

SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
Senator Thomas Umberg, Chair
2025-2026 Regular Session

AB 1622 (Blanca Rubio)
Version: January 22, 2026
Hearing Date: June 23, 2026
Fiscal: No
Urgency: No
ID

SUBJECT

Electrified security fences

DIGEST

This bill removes the January 1, 2028 sunset for provisions that prohibit local cities, counties, and cities and counties from prohibiting the installation and operation of an electrified security fence on specified industrial, manufacturing, or commercial property, or from requiring a permit or approval for such fences, except as specified, when the fence is compliant with various requirements for electrified security fences.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Electrified fences are fences charged with an electrical current through conductive material like metal wire so that they deliver a shock when touched. In 2015, the Legislature enacted a law to establish the basic requirements for electrified fences used for security purposes on commercial, industrial, or manufacturing property. In 2024, AB 2371 (Carrillo, Ch. 235, Stats. 2024) changed various requirements on such electrified security fences, and specified that such fences include ones used to protect and secure property legally authorized to store, park, service, sell, or rent vehicles, equipment, materials, freight, or utility infrastructure, as specified. It also prohibited a city, county, or city and county from prohibiting the installation and operation of a compliant electrified security fence, and prohibited a city or county from requiring a permit or approval that is in addition to an alarm system permit or an administrative permit in certain circumstances. However, AB 2371 contained a sunset clause for its provisions. This bill removes that sunset provision, making AB 2371's amendments to law permanent.

AB 1622 is sponsored by the company AMAROK LLC, Bay Area Council, and the Family Business Association, and is supported by numerous businesses and business associations. The Committee has received no timely letters of opposition. If the bill passes this Committee, it will then be referred to the Senate Local Government

Committee.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE LAW

Existing law:

- 1) Defines, for purposes of the below-described provisions, “electrified security fence” to mean any fence, other than an electrified fence as defined in Food and Agriculture Code section 17151, that:
 - a) is powered by an electrical energizer, driven by solar-charged batteries of no more than 12 volts of direct current that has an impulse repetition rate that does not exceed 1 hertz, and an impulse duration that does not exceed 10 milliseconds; and
 - b) is used to protect and secure manufacturing or industrial property, or property zoned under another designation, but legally authorized to be used for a commercial purpose that stores, parks, services, sells, or rents vehicles, vessels, equipment, materials, freight, or utility infrastructure within an outdoor lot or yard, provided that the secured area does not include any existing residential or hospitality uses. (Civ. Code § 835(a).)
- 2) Permits an owner of real property to install and operate an electrified security fence on their property, if:
 - a) the property is not located in a residential zone and falls within the description of property described in (1)(b), above;
 - b) the electrified security fence meets the standards and specifications of the International Electrotechnical Commission for electric security fence energizers in “International Standard IEC 60335, Part 2-76: 2018;”
 - c) the electrified security fence is identified by prominently placed warning signs that are legible from both sides of the fence, and the warning signs:
 - i. are placed at each gate and access point, and at intervals along the fence not to exceed 30 feet;
 - ii. are adjacent to any other signs relating to chemical, radiological, or biological hazards; and
 - iii. are marked with a written warning or a commonly recognized symbol for shock, a written warning or a commonly recognized symbol to warn people with pacemakers, and a written warning or commonly recognized symbol about the danger of touching the electrified security fence in wet conditions;
 - d) the height of the electrified fence does not exceed 10 feet or 2 feet higher than an existing nonelectrified perimeter fence or wall, whichever is greater, and the fence is located behind a nonelectrified perimeter fence or wall that is not less than five feet tall; and

