



GAINES & ASSOCIATES

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

“GAINES REPORT”

CALIFORNIA STATE LEGISLATURE 2025 SESSION UPDATE

MAY 10, 2025

As we approach the middle of May, it is hard to believe that the 2025 California State Legislative Session is already half over. With the first round of cuts – the May 2nd deadline for policy committees to hear fiscal bills introduced in their house – now behind us, some bills have died a quick death, but countless others remain in play.

This Gaines & Associates “*California State Legislature – 2025 Session Update*” will provide a summary and the status of all legislation of interest to California’s wildlife and conservation community.

Bills are placed in numerical order, not in order of priority or interest.

This Gaines & Associates “California State Legislature – 2025 Session Update” is client privileged and provided as a service to Gaines & Associates clients.

For more information on any of the below bills, please contact Gaines & Associates at info@gainesandassociates.net

2025 State Legislative Session

- **[AB 584 \(Hadwick\)](#) – Firearms Dealers and Manufacturers: Secure Facilities**

Among many other things, existing law defines a secure facility, for purposes of requirements for firearms dealers to store firearms, as a building that has perimeter doorways with specified characteristics, including that the doorway is a windowless or windowed steel security door equipped with both a dead bolt and a doorknob lock, or a metal grate that is padlocked and affixed to the premises. Further, current law defines a secure facility, for purposes of requirements for firearms manufacturers to store manufactured firearms and barrels, as a facility that has perimeter doorways with additional specified characteristics, including that the doorway has hinges and hasps attached to doors by welding, riveting, or

bolting with nuts on the inside of the door or that are installed so that they cannot be removed when the doors are closed and locked.

As amended March 12, 2025, AB 584 by [Assembly Member Heather Hadwick](#) (R/01-Redding) would expand the definition of a secure facility for the entities described above to include a doorway with a windowed or windowless steel door that is equipped with panic hardware that operates a multipoint lock that bolts into the interior frame of the door.

Sponsored by the *California Rifle and Pistol Association (CRPA)*, AB 584 would provide much needed corrections to issues with the California Department of Justice (DOJ) and their interactions with firearms dealers and manufacturers by cleaning up contradictions between the California Penal Code and the California Fire Code. In doing so, AB 584 would ease the ability of firearms dealers and manufacturers to meet California's strict laws relating to a "secure facility".

AB 583, as amended, passed out of the Assembly Public Safety Committee on consent on March 25th.

On April 9th, AB 583 passed out of the Assembly Appropriations Committee and to the Assembly Floor on consent. Continuing to move unabated, AB 583 passed off the Assembly Floor and over to the Senate on April 24th.

Now in the Senate, AB 583 has been referred to the Senate Public Safety Committee but has yet to be set for hearing.

To view all the information currently available on AB 584, click [AB 584 Detail](#)

- [AB 724 \(Zbur\)](#) – **Fur-Bearing and Nongame Mammals: Trapping Licenses**

As introduced February 14, 2025, AB 724 by [Assembly Member Rick Chavez Zbur](#) (D/51-Los Angeles) is a spot bill which would make a nonsubstantive change to current law which requires a person who traps fur-bearing mammals or nongame mammals to procure a trapping license from the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW), and pay a specified fee.

Gaines & Associates continues to closely watch this legislation for amendments which capture its true intent. Our concerns include the impact the bill could, once amended, have on the hunting of coyotes and the state's ability to manage skyrocketing coyote populations and the increasing damage they are doing. Further, adverse changes to regulations pertaining to the hunting of coyotes are currently being pressed by animal-rights interests in the California Fish & Game Commission theater. AB 724 can certainly also be viewed as a "back-up" plan to change the law, should their efforts to change the regulations fail at the Commission level.

Having not been referred to and heard in Assembly policy committee prior to legislative deadline, AB 724 is now a "two-year" bill which cannot be considered until January 2026. Still remaining in spot bill form, AB 724 will have to take on more substantive language before it can be referred to committee and set to be heard.

To view all the information currently available on AB 724, click [AB 724 Detail](#)

- [AB 764 \(Gonzalez\)](#) – **Birds and Mammals: Nongame Birds**

Existing law allows for taking and possession of invasive nongame birds such as the English sparrow and the starling without a hunting license or depredation permit if taken by a landowner or lessee, or an agent thereof in possession of written authority from the landowner or lessee.

As introduced February 18, 2025, AB 764 by [Assembly Member Jeff Gonzalez](#) (R/36-Coachella) would allow mute swans to be taken or possessed under the same circumstances as other listed nongame birds. AB 764 is sponsored by the *California Waterfowl Association*.

Introduced to North America from Europe during the mid-1800's to early 1900's, mute swans are considered a highly invasive resource competitor to native waterfowl in North America. Largely non-migratory, they do not socially aggregate with other native waterfowl species during the winter and are highly aggressive towards native waterfowl during the breeding season. Mute swans prefer California's highly limited permanent and semi-permanent wetland habitats which are of critical importance to many sensitive species as well as for breeding waterbirds. Mute swans within California also occur in large numbers in sensitive tidal habitats in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, Suisun Marsh, and greater San Francisco Bay.

