficiently de-identified to prevent the identification of the individuals involved in the complaint.

Instruction and instructional materials:

- 9) Require that “teacher instruction” be:
 - a) Factually accurate;
 - b) Align with the adopted curriculum and standards; and
 - c) Be consistent with the accepted standards of professional responsibility, rather than advocacy, personal opinion, bias, or partisanship.
- 10) Prohibit the SBE and any governing board from adopting any textbooks or other instructional materials for use in the public schools that contain any matter reflecting adversely upon persons on the basis of race or ethnicity, gender, religion, disability, nationality, or sexual orientation, or because of a characteristic listed in Education Code Section 220, or that violates Sections 243, 244, 51500, or 60044.
- 11) Require instructional materials, including but not limited to materials adopted by the SBE or any governing body to be factually accurate and reflect the adopted curriculum and standards and be consistent with accepted standards of professional responsibility, rather

than advocacy personal opinion, bias, or partisanship.

Curriculum, instructional materials, professional development provided by contractors:

- 12) Require that if instructional materials are found to violate Education Code Section 244, those instructional materials are immediately and permanently omitted from all course materials and not be used in any current course offerings or any subsequent course offerings.
- 13) Require that corrective action be implemented as soon as possible and no later than the beginning of the next school year.
- 14) Require that, if an LEA or the SPI determines that, pursuant to a complaint filed directly with the SPI or on appeal of a LEA's decision regarding a complaint, an organization contracted to provide any textbook, instructional material, professional development material, supplemental instructional material, or curriculum violates subdivision (a) of Section 244, the LEA or the SPI shall notify the organization that it must take corrective action. Authorize the CDE, if corrective action is not taken within 60 days, to use any means authorized by law to effect compliance.
- 15) Require an organization that contracts to provide a textbook, instructional material, professional development material, supplemental instructional material, or curriculum that the LEA or the SPI determines to be a violation of subdivision (a) of Section 244 to do both of the following:
 - a) Reimburse all funds received for their services from the LEA; and
 - b) Disclose the determination that they have been found in violation of the state's antidiscrimination laws by notifying every LEA that they are contracted with to provide services for and as part of any proposal to contract their services with a LEA. Require this disclosure to conspicuously display hyperlinks to the published documentation of the determination.
- 16) Extend the prohibition against the adoption or approval of discriminatory instructional materials to professional development materials.
- 17) Require that, if the governing board of a school district, a county board of education, or the governing body of a charter school (governing board or body) knows or has reason to know that materials were used in a classroom or an action occurred that violated the anti-discrimination provisions of Education Code Section 220, it investigate and remediate the action, which may include, but is not limited to, the implementation of restorative justice practices.
- 18) Prohibit a governing board or body from adopting or approving the use of any professional development materials or services if it promotes, endorses, or otherwise supports actions, or the use of any textbook, instructional material, supplemental instructional material, or curriculum that would subject a pupil to unlawful discrimination pursuant to Education Code Section 220.

Complaints:

- 19) Authorize, in accordance with existing regulations, a party to a written complaint of prohibited discrimination to appeal based on a governing board of an LEA's failure to issue an investigation report within the required timeline directly with the SPI. Require that the complaint present the SPI with evidence that supports the basis for the direct filing and why immediate action is necessary. Require the CDE, prior to direct intervention by the SPI, to attempt to work with the LEA and issue an LEA Investigation Report directly with the SPI.
- 20) Permit a person who alleges a violation of specified anti-discrimination provisions of law rather than a person who alleges that they are a victim of discrimination, to seek civil remedies after 60 days have elapsed from the filing of an appeal to the CDE.
- 21) State that discriminatory bias in instruction and school-sponsored activities does not require a showing of direct harm to members of a protected group, and that members of a protected group do not need to be present while the discriminatory bias is occurring for the act to be considered discriminatory bias.
- 22) Require corrective action if the governing board or body of an LEA finds that instruction or school-sponsored activities are discriminatory.
- 23) Require the CDE, pursuant to the notification made to an LEA, to require specified corrective action be taken by the LEA, including, but not limited to, any of the following:
 - a) Obtaining technical assistance from the OCR;
 - b) Requiring the LEA to engage in regular reporting to the OCR and to use alternative instructional materials; and
 - c) Requiring the LEA, in consultation with the OCR, to develop and implement an improvement plan to address discrimination and antibias at its schoolsites.
- 24) Require that if a violation involves antisemitism, the improvement plan be created in consultation with the Antisemitism Prevention Coordinator.