- e) the electrified security fence includes a device that enables first responders to deactivate the electrified security fence in response to an emergency, if utilized by a city, county, or city and county. (Civ. Code § 835(b).)
- 3) Permits an electrified security fence to interface with a monitored alarm device in a manner that enables the alarm system to transmit a signal intended to summon the business, a monitoring service, or both the business and a monitoring service, in response to an intrusion or burglary. (Civ. Code § 835(c).)
- 4) Prohibits an owner of real property that is not the type of property described in (1)(a), above, from installing and operating an electrified security fence where a local ordinance prohibits the installation or operation of an electrified security fence, and permits a local ordinance to prohibit the installation and operation of an electrified security fence that does not comply with the requirements described in (1) through (3), above. Specifies that a local ordinance that prohibits or regulates only the installation or operation of an electrified fence as defined by the Food and Agricultural Code shall not be construed to apply to an electrified security fence, as defined in the above-described provisions. (Civ. Code § 835(d).)
- 5) Prohibits a city, county, or city and county ordinance, regulation, or code from prohibiting the installation and operation of an electrified security fence that meets the requirements of (1) through (3), above, and that is used to protect and secure real property described in (1)(b), above, nor require a permit or approval that is in addition to an alarm system permit issued by the city, county, or city and county. (Civ. Code § 835(d)(2).)
- 6) Permits a city, county, or city and county to require an administrative permit confirming the fence meets the requirements of this section if it is on a property abutting a property in residential use, or within 300 feet of a public park, childcare facility, recreation center, community center, or school facility. (*Id.*)
- 7) Specifies that nothing in the above described provisions shall be construed to alter the authority of a jurisdiction to adopt and enforce an ordinance relating to nonelectrified perimeter fences or walls as legally authorized, if applicable. (Civ. Code § 835(e).)
- 8) Repeals the amendments made to Civil Code section 835 by AB 2371 (Carrillo, Ch. 235, Stats. 2024) on January 1, 2028. (Civ. Code § 835(f).)
- 9) Defines “electrified fence” for purposes of the Food and Agriculture Code to mean any fence and appurtenant devices, including, but not limited to, fences and devices used in animal control, and including, but not limited to, a fence consisting of a single strand of wire supported by posts or other fixtures, which has an electrical charge or is connected to a source of electrical current, and which is so designed or

placed that a person or animal coming into contact with the conductive element of the fence receives an electrical shock. Clarifies that an electrified fence, for its provisions, does not include an electrified security fence as described in Section 835 of the Civil Code. (Food & Ag. Code § 17151.)

This bill removes the sunset provisions described in (8), above, thereby making the provisions described in (1) through (7) permanent.

COMMENTS

1. Author's statement

According to the author:

Prior to the enactment of AB 2371 (Carrillo and Flora, 2024), which was approved unanimously by the Legislature and signed by Governor Newsom on September 14, 2024 as an urgency bill, commercial property owners statewide had faced escalating incidences of trespass and criminal activity such as theft, vandalism and threats to employee health and safety, which, in some cases, resulted in the closure of businesses and loss of jobs. And for almost a decade prior to AB 2371, more than 1,000 installations of electrified security fence systems were permitted and safely securing commercial properties statewide without issue. However, in 2024 there were more than 400 businesses statewide in permitting limbo for an average of 372 days, desperately seeking approval from their local governments to permit them to install this proven safe and effective technology to secure their property and protect their employees. This security technology was also being utilized by public agencies such as school districts and state public safety agencies to secure their assets from theft and vandalism.

Since its passage, AB 2371 resolved the disparity and associated delays in the permitting of electrified security fence installations and, as a result, more than 800 additional businesses have benefited by being able to implement this security technology in an average of 19 days.

AB 1622 simply repeals the sunset date on a statute that achieves its goals without presenting any implementation difficulties.

2. The use of electrified fences on commercial properties

Electrified fences are fences that provide a direct current throughout the fence's wires so that they provide an electric shock when touched. Electrified fences work by sending high voltage pulses of electricity at regular intervals through conductive materials in the fence like metal wires. While traditionally used in the agricultural context to keep in livestock, electrified fences are being increasingly used in the commercial context as a

product to protect businesses' properties and equipment. Such systems typically will trigger an alarm if disturbed, and may be combined with cameras or other surveillance systems. Although the use of electrified fences for commercial purposes has been increasing, local jurisdictions have at times approached such fences in different ways to ensure the fences are safe and that they are not located in areas that may place residents at risk.¹ Some jurisdictions require that businesses and properties obtain permits before constructing an electrified fence.

While electrified fences usually use high voltage, they ordinarily should not cause significant harm to a person because the duration of the shock is very brief.² However, in different conditions, such as when more conductive materials like water are present, the risks of receiving a substantial electrical current and being severely harmed increase.³ Shocks closer to the heart or to those with pacemakers pose greater risks.