Current (2024) estimates are that mute swan populations have increased to 6,912 – 71% above the 2023 estimate and 535% above their long-term average. AB 764 would provide DFW with greater flexibility to control invasive mute swan populations and, in doing so, help protect native waterfowl and other wetland-dependent species and reduce impacts to sensitive wetland habitat.

AB 764 passed out of the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee via unanimous vote on March 25th.

Maintaining its momentum, AB 764 was heard in the Assembly Appropriations Committee on April 9th, passing out and to the Assembly Floor via a unanimous vote. On April 24th, AB 764 was brought up on the Assembly Floor, passing out and to the Senate on yet another unanimous vote.

Now in the Senate, AB 764 has been referred to the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee but has yet to be set for hearing.

To view the wildlife conservation coalition letter to the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee in support of AB 764, click [AB 764 AWPW Support](#)

To view all the information currently available on AB 764, click [AB 764 Detail](#)

- [AB 902 \(Schultz\)](#) – **Transportation Planning and Programming: Barriers to Wildlife Movement**

Existing law requires certain transportation planning agencies to prepare and adopt regional transportation plans directed at achieving a coordinated and balanced regional transportation system.

As amended April 23, 2025, AB 902 by [Assembly Member Nick Schultz](#) (D/44-Burbank) would require a lead agency to incorporate appropriate wildlife passage features to feasibly avoid, minimize, and mitigate further impairment to wildlife connectivity into a transportation infrastructure project in a connectivity area that may significantly impair wildlife connectivity. As amended, the bill would allow a lead agency to use compensatory mitigation credits to satisfy these requirements if DFW concurs with the use of those

credits. AB 902 would only apply to projects with a project initiation phase beginning on or after January 1, 2026.

Double-referred to the Assembly Committee on Transportation and the Assembly Committee on Local Government, AB 902 was first heard in the Assembly Transportation Committee on April 21st, passing out and to the Assembly Local Government Committee on a 11-2 vote. AB 902 was then withdrawn from the Assembly Local Government Committee and referred directly to the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

AB 902 is set to be heard in the Assembly Appropriations Committee on May 14th. That hearing will be held in the “Swing Space”, 1021 O Street, Room 1100, and begin at 9:00 AM. For more information on the hearing, click [Assy Approps Committee](#).

To view all the information currently available on AB 902, click [AB 902 Detail](#)

- [AB 929 \(Connolly\)](#) – **Sustainable Groundwater Management: Managed Wetlands**

Established in current law, the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) requires all groundwater basins designated as high- or medium-priority basins by the Department of Water Resources (DWR) that are designated as basins subject to critical conditions of overdraft to be managed under a groundwater sustainability plan (GSP) or coordinated GSPs as of January 31, 2020. Further, SGMA requires all other groundwater basins designated as high- or medium-priority basins to be managed under a GSP or coordinated GSPs as of January 31, 2022. However, current law does not recognize the environmental benefits nor make any exception for artificially irrigated wetland habitats in basins subject to SGMA that depend upon groundwater for seasonal management.

As a result of the significant changes to our natural hydrology, only 5% of historical wetland habitats remain in California. Today, nearly all our remaining interior wetlands must be artificially irrigated and intensely managed, year-round, to recreate seasonal wetland values. These managed wetland habitats not only provide critical habitat for migratory waterfowl and other wetland-dependent species, but they also improve water quality, provide groundwater recharge, and offer flood protection and recreational benefits. The availability of a wetland water supply when, where, and in the quantity necessary is integral to the ability of public and private land managers to recreate these important habitat benefits. As such, SGMA generated restrictions placed on the use of groundwater for wetland irrigations in some areas – such as the Tulare Basin in the southern San Joaquin Valley – could have devastating impacts on the ability of landowners to manage their lands to provide maximum wetland habitat values.

Because of the substantial loss of our historical wetland base, in 1993, the State adopted a “no net loss” wetlands policy pursuant to Executive Order No. W-59-93. The goal of the EO being to balance wetland loss due to economic development with wetland protection and restoration so that the total acreage of wetlands in the state does not decrease but rather remains constant or increases. The state doubled-down on EO No. W-59-93 when it passed [AB 2875 \(Freidman\)](#) into state law last year.

SGMA currently requires a groundwater sustainability agency (GSA) to consider the interests of environmental users of groundwater and GSPs to describe impacts on groundwater dependent ecosystems and beneficial users of groundwater – including managed wetlands. Despite these provisions, SGMA does not protect against wetland losses or ensure availability of historic wetland groundwater supplies. Further, management actions in GSPs thus far have shown a significant net loss of managed wetlands in the relatively short period since SGMA implementation. GSAs have begun to impose one-size-fits-all caps on groundwater pumping, regardless of whether land uses provide public beneficial uses, and hefty

fees, including up to \$500 per acre-foot for additional pumping. With just 5% of historic wetlands remaining, the additional wetland losses likely to occur under SGMA could substantially jeopardize the health of Pacific Flyway waterfowl and other wetland-dependent species.