Parent notification and access to materials:

- 25) Require that the annual parent notification advise the parents of the protections, requirements, and responsibilities prescribed in this measure.
- 26) Require that LEAs ensure that parents and guardians have access to materials in a reasonable amount of time pursuant to the California Public Records Act.

Other provisions:

- 27) Require the CDE, by October 1 of each year, to issue a management bulletin to all LEAs describing the protections, requirements, and responsibilities prescribed in specified Education Code sections.
- 28) Require the SPI, in consultation with the executive director of the SBE and the Antisemitism Prevention Coordinator established by this measure, to develop and maintain a distinct page on its website containing resources and information specific to antisemitism.
- 29) Make the provisions of this act severable.
- 30) Make operation of this measure contingent upon the enactment of SB 48 of this Session.
- 31) Add findings and declarations.

COMMENTS

Major provisions of this bill. As passed by this Committee in July, this bill would have prohibited the governing boards from allowing the use of any curriculum or instructional materials that would subject a pupil to unlawful discrimination; changed the definitions of nationality and religion for purposes of prohibitions on discrimination in public schools; and stated the intent of the Legislature to strengthen protections against discrimination in various ways.

Those provisions of the bill have since been removed, and new provisions have been added. The current version of the bill, as amended on September 9, 2025, contains the following major provisions, among others:

- Creates an Office of Civil Rights at the Government Operations Agency;
- Establishes an Antisemitism Prevention Coordinator position within the OCR, establishes its duties, and requires that U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism, (2023) be a basis to inform the Antisemitism Prevention Coordinator on how to identify, respond to, prevent, and counter antisemitism;
- Requires that all instruction be “factually accurate,” aligned to the state curriculum, and consistent with “accepted standards of professional responsibility, rather than advocacy, personal opinion, bias, or partisanship;”
- Requires that any organization contracted with an LEA to provide curriculum, instructional materials, or professional development which is found by an LEA or the SPI to have violated specified anti-discrimination statutes to reimburse all funds received for their services from the LEA, and notify every LEA with which they contract of this finding; and
- Makes the measure operative only if SB 48 of this Session is enacted. SB 48, as recently amended, would establish various Coordinator positions within the OCR to prevent discrimination on the basis of religion, gender, race/ethnicity, and LGBTQ+. SB 48 will be operative only if AB 715 is enacted.

New limits on instruction and instructional materials. This bill requires that all “teacher instruction” and instructional materials be:

- Factually accurate;
- Align with the adopted curriculum and standards; and
- Be consistent with accepted standards of professional responsibility, rather than advocacy, personal opinion, bias, or partisanship.

While the term “teacher instruction” is undefined, Education Code section 46300 defines instructional time to mean any time a student is attending school and is under the immediate supervision and control of a certificated employee of the school district. Without further clarification, the above requirements could be understood to apply, with the exception of times when students are under the supervision of classified staff, from “bell to bell.”

Educators have always been expected to provide accurate information in their instruction and follow the state-adopted curriculum. Establishing these expectations as a matter of law, however, raises a number of important questions. Is it reasonable to require teachers to ensure that everything they say during a school day is factually accurate and free of opinion? Will teachers narrow the curriculum in order to avoid risking disciplinary action?

As the California School Boards Association notes, this requirement may cause schools to “hesitate to engage students in thoughtful, academically sound discussions of complex historical or political topics out of fear that their context could be misinterpreted as noncompliant. The threat of complaints and investigations may lead educators to avoid controversial subjects altogether, which would ultimately narrow the curriculum and undermine student learning.”

Beyond practical and political concerns, an emphasis on factual accuracy reflects a narrower view of teaching and learning than the California curriculum promotes. In some subjects, such as the humanities and the arts, individual interpretation and expression are core part of instruction. Even in the STEM subjects, instruction should foster creative problem solving, curiosity, and exploration. As technology rapidly changes the workforce and society as a whole, schools will increasingly need to focus on developing students’ distinctly human skills, such as critical thinking, creativity, curiosity, communication, and collaboration with others.

The requirement that instruction align with the state-adopted curriculum raises additional concerns. Teachers have always had the ability to introduce new content, in order to keep their subjects current, to explore new ways of teaching concepts, and even simply to make school engaging for students. It is unclear if content beyond the adopted curriculum could be delivered under the requirements of this bill.

