



Senate Bill 272

Local Government Open Data Act

SUMMARY

Senate Bill 272 is about preserving the right of access of all Californians to the information of local government. This bill would require all local agencies to create a catalog of the enterprise software systems they use to collect and maintain public information. The bill requires that the catalog of systems be made available to the public under the California Public Records Act (CPRA).

ISSUE

Local government agencies throughout California possess a potentially powerful tool for improving the lives of Californians: data. In too many cases, however, local agencies – and the constituents they serve – do not know what data they have collected or how to access it. SB 272 will identify the enterprise systems used to collect and manage the information that is being kept by local agencies, how that information is maintained, and who is responsible for its collection. Publishing a catalog of this information will improve the public's access to information, enabling further public review and analysis, and immediately empower Californians to utilize this information.

There are thousands of local public agencies that collect information on critical government programs and services. The data include building permits and public parks to potholes and public transportation. Harnessing the power of this locally generated data could help spur economic growth, tackle major infrastructure issues and engage millions of Californians in their communities. Properly gathered and clearly understood data would also help empower state and local agencies to collaborate more effectively and improve service delivery.

From public bus times in San Francisco to maps of fire hazards in Santa Cruz County, local agencies statewide are already turning internally gathered data into usable information. Cataloguing the systems used to collect and maintain public information at the local level is a vital first step in both promoting open data across the state and ensuring that all Californians have access to the records that local agencies collect and maintain. While Californians have a right to inspect records under the CPRA, without an understanding of what information exists and in what form it's kept, the public's access is restricted. This bill will improve the public's access to those records.

SB 272 (HERTZBERG)

In making California local government data more accessible to the public, SB 272 (Hertzberg) would amend the California Public Records Act to require local governments to create a catalog of enterprise systems and the data those systems contain. These catalogs would include who maintains the information, how it is stored and how often that data is collected. This bill would allow both government and the public to better understand how local government serves *all* Californians.



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