As amended May 1, 2025, AB 929 by [Assembly Member Damon Connelly](#) (D/12-San Rafael) would, among other things, prohibit a GSA from using their authority to limit groundwater extraction by those who must rely upon groundwater for managing wetland habitats. AB 929 would also prohibit a GSA from imposing a fee upon “managed wetland extractors”, provided the water use for each user does not increase above what was historically required to support the managed wetland. As amended May 1, 2025, the provisions of AB 929 would sunset on January 1, 2029.

AB 929 defines a “managed wetland” as an existing publicly or privately owned wetland that receives seasonal, semi-permanent, or permanent flooding to simulate natural processes that promote food production and habitat for the benefit of wetland-dependent species, and which is designated as, or administered as a:

- (1) State wildlife area;
- (2) National wildlife refuge;
- (3) Central Valley Project Improvement Act wetland habitat area;
- (4) Conservation easement held by a federal or state resource agency, a local agency whose primary function is managing land or water for wetland habitat purposes, or a non-governmental conservation organization; or
- (5) Wildlife habitat contract or other conservation agreement of no less than ten years in duration administered by the Department of Fish and Wildlife, Wildlife Conservation Board, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, or Natural Resources Conservation Service.

AB 929 defines a “managed wetland extractor” as a person who extracts groundwater solely for managed wetland purposes.

AB 929 was heard in the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee on April 29th, passing out and to the Assembly Appropriations Committee on a 9-3 party-line vote.

AB 929 is set to be heard in the Assembly Appropriations Committee on May 14th. That hearing will be held in the “Swing Space”, 1021 O Street, Room 1100, and begin at 9:00 AM. For more information on the hearing, click [Assy Approps Committee](#).

AB 929 is a re-do of AB 828 – legislation introduced by Assembly Member Connolly during the 2023/2024 Legislative Session that made it all the way to the Governor’s desk but was vetoed.

To view all the information currently available on AB 929, click [AB 929 Detail](#)

- [AB 933 \(Ávila Farías\)](#) – **Organized Residential Camps: Organized Day Camps**

Existing law establishes standards for the operation, regulation, and enforcement of organized camps, and regulations governing the operation of organized camps that are necessary to protect the health and safety of the campers. Existing law also requires the State Fire Marshal to adopt minimum fire safety regulations for organized camps. Among other things, existing law also adopts a definition for “organized camp” and “camper.”

Existing law also prohibits an organized camp from operating unless the minimum standards for organized camps prescribed in the building standards published in the State Building Standards Code relating to organized camps, and in other rules and regulations adopted by the Director of Public Health and the State Fire Marshal, are satisfied. Existing law makes a violation of these provisions a misdemeanor. Existing law requires the Department of Social Services (DSS), within a specified time period, to prepare and submit a report to the Legislature regarding approaches for children's camp health and safety regulation and oversight, and specified recommendations and cost estimates.

As introduced February 19, 2025, AB 933 by [Assembly Member Anamarie Ávila Farías](#) (D/15-Concord) would rename "organized camp" to "organized residential camp" and make other related changes. The bill would define "organized day camp" to mean a site where the primary purpose is to provide a group experience with social, spiritual, educational, or recreational objectives, that has programs and facilities attended by 5 or more children 3 to 17 years of age, inclusive, and that operates for more than 3 hours per day for at least 5 days during any 12-month period. AB 933 would define "living experience" to mean an overnight camp for 5 days or more. The bill would change the definition of "camper" to mean any person in an organized residential camp or an organized day camp on a fee or nonfee basis who is a participant in the regular program and training of an organized residential camp or an organized day camp, and who may take on duties relating to that program and training.

AB 933 would specify that the rules and regulations relating to organized residential camps adopted by the State Public Health Officer and the State Fire Marshal would also apply to organized day camps, except for those regulations that are applicable to a living experience. The bill would require every local health officer to also enforce within their jurisdiction the building standards published in the State Building Standards Code relating to organized day camps.

AB 933 would expand the above-described prohibition to operate unless certain minimum building standards are satisfied to organized day camps. The bill would also make any violation of those standards, or of any building standard published in the State Building Standards Code relating to organized day camps, or any other rule or regulation adopted by the State Public Health Officer or the State Fire Marshal, in the operation of organized day camps, a misdemeanor.

Existing law requires DSS, no later than 24 months after the date funds have been appropriated for this purpose, to prepare and submit a report to the Legislature regarding approaches for children's camp health and safety regulation and oversight. AB 933 would make its provisions pertaining to organized day camps inoperative after DSS promulgates regulations pursuant to that report.

The above noted DSS report was mandated by the passage of [AB 262 \(Holden\)](#) during the 2023/2024 Session. *Gaines & Associates* worked closely with *Ducks Unlimited (DU)*, and the *California Rifle and Pistol Association (CRPA)* throughout that Session to successfully secure amendments to AB 262 which ensure wildlife conservation, shooting organizations, and DFW were appropriately represented in the stakeholder group the DSS was to establish and consult with in preparing that report.