3. California's history of legislation regarding electrified fences

Prior to 2015, the only statutes regulating electrified fences were provisions of the Food and Agriculture Code relating to agricultural electrified fences. Reportedly, those code provisions resulted in hesitancy and delays on the part of local jurisdictions when companies applied to install electrified security fences on industrial or commercial properties.⁴ However, in 2015, the Legislature enacted SB 582 (Hall, Ch. 273, Stats. 2015) to create Civil Code Section 835 to authorize and regulate the use of electrified security fences on commercial, manufacturing, or industrial property. SB 582 explicitly permitted property owners to install and operate specified electrified security fences to protect commercial, manufacturing, or industrial property, or property zoned for another designation that is authorized to be used for such a purpose. However, it provided a variety of limitations and requirements, including that: the property is not located in a residential zone; the fence meets certain international standards; the fence has prominent warning signs on both sides of the fence; and that the fence meets certain height restrictions and is located behind a perimeter fence. However, SB 582 also provided for some local control relating to the installation of such permits, providing that an owner of property may not install or operate an electrified security fence where a local ordinance prohibits the installation or operation of an electrified fence. SB 582 specified that, if a local ordinance permits electrified security fences, the installation and

¹ See, City News Service, "LA leaders say not so fast on electric fence proposal," Los Angeles Daily News (Oct. 9, 2019), available at <https://www.dailynews.com/2019/10/09/la-leaders-say-not-so-fast-on-electric-fence-proposal/>; James Taylor, "Some Sacramento car dealerships considering electric fences to deter thieves, but some residents express concern," CBS News (Mar. 20, 2023), available at <https://www.cbsnews.com/sacramento/news/sacramento-dealership-electric-fence-theives/>.

² John Webster, *Safety of electric security fences*, University of Wisconsin-Madison (2021), available at <https://static.spokanecity.org/documents/projects/electric-fence-text-amendment-update/electric-fence-university-wisconsin-report.pdf>.

³ *Id.*

⁴ See Senate Judiciary Committee, Analysis: AB 582 (Apr. 7, 2015).

operation of the fence must meet the requirements of that ordinance, in addition to the requirements created by SB 582.

Subsequent to SB 582, the Legislature further clarified the limits and contours of local control over the installation and operation of electrified security fences in AB 358 (Flora, Ch. 148, Stats. 2021). SB 358 specified that any prohibition of an agricultural electrified fence under the Food and Agricultural Code does not apply to an electrified security fence for industrial, manufacturing, or industrial purposes. (Civ. Code § 835(d).)

4. AB 2371 prohibited local jurisdictions from prohibiting electrified security fences to protect or secure manufacturing, industrial, or specified commercial property

In 2024, the Legislature passed AB 2371 (Carrillo, Ch. 235, Stats. 2024) to further provide limits on local jurisdictions' abilities to restrict the installation or use of electrified security fences. AB 2371 specified that, for manufacturing or industrial property, or property legally used to store, service, park, sell, or rent vehicles, vessels, equipment, materials, freight, or utility infrastructure, when the proposed electrified security fence meets the specified requirements for an electrified security fence, a local ordinance may not prohibit the installation and operation of the electrified security fence, nor require a permit or approval in addition to any alarm system permit used by the local jurisdiction. This prohibition effectively meant that, if a property owner proposes to install and operate an electrified security fence that meets the requirements of Civil Code Section 835, the city or county cannot place additional requirements on the fence or require the owner to apply for and receive a permit from the city first.

AB 2371 also made a number of changes to the requirements for compliant electrified security fences. It specified that an electrified security fence under its provisions is one that is powered by an electrical energizer driven by solar-charged batteries of no more than 12 volts of direct current. It also updated the code's reference to the international standards to reference more recent standards than the 2006 standards previously referenced.

When AB 2371 came before this Committee, the author agreed to a number of amendments. The first amendment permitted a city or county to require an administrative permit to confirm that the fence meets the applicable requirements when the fence would be located on a property abutting a property in residential use, or within 300 feet of a public park, childcare facility, recreation center, community center, or school facility. The second amendment placed a sunset date on the changes made by AB 2371, sunsetting its provisions on January 1, 2028.

5. AB 1622 proposes to make AB 2371's provisions permanent

AB 1622 would remove the sunset provision added by this Committee to AB 2371. AB 2371 was an urgency statute that went into effect upon enactment, but it has only been

in effect for a little more than a year and a half. The sunset provisions of AB 2371 also have one more year before they must be extended or removed to prevent the law's sunset. Why the sunset provisions in AB 2371 should be removed at such an early stage is unclear, though the author asserts that there have been no concerns with the operation and implementation of AB 2371 thus far.

