



June 9, 2026

The Honorable Lola Smallwood-Cuevas
Chair, Senate Labor, Public Employment and Retirement Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 6740
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1883 (Bryan) Workplace Surveillance Tools - Oppose

Dear Chair Smallwood-Cuevas,

The city of San Marcos must regretfully share its opposition to AB 1883 (Bryan), which could vastly complicate the routine work of local governments, endanger our ability to perform essential public services, impede our ability to manage and respond to workplace violence threats, and make local governments vulnerable to waste, fraud, and abuse of public resources.

We have fundamental concerns with this and other bills that aim to restrict how public agencies can use the tools defined as “workplace surveillance tools,” which we believe are essential and, in many cases, routine tools used for security.

AB 1883 would impose several rules on how public agencies may use surveillance tools – a term that is vast in its application, including video cameras, ID badge or key fob access, digital workplace messaging collaboration platforms (e.g. Microsoft Teams or Slack), and a wide array of tools used to keep workplaces safe, conduct essential government services, and protect against abuse, fraud, and waste of public resources.

We understand the reasonable concerns one could have about the slow creep of surveillance tools into every aspect of daily life, particularly as new technologies emerge. However, we are concerned that this bill and others aimed at limiting employer surveillance are too broad, too expensive, and too dangerous for public agencies and those we serve.

Could prohibit routine security or public health tools

It is unclear how a court could interpret the meaning of this bill. While we understand and sympathize with the concerns this bill intends to address, our concern is that a reasonable interpretation could blanketly prohibit routine tools used for security, operations, or public health.

Routine security tools like security cameras, key fobs, ID badges, digital workplace collaboration platforms (e.g. Teams or Slack), or GPS trackers passively collect worker data, including when they are actively working at a computer or cell phone or where they are at a given point in a day. Section 1581(a)(1)(B) **prohibits** any tool that identifies or infers information about workers engaging in activity protected by state or federal law.

We believe it is critical to protect the civil and labor rights of the public workforce. Our concern is that an overbroad interpretation of what it means to “identify,” or “infer,” worker information could endanger essential tools that, while not *designed* or *used* to intentionally undermine the rights of employees, may passively collect information that happens to meet the law’s threshold for an outright ban on their use.



We are concerned that the breadth of the bill could sweep in routine or innocuous technologies and have other unforeseen operational or safety consequences for public agencies.

Inappropriately applies to public agencies

The sponsors are advancing this bill, in part, to address activities by employers that undermine efforts to organize a union, influence union elections, or retaliate against union leaders. Existing law already provides significant protections for public employee union organizing and bargaining activities. For example, Government Code § 3550 provides that a public employer shall not deter or discourage public employees, or applicants to be public employees, from becoming or remaining members of an employee organization. Section 3551.5 imposes significant penalties for violations of § 3550 and grants employee organizations standing to bring the claims.

Exposes public agencies to severe litigation risk and steep penalties

AB 1883 would allow employees or employee representatives to bring civil actions against public agencies for violating a law that is vague, sweeping, and littered with unintended consequences. In addition to punitive damages and attorney fees, this bill could cause public agencies to incur staggering penalties of \$500 per employee for each violation. We are concerned this bill could have unintended consequences that limit or prohibit essential tools used to keep employees and the public safe and thriving.

For these reasons, the city of San Marcos must oppose **AB 1883 (Bryan)**.

Sincerely,

Rebecca D. Jones
Mayor