Although well intended, AB 933 goes far beyond the lengths of what reasonable steps could be taken to further ensure participant safety at children's camp. Youth recreational camps – especially those administered by small nonprofit conservation groups to educate youth on wildlife conservation, our hunting, fishing, and archery pastimes, and firearms safety – operate very safely overall, with every effort taken to ensure the safety and well-being of the participants. AB 933 would result in unnecessary and costly regulations being placed on these recreational camps – leaving the nonprofits that run them no

choice but to pass the additional costs on to the participants, or to absorb the increase in their own budget. The result being fewer organizations offering recreational camps and few, if any, middle-to-low-income youth being able to attend the few camps which remain.

AB 933 was double-referred to the Assembly Committee on Health and the Assembly Committee on Emergency Management but was not heard in either committee. Having missed the legislative deadline for being heard and passed out of policy committee, AB 933 is now a “two-year” bill which cannot be considered until January 2026.

To view all the information currently available on AB 933, click [AB 933 Detail](#)

- [AB 1038 \(Hadwick\)](#) – **Bears: Hunting: Use of Dogs**

As amended April 21, 2025, AB 1038 by [Assembly Member Heather Hadwick](#) (R/01-Redding) would provide wildlife managers and those responsible for public safety with science-based tools for the responsible management of California’s overabundant black bear populations. This important legislation breaks down into two parts: First, AB 1038 would enhance public safety while preserving the wild nature of bears by requiring the Fish & Game Commission to designate specific seasons during which houndsmen may use dogs in the non-lethal pursuit of bears. The intent being to reestablish the natural fear bears have of humans by hazing them out of human-populated areas with dogs. Second, AB 1038 would not mandate a hunting season during which houndsmen may use dogs to pursue bears, but it would restore the authority of the Commission to do so, if they deemed it necessary, in areas identified by DFW as requiring management. The intent being to help bring overabundant black bear populations back in balance with their ecosystem and prey.

AB 1038 is co-sponsored by the *California Houndsmen for Conservation* and the *California Deer Association* with the assistance of *Gaines & Associates*.

On April 14th DFW released their update of their 1998 Bear Management Plan (BMP) which estimates California’s black bear population at 60,000 – twice their previous projection. Further, the updated BMP also states that black bears are now occupying areas they have never occupied before – including urban and suburban areas – resulting in a substantial increase in human-bear conflicts, and California’s first confirmed fatal black bear attack in 2023.

In addition to public safety concerns, our overabundant black bear population is also placing substantial stress on California’s deer herds and competing predatory species – most notably mountain lions. Multiple studies have documented that bears kill up to 80% of deer fawns within their first 30 days of life. Further, according to the updated BMP, bears chase mountain lions off their adult deer kills over 70% of the time. In doing so, mountain lions must not only kill again but kill more to compensate for the energetic losses – leading to the highest deer predation rates on record. One DFW study framed the significant contribution of black bears to the decline of California’s deer herds as “warranting special attention.”

AB 1038 was heard in the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee on April 29th. Going into the hearing, animal-rights opposition was expecting yet another easy victory on the extremely uneven playing field of the California State Capitol. Yet, following intense lobbying by Gaines & Associates, the California Houndsmen for Conservation, the California Deer Association, and our partners, the result was far from an easy victory.

After receiving testimony from the support and opposition to AB 1038, and a series of questions to both sides from the dais, the vote roll was called. Seven "aye" votes were needed for AB 1038 to pass out of the 13-member Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee made up of 10 Democrats and 3 Republicans. With most expecting AB 1038 to suffer a quick and overwhelming defeat, the bill quickly racked up six "aye" votes against only three "no" votes. With AB 1038 needing just one more vote to pass, the committee took a five-hour nerve-wracking recess.

The lobbying team in support of the bill quickly hit the Capitol Halls once again to visit the four offices that had not yet voted - seeking that single needed "aye" vote. Following several hours of lobbying, the committee reconvened and went through the roll of those who had not voted. Failing to get that one final illusive "aye" vote, AB 1038 failed to pass on a six "aye"/four "no" vote count, with three members not voting.

But AB 1038 is not dead yet. Assembly Member Hadwick quickly asked the committee for "reconsideration" of the bill - a motion that, if carried, allows a measure that failed to be heard again in committee. On a unanimous vote, the committee agreed to allow the bill to be heard again.

Due to legislative deadlines, the bill cannot be heard again in committee until January 2026, during the second year of the 2025/2026 Legislative Session.

