AB 1588

Sideshow Accountability and Community Safety Act

ASSEMBLYMEMBER DISTRICT 19

Catherine Stefani

SUMMARY

AB 1588 will provide more clarity for law enforcement to better respond to organized sideshow events and aims to prevent the harm caused by these illegal activities. This bill strengthens existing penalties for repeat offenders and those who cause serious injury during a sideshow, closes loopholes in the existing sideshow framework, and improves public safety.

BACKGROUND

Illegal sideshows have become increasingly organized and dangerous, turning public streets into unsafe environments for residents, first responders, and spectators. These events frequently involve blocked intersections, reckless stunts, large crowds, and firearms, creating serious public safety hazards and straining local law enforcement resources.

While California has taken steps to address sideshow activity, enforcement tools have not kept pace with evolving tactics, including the use of dirt bikes and motorbikes, and the growing frequency of repeat offenders.

Current law also allows courts to impose jail time, fines, community service, and driver's license suspension or restriction for certain violations. Vehicles used in violations may also be impounded under specified circumstances.

Under current law, participation in a sideshow is generally charged as a misdemeanor, regardless of prior convictions. Enhanced penalties are only available when the sideshow results in serious bodily injury to a member of the public. Despite recent legislation targeting sideshows across the state, increasingly organized groups continue to endanger communities with these reckless activities. These penalties have not sufficiently deterred organized sideshows, which continues to occur across the state.

In addition to the prevalence of firearms, illegal fireworks, and other dangerous activities associated with sideshows, they are also taking place in increasingly dangerous settings including the Bay Bridge, halting traffic on vital transportation corridors. This kind of dangerous and organized behavior can impede the flow of traffic, not only for commuters, but for emergency services and first responders whose service to the public can be impacted because of the sideshow.

With the lack of effective deterrents available for law enforcement, communities lack the tools necessary to prevent tragedies like the one seen in Crockett, California where a teenager fatally fell from a freeway overpass during a sideshow.

THIS BILL

AB 1588 strengthens the ability of law enforcement to respond to illegal

sideshows threatening the safety of communities across the state. It provides additional tools and increases accountability for repeat offenders by:

- Adding motorbikes and dirt bikes to the sideshow framework, closing enforcement gaps when unlicensed and unplated dirt bikes are used to perform dangerous stunts or block city streets.
- Aligning sideshow penalties with that of street racing—mirroring the escalating misdemeanor framework and wobbler for serious bodily injury that exists for street racing.
- Including sideshows in street racing impoundment statue where, upon conviction, the vehicle used in a sideshow may be impounded for up to an additional 30 days.

SUPPORT

- **Daniel Lurie, Mayor of the City and County of San Francisco (Sponsor)**
- **Streets are for Everyone (SAFE) (Co-Sponsor)**
- AAA Northern California, Nevada & Utah
- Active San Gabriel Valley
- American Medical Response West
- Arcadia Police Officers' Association
- Auto Club of Southern California (AAA)
- City of Beverly Hills
- Brea Police Association
- Burbank Police Officers' Association
- California Association of Highway Patrolmen
- California Association of School Police Chiefs
- California City Transportation Initiative (CACTI)
- California Coalition of School Safety Professionals
- California Contract Cities Association
- California District Attorneys Association
- California Mobility and Parking Association
- California Narcotic Officers' Association
- California Police Chiefs Association
- California Reserve Peace Officers Association
- City and County Of San Francisco
- City of Fremont
- City of Hayward
- City of Norwalk
- City of Oakland
- City of Pico Rivera
- City of Sunnyvale
- Claremont Police Officers Association
- Corona Police Officers Association
- County of San Joaquin
- Culver City Police Officers' Association
- Fullerton Police Officers' Association
- League of California Cities
- Long Beach Gray Panthers
- Los Angeles County Attorney's Office
- Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department
- Los Angeles School Police Management Association
- Los Angeles School Police Officers Association
- Move Santa Barbra County
- Murrieta Police Officers' Association

- Newport Beach Police Association
- Palos Verdes Police Officers Association
- Placer County Deputy Sheriffs' Association
- Pomona Police Officers' Association
- Riverside Sheriffs' Association
- San Francisco Bay Area Families for Safe Streets
- San Francisco Police Department
- So Cal Cycling
- Street Racing Kills
- Walk San Francisco

STAFF CONTACT

John.Otair@asm.ca.gov
916-319-2019