This bill also extends these requirements to instructional materials, including but not limited to those adopted by an LEA’s governing board. Teachers frequently use materials they develop or find, to supplement the adopted materials. Would all materials teachers use have to be factually accurate and free of opinion?

Additionally, the limitation on “advocacy,” a term which is not defined, may cause confusion and limit educators’ ability to teach. Would a poster of women mathematicians, posted to promote gender equality in STEM, be considered unlawful advocacy by a teacher? Could a teacher advocate for the right of his undocumented students to attend certain classes with their peers – a legal right recently threatened by the federal government? Would it be lawful to celebrate Black History Month or Pride Month at school?

Finally, whose facts are we talking about? This requirement could give advocates on different sides of controversial issues a new legal tool to disrupt instruction and harass educators. This could further inflame the already tense political environment in many communities. Recent survey data indicates that this charged political climate is taking a toll on educators - causing teachers stress and leading them to have negative views of the future of public education (RAND, 2025; Pew, 2024)

What do new, unspecified standards of professional responsibility mean for educator discipline, and existing professional conduct rules? This bill would require that instruction be “consistent with accepted standards of professional responsibility.” These standards are undefined in the measure.

California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title V, sections 80311-80339.6 establish the Rules of Conduct for Professional Educators, which are binding upon all individuals holding credentials issued by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC). Violations of these rules can result in revocation or suspension of an educator’s credential. These rules address numerous topics, including discriminatory conduct. In addition, Education Code 44242.5 pertains to the discretionary review of misconduct for fitness for teaching, which provides the CTC the authority to take action, pursuant to Education Code sections 44345 and 44421.

Since “accepted standards of professional responsibility” is not defined in this bill, this provision would cause confusion and could result in indiscriminate teacher discipline. It is also unclear how this provision and existing regulations would interact.

Potential First Amendment issues. The following comments, provided by the Assembly Committee on Judiciary, address potential First Amendment concerns with one provision of this bill:

The First Amendment limits the ability of a public employer to leverage the employment relationship to restrict, incidentally or intentionally, the liberties employees enjoy in their capacities as private citizens speaking about matters of public concern. (See *Pickering v. Board of Education* (1968) 391 U.S. 563.) So long as employees are speaking as *citizens* about matters of public concern, they are subject only to those speech restrictions that are necessary for their employers to operate efficiently and effectively. (See, e.g., *Connick v. Myers* (1983) 461 U. S. 138, 142, 147 [“Our responsibility is to ensure that citizens are not deprived of fundamental rights by virtue of working for the government”].) In *Pickering*, the relevant speech was a teacher’s letter to a local newspaper addressing issues including the funding policies of his school board. (391 U. S., at p. 566.) The Court reasoned that, “the interest of the school administration in limiting teachers’ opportunities to contribute to public

debate is not significantly greater than its interest in limiting a similar contribution by any member of the general public.” (*Id.*, at p. 573.)

This bill does not restrict an employee’s ability to comment on public issues *in a public forum*. Instead, it is aimed at what teachers can say *in the classroom*. To the extent that the bill requires teacher instruction to align with curriculum and professional standards, it presents no First Amendment issues on its face. However, the somewhat ambiguous language at the end of subdivision (b)—“rather than advocacy, personal opinion, bias or partisanship”—could be deemed to be unconstitutional because if it is held to be overly broad in that it potentially sweeps in both protected and unprotected activity. In *Baggett v. Bullitt* (1964) 377 U.S. 360, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down loyalty oaths requiring Washington state employees to affirm that they were not members of alleged subversive organizations and requiring teachers to swear to promote “undivided allegiance to the government of the United States.” In ruling that these provisions violated the First Amendment rights of employees who would be unable to determine what they were swearing to, the Court pointed out that, “The oath may prevent a professor from criticizing his state judicial system or the Supreme Court or the institution of judicial review. Or it might be deemed to proscribe advocating the abolition, for example, of the Civil Rights Commission, the House Committee on Un-American Activities, or foreign aid.” (*Id.*, at p. 376.)