To view the wildlife conservation coalition letter to the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee in support of AB 1038, click [AB 1038 AWPW Support](#)

To view all the information currently available on AB 1038, click [AB 1038 Detail](#)

- [AB 1169 \(Gonzalez\)](#) – **Wildlife Grants: SHARE Program**

In 2003, recognizing that much of California's game was on private property, and few of California's hunting public could afford to pay exorbitant fees to gain access, the wildlife conservation community successfully sponsored AB 396 – legislation which directed DFW to work in partnership with nonprofit conservation groups, landowner organizations and others to establish the Shared Habitat Alliance for Recreational Enhancement Program, or "SHARE". Authored by [Assembly Member Tom Harman](#) (R/67-Los Angeles), AB 396 authorized DFW to enter into voluntary agreements with private landowners to provide public access to their lands for hunting and other wildlife-dependent recreational activities. AB 396 also capped the compensation DFW could offer to a private landowner at \$30 per acre, or \$50 per public participant per day. Twenty-two years later, SHARE has proven to be successful with roughly 100,000 acres of private land enrolled in the program. However, the cap on the financial compensation DFW can offer private landowners has slowed enrollment as landowners with quality hunting to be offered on their properties have chosen more lucrative options for providing public hunter access.

As introduced February 21, 2025, AB 1169 by [Assembly Member Jeff Gonzalez](#) (R/36-Coachella) would address this concern by removing the cap on financial compensation DFW can offer to private landowners to enroll their land in SHARE. Instead, AB 1169 would allow DFW to determine the appropriate amount to pay each participating landowner, as long as it is commensurate with the quality of the wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities that are to be provided on the property.

In addition, while current law states that the SHARE Program shall be a partnership of DFW and nongovernmental organizations, DFW has not done so in a significant way – even though some organizations have excellent relationships with private landowners, operate their own outdoor access

programs, or even own their own land. To address this concern, AB 1169 would require DFW to contract some of the work necessary to carry out the Program to nonprofit conservation groups.

AB 1169 was heard in the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee on April 8th, passing out and to the Assembly Appropriations Committee on a unanimous vote with a recommendation that the bill be placed on consent.

However, once received in Assembly Appropriations Committee, AB 1169 was referred to suspense file. AB 1169 must be heard and passed out of Assembly Appropriations Committee by May 23rd to meet legislative deadline.

To view the wildlife conservation coalition letter to the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee in support of AB 1169, click [AB 1169 AWPW Support](#)

To view all the information currently available on AB 1169, click [AB 1169 Detail](#)

- [AB 1187 \(Celeste Rodriguez\)](#) – **Firearms: Safety Certificates**

Existing law requires any person who purchases or receives a firearm to possess a firearm safety certificate. Existing law also prohibits a person from selling or transferring a firearm to any person who does not possess a firearm safety certificate. A violation of either of these provisions is punishable as a misdemeanor. Existing law requires a personal firearm importer, within 60 days of bringing any firearm into this state to, among other things, submit a report including information concerning that individual and a description of the firearm to DOJ.

As amended April 10, 2025, AB 1187 by [Assembly Member Celeste Rodriguez](#) (D/43-Arleta) would require that personal firearm importer to also obtain a valid firearm safety certificate and include a copy of the valid firearm safety certificate within the report to DOJ. The bill would prohibit a person from bringing a firearm into the state without obtaining a valid firearm safety certificate within 60 days, except as specified.

In addition, AB 1187 would require an applicant for a firearm safety certificate, on or after July 1, 2027, to complete a training course no less than 8 hours in length that, among other things, includes instruction on firearm safety and handling and live-fire shooting exercises on a firing range.

AB 1187 was heard in the Assembly Public Safety Committee on April 8th, passing out and to the Assembly Appropriations Committee on a party-line vote.

Once received in Assembly Appropriations Committee, AB 1187 was referred to suspense file. AB 1187 must be heard and passed out of Assembly Appropriations Committee by May 23rd to meet legislative deadline.

To view all the information currently available on AB 1187, click [AB 1187 Detail](#)

- [AB 1316 \(Addis\)](#) – **Hunting Licenses: Information on Firearms**

As introduced February 21, 2025, AB 1316 by [Assembly Member Dawn Addis](#) (D/30-San Luis Obispo) would require DFW, beginning July 1, 2027, to ensure that every person who purchases a hunting license receives, at minimum, information on certain topics related to firearms, including the safe storage of

firearms, liability for parents and guardians who should have known their child could access a firearm at home, basic California firearm laws, and how to legally transfer or relinquish a firearm.

To obtain a hunting license, an individual must take a Hunter Education course. The course, which is the equivalent of ten hours of class time, not only teaches hunter ethics and skills, it is loaded with instruction on gun laws, firearms safety, and safe firearms storage. AB 1316 would only be duplicative of the detailed instruction on firearms laws and safety students receive in the Hunter Education class. Further, the cost of the materials the bill would require DFW to distribute with hunting licenses would surely be paid for out of the Fish and Game Preservation Fund – the account where license revenues are deposited. As such, the cost of producing these materials would only take away from the monies those who purchase hunting licenses generate for wildlife management, research, hunting opportunity, and other beneficial DFW duties.

AB 1316 was heard in the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee on April 29th, passing out and to the Assembly Appropriations Committee on a party-line vote.

