

Gavin Newsom Signs 'Stop Nick Shirley Act'

Governor Gavin Newsom (D-CA) signed a bill that expands the state's address-protection program to those working in immigration services. Critics of the bill say it impedes journalists and investigations, while supporters believe it protects workers from threats.

The law, AB 2624, creates an "address confidentiality program for a designated immigration support services provider, employee, or volunteer, as defined, who faces threats of violence or harassment from the public because of their affiliation with a designated immigration support services facility." It further blocks an individual from "posting on the internet the personal information or image of a designated immigration support services provider, employee, or volunteer, or other individuals residing at the same home address, with the specific intent that another person imminently use that information to commit a crime involving violence or a threat of violence that is likely to occur against such an individual."



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Republican Assemblymember Carl DeMaio told the California Post that he believes the law will go to court. "I ultimately believe that this has to go to court because clearly our politicians don't give a [expletive] about our First Amendment rights. But this is a bad pattern of behavior," he said.

When the bill passed through the California State Assembly earlier this year, journalist Nick Shirley said, "This bill puts journalists at civil risk for investigating fraud and

makes it harder to expose fraud in 'immigration support services,' including NGOs, nonprofits and health care facilities that receive hundreds of millions from the state of California each year."

"This bill would have made it criminal to expose fake hospices in LA or the Somali 'learning center' in Minnesota if they then claim 'reasonable fear' and the business owner gives a written demand not to post the video," he continued. "Plain and simple, California is trying to make it harder to expose fraud and scare individuals from investigating fraud in their communities, as they could be sued for an injunction to remove the video + forced to pay their attorney fees + minimum \$4,000 in damages."

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