The language of the bill presents potentially similar issues in that teachers may not understand which statements in the classroom could expose them to professional discipline. Teachers of history, social science, and humanities often address morally and politically charged issues for which there is no scholarly or community consensus. Teachers of biology discuss public health issues long considered to be factual, such as efficacy of vaccines, but are now subject to debate at the highest levels of the federal government. Would a teacher who discussed a politically contested issue run the risk of introducing “advocacy, personal opinion, bias, or partisanship?” Would parents and outside interest groups be emboldened to challenge a teacher’s statements in the classroom because of their alleged factual inaccuracy, or because they reflected the teacher’s personal opinion, bias or partisanship? Would teachers be discouraged from discussing factual historic events that are controversial, despite their alignment with curriculum and standards, such as the attempted coup on January 6, 2021 and the multiple impeachments of Donald Trump, to avoid such risks? Given that teachers may not know how to comply with the proposed law, as well intentioned as this measure may be, the bill may pose a chilling effect on educator’s ability to teach about politically contested issues. This provision of the bill could be subject to an overbreadth challenge.

Office of Civil Rights raises governance issues. California has the responsibility under state and federal law to enforce state and federal civil rights protections in public education.

Federal law vests responsibility for monitoring and enforcing multiple education statutes to state education agencies (SEAs). In California, the CDE is the state agency responsible for ensuring compliance with state and federal civil rights laws and regulations. To do so, the CDE maintains an Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO), which conducts compliance activities related to:

- Guidelines for Eliminating Discrimination and Denial of Services on the Basis of Race, Color, National Origin, Sex, and Handicap in Vocational Education Programs, March 21, 1979, (34 CFR, Part 100, Appendix B);
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and implementing regulations (34 CFR, Part 100), which prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin;
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the implementation of 28 CFR, Part 35;
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and the implementation of 34 CFR, Part 106 which prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex/gender;
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and implementing regulations (34 CFR, Part 104) which prohibit discrimination on the basis of handicap;
- California Education Code, Education Equity section 200, et seq; and
- California Code of Regulations, Title 5, section 4900, et seq.

State law and regulations also require the CDE to administer the Uniform Complaint Procedures (UCP) which generally allow individuals to file complaints regarding alleged violations of law with LEAs and appeal their decisions to the CDE if desired. This includes violations of civil rights statutes.

Historically, the federal government has also enforced civil rights laws. However, the Trump administration has virtually eliminated the federal role in civil rights enforcement in education, closing numerous field offices and leaving the fate of hundreds of cases pending with the United States Department of Education unclear.

In light of this diminished federal role, it makes sense for California to strengthen its compliance monitoring and enforcement of civil rights protections in public education.

This bill proposes to establish a new OCR at the GovOps agency. The purposes of this office would be to provide education and educational resources to identify and prevent antisemitism and other forms of discrimination and bias, report on the state of discrimination and bias in public schools, recommend strategies to combat discrimination or bias, advise on subsequent action regarding complaints that involve discrimination, and provide protocols to respond to discrimination complaints, among other responsibilities.

The establishment of a new OCR raises a number of governance issues. While the missions of the CDE's compliance functions and the proposed OCR have differences, there appears to be some duplication in reporting, advising, and implementing correction plans related to complaints. Even with distinct responsibilities, having two state agencies working with LEAs on issues of discrimination may cause confusion and disruption. It is also unclear how these functions would be carried out by GovOps, an agency with no expertise in educational civil rights compliance, unclear authority to engage in compliance activities, and no direct relationship with schools. ***The Committee may wish to consider*** that the appropriate entity in which to vest these responsibilities is the CDE, consistent with its expertise and its longstanding mandate under state and federal law. Renaming the existing CDE office the OCR, and increasing its resources, could accomplish this goal without creating duplication and disruption at the local level.

According to the Author

“AB 715 is a multi-pronged approach to address the concerning rise of antisemitism in K-12 education. This bill was crafted with input from a diverse group of stakeholders, including teachers and other education leaders and experts. AB 715 strengthens protections against antisemitism and all forms of discrimination in order to address increased instances of antisemitism in K-12 education, and fosters safe and supportive schools for all students.

The bill establishes a state-level Office of Civil Rights for TK-12 education that includes an Antisemitism Prevention Coordinator, strengthens laws prohibiting discrimination in schools and strengthens their enforcement mechanisms, ensures complaints of discrimination can be elevated to the State Superintendent when a local educational agency fails to respond, and requires districts that engage in discrimination to remove violating materials and comply with corrective action plans. Together, these changes will provide enhanced protections and better pathways to justice for not only the Jewish community, but all students facing discrimination.”