AB 1316 is set to be heard in the Assembly Appropriations Committee on May 14th. That hearing will be held in the “Swing Space”, 1021 O Street, Room 1100, and begin at 9:00 AM. For more information on the hearing, click [Assy Approps Committee](#).

To view all the information currently available on AB 1316, click [AB 1316 Detail](#)

- [AB 1482 \(Castillo\)](#) – **Bowie’s Law: Animals: Adoption, Shelter Overcrowding, and Breeding**
As amended April 30, 2025, AB 1482 by [Assembly Member Leticia Castillo](#) (D/58-Corona) would, among other things, lower the criteria for a “breeder” to be regulated under the Polanco-Lockyer Pet Breeder Warranty Act from an individual or entity that has sold, transferred, or given away all or part of three or more litters or 20 or more dogs during the preceding 12 months, to one that has sold, transferred, or given away all or part of two or more litters or ten or more dogs during the preceding 12 months.

AB 1482 would additionally require a breeder, before a dog reaches eight weeks of age, to have a microchip device implanted in the dog that identifies the breeder. The bill would require the breeder, upon the sale or transfer of the dog, to register the identity of the new owner with the microchip registry company as the primary owner on the microchip device and would require the breeder to provide certain information to the new owner regarding the microchip. AB 1482 would prohibit a dog from being sold or otherwise transferred by a breeder, whether for compensation or otherwise, until it has been immunized against common diseases, in accordance with veterinary recommendations for the age and breed of the dog and has a documented health check from a California-licensed veterinarian.

AB 1482 would hold countless small hobby breeders and purebred dog enthusiasts to the same strict requirements placed on high volume breeders, when they are not contributing to the problem of increasing shelter populations that this bill seeks to address.

High volume commercial dog breeders in California are already heavily regulated. Although portions of AB 1482 may have had merit, the provisions addressed above would not impact target problem dog breeders. Instead, they would place added burdens and expense on lawful small breeders – causing many to cease their operations entirely. Those small breeders who do stay in business would have little choice but to pass the added costs to consumers, making it extremely difficult for California’s public not only to find, but also to afford a purebred dog.

Dogs used for hunting, field trialing and other legitimate sporting purposes are typically purebred breeds. Dogs used for these activities are already of high value (with untrained pups often going for several thousand dollars), the result of careful selective breeding over many generations, and given exceptional care to ensure their health and well-being. These carefully bred dogs rarely, if ever, end up in shelters or pose a public nuisance, safety, or health issue.

AB 1482 was heard in the Assembly Business and Professions Committee on April 29th, amended, and passed out to the Assembly Appropriations Committee on a unanimous vote.

AB 1316 is set to be heard in the Assembly Appropriations Committee on May 14th. That hearing will be held in the “Swing Space”, 1021 O Street, Room 1100, and begin at 9:00 AM. For more information on the hearing, click [Assy Approps Committee](#).

To view all the information currently available on AB 1482, click [AB 1482 Detail](#)

- [SB 427 \(Blakespear\)](#) – **Habitat Conservation Fund**

In June 1990, the voters of California passed Proposition 117, “The California Wildlife Protection Act of 1990”. Among other things, the Act created the Habitat Conservation Fund (HCF) and guaranteed the fund \$30 million annually for 30 years for the acquisition, restoration and enhancement of habitat necessary to protect wildlife and plant populations. In 2019 – when the HCF was set to expire the following July – conservation organizations worked hard to help successfully convince the Legislature and the Governor to extend the annual allocation to the HCF through July 1, 2030.

Since the passage of Proposition 117 thirty-five years ago, HCF has proven to serve as a highly effective and efficient program for assisting California’s conservation efforts throughout the entire state. In fact, in the last decade alone, the HCF has protected and/or restored well over one million acres of deer and mountain lion habitat, wetlands, aquatic and riparian habitat, and wildlife corridors.

As introduced February 18, 2025, SB 427 by [Senator Catherine Blakespear](#) (D/38-Encinitas) would remove the current HCF sunset date of July 1, 2030 and allow the important annual transfer of these funds into the HCF, and the critical benefits they provide to our wildlife and fishery resources, to continue in perpetuity.

SB 427 was heard in the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee on April 8th, passing out and to the Senate Appropriations Committee on a unanimous vote.

Once received in Senate Appropriations Committee, SB 427 was referred to suspense file. SB 427 is set to be heard in the Senate Appropriations Committee on May 23rd. That hearing will be held in the “Swing Space”, 1021 O Street, Room 2200, upon adjournment of Floor Session. For more information on the hearing, click [Sen Approps Committee](#)

To view the wildlife conservation coalition letter to the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee in support of SB 427, click [SB 427 SNRW Support](#)

To view all the information currently available on SB 427, click [SB 427 Detail](#)

- [SB 649 \(Alvarado-Gil\)](#) – **Firearms: Silencers**

Existing law defines a silencer as any device or attachment intended to muffle the sound of a firearm and makes it a felony for any person, firm, or corporation to possess a silencer for a firearm.