6. Considerations

When it was before this Committee, there were a variety of considerations and concerns regarding AB 2371's provisions. The California State Association of Counties (CSAC) and the California League of Cities raised concerns that its requirements on local cities and counties would force those local jurisdictions to accept electrified security fences in every instance, and thus posed risks to residents where fences are installed near a residential or hospitality facility. The opposition pointed to the fact that cities are being required to approve housing sometimes without discretion, such that it is possible housing could be built next to a property with an electrified fence. Once a property has installed a fence, AB 2371 did not allow any process for revisiting the fence's approval if housing later is developed next to the electrified property. In their opposition letter, CSAC and the League of Cities stated: "Considering the potential hazards an electrified security fence can pose to the public, it is critically important for local governments to retain their discretion on a case-by-case basis to ensure installation of such fences is safe and appropriate for the given area." CSAC and the California League of Cities changed their position to neutral after the amendments taken in this Committee and the Senate Local Government Committee. Those amendments included the sunset clause that this bill removes.

Additionally, AB 1622, like AB 2371 before it, is co-sponsored by a private company that specifically makes and sells electrified security fences. AB 2371 likely directly benefited the sponsor by requiring local jurisdictions to allow installation of the sponsor's product. While that is not in and of itself a concern, it does raise questions about whether AB 2371's provisions and added requirements for compliant electrified security fences could have given the sponsor a competitive marketplace advantage. For example, AB 2371 required that compliant fences be powered by solar-powered batteries. While all of the sponsor's systems apparently operate on solar-powered batteries, it is not clear whether the entire industry of electrified security fences relies on solar-powered batteries. As AB 2371 made solar-powered batteries a requirement for fences that cannot be denied installation or operation, it could have advantaged the sponsor's business over other electrified security fence companies whose products do not utilize solar-powered batteries to power their fences. It should be noted that the Committee has not heard specifically from any other electrified fence company regarding this bill. AB 1622 would make AB 2371's changes permanent, and does so before the end of the sunset.

SUPPORT

ARAMOK, LLC (co-sponsor)
Bay Area Council (co-sponsor)
Family Business Association of California (co-sponsor)
Cal Fire Local 2881
California Chamber of Commerce
California Fuels and Convenience Alliance
California Manufacturers and Technology Association
California Trucking Association
Copart Inc.
Peace Officers Research Association of California (PORAC)
Republic Services
Self Storage Association

OPPOSITION

None received

RELATED LEGISLATION

Pending Legislation: None known.

Prior Legislation:

AB 2371 (Carrillo, Ch. 235, Stats. 2024) prohibited, as an urgency measure, local cities, counties, and cities and counties from prohibiting the installation and operation of an electrified security fence on specified industrial, manufacturing, or commercial property, or from requiring a permit or approval for such fences, except as specified, when the fence is compliant with the law's requirements for electrified security fences, and made various changes to the requirements for such fences. AB 2371 included the January 1, 2028 sunset that this bill removes.

AB 1531 (Flora, 2023) was substantially similar to AB 2371 and would have authorized a local ordinance to prohibit the installation of an electrified security fence only if the fence fails to meet specified requirements, and would have prohibited a local jurisdiction from requiring a permit or approval for a compliant fence in addition to an alarm system permit. AB 1531 died in the Assembly Local Government Committee.

SB 358 (Flora, Ch. 148, Stats. 2021) authorized the installation and operation of an electrified security fence to protect and secure commercial, manufacturing, or industrial property, or property zoned under another designation but legally authorized to be used for a commercial, manufacturing, or industrial purpose. Specified that a local

ordinance that prohibits or regulates only specified animal control fencing does not apply to an electrified security fence.

AB 582 (Hall, Ch. 273, Stats. 2015) authorized an owner of property to install and operate an electrical security fence, as defined, if the property is not in a residential zone, the fence has prominent warning signs, certain height restrictions are met, the fence is behind a perimeter fence, and the fence meets other specified technical and local requirements. Specifies that, if a local ordinance allows electrical security fences, the installation and operation of the fence must meet the requirements of that ordinance in addition to AB 582's requirements. *See Comment 2.*

PRIOR VOTES:

Assembly Floor (Ayes 64, Noes 0)

Assembly Local Government Committee (Ayes 10, Noes 0)