Arguments in Support

The Jewish Public Affairs Committee of California writes, “Our diverse Jewish organizations proudly support Assembly Bill 715 (Zbur, Addis), a critical measure to counter antisemitism and other forms of discrimination in California’s K-12 schools.

According to the California Attorney General, hate crimes targeting Jewish Californians have increased by 261% over the past decade. Today, the Jewish community ranks as the second most targeted group in the state – despite making up just 3% of the population.

Alarming, many of these incidents are occurring in our schools. While antisemitism in education has been steadily increasing for years, the climate for Jewish students has grown markedly more hostile since October 7. Classrooms have seen a rise in antisemitic, factually inaccurate, and one-sided content –often introduced by educators without proper oversight. Jewish students are facing bullying and isolation from their peers, while schools frequently lack the tools, training, or awareness to recognize and address antisemitism when it arises.

Our community is deeply shaken. Many Jewish students no longer feel safe in their own classrooms, and more families are making the difficult decision to withdraw their children from public schools. These issues have divided communities, triggered lawsuits, led to state findings of bias, and heightened fear and anxiety for students and families alike.

We know other vulnerable communities have also been subject to increases in discrimination in recent years. This surge in targeted hate demands a firm and urgent legislative response.

AB 715 offers a meaningful and systemic solution. It strengthens anti-discrimination protections based on religion and nationality, ensures that instructional content and materials are free from antisemitism and bias, and expands the Uniform Complaint Procedures (UCP) process to include school board members and contractors – with stronger timelines for resolution. The bill also increases accountability for school districts and establishes a State Antisemitism Coordinator to lead statewide prevention, response, and education efforts.

This legislation reaffirms California's commitment to creating safe, inclusive learning environments for all students – including Jewish students – and ensures that school communities are equipped to prevent hate, respond effectively, and rebuild trust.

AB 715 is the product of cross-caucus collaboration, jointly authored by Assemblymembers Zbur and Addis and principally co-authored by the Chairs of the Jewish, Black, Latino, Native American, and AAPI Legislative Caucuses. This broad and unified front sends a powerful message: hate against one community is a threat to all – and we must stand together to confront it in every form.

Ensuring the safety and well-being of our students is paramount. We respectfully urge your support for AB 715 – a vital step toward upholding the promise of safe, equitable, and inclusive public education for every student in California.”

Arguments in Opposition

The California Teachers Association writes, “At a time when there are those that seek to weaponize public education, AB 715 would unfortunately arm some ill-intentioned people with the ability to do so. We abhor and condemn antisemitism in any form and have been working with the authors to reach a consensus.

The language in AB 715 raises serious concerns, including but not limited to the following:

- 1) *We believe we need to stand together to combat hate, discrimination and bigotry in all forms.* We recognize that fighting antisemitism is the core of the bill. And, we support that fight. As a diverse state, our members have expressed concerns about lifting these experiences of inequity above those of other groups. The bill establishes a Senate confirmed Antisemitism Prevention Coordinator within the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), charged in part to track uniform complaints which involve antisemitism and to consult on corrective action plans. AB 715 does not contemplate coordination between the proposed OCR and the California Department of Education (CDE), which is problematic since the CDE manages the Uniform Complaint Procedure process. The Antisemitism Prevention Coordinator does not address any other forms of hate or discrimination, something that is equally needed.
- 2) *We oppose restricting classroom discussions that foster critical thinking and diverse perspectives.* A requirement in law that all instruction be “factually accurate” is well meaning but fraught with unintended consequences. Further, the same section of AB 715 requires that “instruction shall be consistent with accepted standards of professional responsibility, rather than advocacy, personal opinion, bias or partisanship.” With such vague rules around what can be discussed in the classroom, educators may avoid discussing controversial or sensitive topics altogether, depriving students of the inclusive and honest education they are entitled to receive. The language will inevitably invite debate about what constitutes ‘advocating for or against a position’ and attacks on teachers who have expressed an opinion or even an identity that is itself controversial in today’s polarized environment.
- 3) *Multiple definitions of anti-semitism upon which there is not universal agreement undermines California's antisemitism efforts.* The proposal suggests that the U.S. National Strategy (*Strategy*) to Counter Antisemitism, published by the Biden Administration on May

25, 2023, “shall be a basis to inform the Antisemitism Prevention Coordinator on how to identify, respond to, prevent, and counter antisemitism,” which is problematic. There are several definitions of antisemitism within this document, and the *Strategy* states “the most prominent is the non-legally binding working definition of antisemitism adopted in 2016 by the 31-member states of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), which the United States has embraced.” The IHRA definition includes examples that some have inferred conflates antisemitism with criticism of actions by the Israeli government. This sets dangerous precedent in which we are restricting dialogue and critique of a government or their actions.