As amended March 24, 2025, SB 649 by [Senator Marie Alvarado-Gil](#) (R/4-El Dorado Hills) would replace the term “silencer” with the term “suppressor” throughout existing law.

Commonly known as silencers, suppressors are the hearing protection of the 21st century recreational shooter and hunter. Despite common misconceptions perpetuated by Hollywood, suppressors do not render gunfire silent – rather they only muffle the report of a firearm. In fact, on average, suppressors diminish the noise of a gunshot by only 20-35 decibels (dB), roughly the same sound reduction provided by earplugs or earmuffs. Even the most effective suppressors on the market, on the smallest and quietest calibers, such as .22 LR, can only reduce the peak sound level of a gunshot to around 110-120 dB. To put that in perspective, according to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, that is as loud as a jackhammer or an ambulance siren.

Noise-induced hearing loss and tinnitus are two of the most common afflictions for recreational shooters and hunters in the United States. By decreasing the noise of a gunshot to hearing-safe levels, suppressors help to conserve the hearing of recreational shooters, hunters, and their hunting dogs. In addition to hearing protection, suppressors also mitigate noise complaints from those who live near shooting ranges and hunting areas. Largely due to these tremendous benefits, suppressors are currently legal to own in 42 states and legal to hunt with in 41 states.

Working with the *American Suppressor Association* and [Senator Joel Anderson](#) (R/38-San Diego), *Gaines & Associates* tried twice ([SB 710](#) and [SB 1092](#)) to legalize the use of suppressors for hunting during the 2017/2018 Legislative Session. Both bills failed in the first Senate policy committee.

Although SB 649 would do nothing to legalize the use of “suppressors”, changing the term “silencer” to “suppressor” in California law may be a small step in that direction.

SB 649 was not referred to a Senate policy committee for hearing. Having missed the legislative deadline for being heard and passed out of policy committee, SB 649 is now a “two-year” bill which cannot be considered until January 2026.

To view all the information currently available on SB 649, click [SB 649 Detail](#)

- [SB 704 \(Arreguín\)](#) – **Firearms: Firearm Barrels**

Existing law generally requires the sale or transfer of firearms to be conducted through a licensed firearms dealer. For purposes of these provisions, existing law defines “firearm” to mean a device, designed to be used as a weapon, from which is expelled through a barrel a projectile by the force of an explosion or other form of combustion and to include the frame or receiver of the weapon, including both a completed frame or receiver, or a firearm precursor part.

As amended March 26, 2025, SB 704 by [Senator Jesse Arreguín](#) (D/7-Oakland) would require the sale or transfer of a firearm barrel to be completed in person by a licensed firearms dealer. The bill would require the licensed firearms dealer to conduct a background check of the purchaser or transferee and to record detailed information pertaining to the transaction – including the date of the sale or transfer, the make and model of the firearm that the firearm barrel is for, and the purchaser’s or transferee’s full name, address,

phone number, and date of birth. The bill would make a violation of these provisions punishable as a misdemeanor. SB 704 would go into effect July 1, 2026.

SB 704 was heard in the Senate Public Safety Committee on April 29th, passing out and to the Senate Appropriations Committee on a party-line vote.

SB 704 is set to be heard in the Senate Appropriations Committee on May 12th. That hearing will be held in the “Swing Space”, 1021 O Street, Room 2200, upon adjournment of Floor Session. For more information on the hearing, click [Sen Approps Committee](#)

To view all the information currently available on SB 704, click [SB 704 Detail](#)

- **[SB 718 \(Dahle and Allen\)](#) – Hunting and Sport Fishing Licenses: Reduced Fees**

As amended April 28, 2025, SB 718 by [Senators Megan Dahle](#) (R/1-Redding) and [Benjamin Allen](#) (D/24-El Segundo) would require DFW, until January 1, 2031, to issue a reduced fee hunting license to a qualified recipient who is a resident of the state and has not been convicted of a violation of the Fish and Game Code and who has provided documentation demonstrating eligibility for any of the following programs:

- (A) Medicaid or Medi-Cal.
- (B) The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program.
- (C) The California Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children.
- (D) CalFresh or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.
- (E) The federal Tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (Tribal TANF) grant program.
- (F) A tribal Head Start program.
- (G) Supplemental Security Income.
- (H) Medi-Cal for Families (Healthy Families A and B).
- (I) The federal National School Lunch Program.
- (J) The federal Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance program.
- (2) “Qualified recipient” means a person eligible for either of the following:
 - (A) The California Alternative Rates for Energy program.
 - (B) The Family Electric Rate Assistance program.

In addition, SB 718 would amend existing law to add “qualified recipient” (above) to those who shall be eligible to receive a reduced fee fishing license.

As amended, SB 718 would also require the DFW to submit a report to the Legislature on or before October 1, 2029, that evaluates the effect of the reduced fee for hunting and sport fishing licenses, as specified.

SB 718 was heard in the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee on April 22nd, passing out and to the Senate Appropriations Committee on a unanimous vote.

SB 718 is set to be heard in the Senate Appropriations Committee on May 12th. That hearing will be held in the “Swing Space”, 1021 O Street, Room 2200, upon adjournment of Floor Session. For more information on the hearing, click [Sen Approps Committee](#)

To view all the information currently available on SB 718, click [SB 718 Detail](#)

- **SB 818 (Alvarado-Gil) – Mountain Lions: Pilot Program: Permitted Houndspersons**

As gutted and rewritten with hostile amendments on May 1, 2025, SB 818 would now require DFW to maintain, enhance, and expand its human-mountain lion conflicts program in El Dorado County, including by exercising its authority to authorize nonlethal procedures. As newly amended, SB 818 would require the DFW to develop and implement a grant program to assist eligible applicants to obtain, install, and maintain equipment and other measures in El Dorado County to protect livestock and domestic animals and minimize activities that attract mountain lions into communities. Further, SB 818 would now require DFW to continue and expand its scientific research effort in El Dorado County to develop and evaluate methods to deter mountain lions from communities and to prevent habituation. In implementing these programs, the bill would require DFW to engage in specified public outreach activities. SB 818 would authorize DFW to expand these programs to areas outside of El Dorado County. The above provisions of SB 818 would sunset January 1, 2032.

As amended May 1, 2025, SB 818 would also require DFW to prepare and submit a report to the Legislature on or before October 1, 2030, describing these programs, the results of the programs, the number of department personnel involved in the programs, and recommendations to further improve the programs to protect human health and safety. SB 818 would require the Director of DFW, until the 2033 calendar year, to appear on an annual basis at a hearing before one of specified committees of the Legislature to provide a status update on the programs.

Prior to being gutted and amended with hostile amendments, SB 818, as amended April 21, 2025, by [Senator Marie Alvarado-Gil](#) (R/4-El Dorado Hills), would have allowed for a regulated program under which DFW approved houndsmen with properly trained hounds could haze nuisance lions out of problem areas in a way that was both humane and effective. Coined “Taylen and Wyatt’s Law”, SB 818, as previously written, was an effort by Senator Marie Alvarado-Gil to take steps to increase the safety of the public of El Dorado County that she represents.

Houndsmen have historically used dogs to pursue mountain lions throughout our nation. But since the passage of Proposition 117 in 1990, this practice has been prohibited in California. Having not been pursued by hounds for over 35 years, these once highly elusive animals have lost their fear of humans – leading to regular human encounters, the fatal attack on Taylen Brooks one year ago, and an unacceptable increase in domestic animal predation in El Dorado County.

Research shows that non-lethal pursuit of mountain lions with trained dogs is an effective way to restore their natural wariness of humans and encourage them to avoid populated areas. As amended April 21, 2025, SB 818 would have authorized this proven practice to enhance public safety and mitigate the escalating loss of domestic animals by gently pushing nuisance lions out of areas they should not be, while also restoring their natural wariness of humans and dogs, before they get into real trouble and ultimately must be dealt with via lethal take. Further, as previously written, SB 818 would have also helped gather valuable data to inform future mountain lion management strategies in El Dorado County and beyond.

The lion that attacked the Brooks brothers had been in trouble before but had never been hazed by dogs. Experts conclude that, had the lion that attacked Taylen and Wyatt previously been hazed by hounds, he would never have approached them.

SB 818, as amended April 21st, was heard in Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee on April 22nd but failed to pass on a party-line vote. The committee then granted the bill “reconsideration” via another party-line vote – allowing the bill to be heard again in committee. The committee then used a party-line vote for the third time to gut out the language Senator Alvarado-Gil had worked with the Brooks family and Gaines & Associates to place in the bill and replace it with their own hostile amendments. The amendments forced into the bill fully deleted the core of the bill which was to promote public safety by allowing permitted private houndsmen to haze problem lions away from areas they should not be, replacing it with language which promotes only actions county residents are already doing to protect livestock.

SB 818, as gutted and amended, then passed out of the Senate Natural and Resources and Water Committee to the Senate Appropriations Committee.

SB 818, as amended May 1, 2025, is set to be heard in the Senate Appropriations Committee on May 19th. That hearing will be held in the “Swing Space”, 1021 O Street, Room 2200, upon adjournment of Floor Session. For more information on the hearing, click [Sen Approps Committee](#)

Gaines & Associates is working with Senator Alvarado-Gil’s office and the Brooks family to stop SB 818, as gutted and amended, in Senate Appropriations Committee.

Because SB 818 proposes to amend Proposition 117 it would require a 4/5th vote to pass off the Floor of both houses of the Legislature.

SB 818, as originally written, was sponsored by the Family of Taylen and Wyatt Brooks with the assistance of Gaines & Associates.

To view the wildlife conservation coalition letter to the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee in support of SB 818, as amended April 21st, click [SB 818 SNRW Support](#)

To view all the information currently available on SB 818, click [SB 818 Detail](#)

If you would like to unsubscribe to Gaines & Associates “Gaines Reports,” just let us know at info@gainesandassociates.net