- 4) *Protecting Fair Oversight in Education Supports Equity*. We oppose allowing a local school district to unilaterally label professional development materials as harmful or discriminatory as described in the bill, as this sets a dangerous precedent. Our primary concern lies in the far-reaching consequences of such actions, which risk creating a chilling effect on ethnic studies implementation, as well as other critical areas of education such as social-emotional learning and culturally responsive teaching practices.

While we share the same overarching goal of the AB 715 author and sponsors of combatting antisemitism, we have serious reservations about the proposed methods for achieving it.”

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee:

- The GovOps estimates General Fund costs of approximately \$4 million each year and 6.0 positions to establish and operate the OCR and the Antisemitism Prevention Coordinator. This estimate includes \$1.5 million for staffing and the remaining \$2.5 million for various operating expenses and equipment, including the development of educational materials, providing guidance and technical assistance to LEAs, advising on and responding to complaints, and holding forums and meetings in various locations. However, this estimate could be higher depending on additional workload that is unknown at this time. Staff notes that the 2025 budget bill juniors—AB 105 (Gabriel, 2025) and SB 105 (Wiener, 2025), both include Control Section 92.00 which would authorize the Director of Finance to augment the amount of any appropriation for any state department or agency from the General Fund to provide personnel and other resources necessary to implement AB 715 (Zbur) and SB 48 (Gonzalez).
- The bill includes legislative intent to enact future legislation to establish coordinators to be employed within the office to prevent and address discrimination and bias and enact the duties and responsibilities of the coordinators. This could lead to future General Fund cost pressures in the high hundreds of thousands of dollars each year for the state to establish these positions.
- This bill could result in additional, unknown General Fund cost pressures for the OCR to develop a training module to process and resolve discrimination complaints, as specified. This provision is contingent upon an appropriation.

- There could be additional, unknown Proposition 98 General Fund cost pressures, potentially in the millions of dollars each year, for LEAs to ensure that instruction provided by teachers and the instructional materials that are adopted comply with the bill's requirements. This includes increased oversight and monitoring by LEA governing boards to account for all instructional materials currently used in their schools and the investigation of complaints. These costs may be deemed to be reimbursable by the state.
- The CDE estimates General Fund costs of \$1.2 million each year and 7.0 positions for various workload activities required by the bill, including support for complaint resolution, processing of appeals, and requiring specified corrective action to be taken by LEAs.
- This bill could expand the number of complaints filed under the Uniform Complaints Procedures (UCP) process, thereby increasing Proposition 98 General Fund costs associated with the existing UCP mandate. The extent of these costs is unknown and would depend on the number of complaints filed each year. The UCP mandate has an adopted statewide cost estimate of \$209,613 and a prospective cost of \$34,751 each year.
- This bill could result in additional, unknown General Fund and Proposition 98 General Fund costs associated with lawsuits and litigation that may result from disputes over instruction provided by teachers and the instructional materials used in schools. The bill requires instruction and instructional materials to be factually accurate and to be consistent with accepted standards of professional responsibility.

VOTES:

ASM EDUCATION: 9-0-0

YES: Muratsuchi, Hoover, Addis, Alvarez, Bonta, Castillo, Garcia, Lowenthal, Patel

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 14-0-1

YES: Wicks, Arambula, Calderon, Caloza, Dixon, Elhawary, Fong, Mark González, Hart, Pacheco, Pellerin, Solache, Ta, Tangipa

ABS, ABST OR NV: Sanchez

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 68-0-11

YES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Krell, Lackey, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Valencia, Wallis, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

ABS, ABST OR NV: Alvarez, Bryan, Chen, Elhawary, Kalra, Lee, Nguyen, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Tangipa, Ward

UPDATED

VERSION: July 1, 2025

CONSULTANT: Tanya Lieberman / ED. / (916) 319-2087

FN: