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PORAC Slams Newsom's Veto of Bipartisan Public Safety Retirement Reform

AB 1383 passed the Senate 33–0 and secured final Assembly approval 69–2. Newsom rejected it.

SACRAMENTO, CA — The Peace Officers Research Association of California (PORAC) today condemned Governor Gavin Newsom's veto of Assembly Bill 1383 (McKinnor), a public safety retirement reform bill that reached his desk with overwhelming bipartisan legislative support and backing from local elected officials across California.

"Governor Newsom had an opportunity to deliver a major bipartisan victory for public safety. Instead, he slammed the door on the officers and firefighters who keep this state running through its worst moments," said PORAC President Brian R. Marvel. "Democrats and Republicans came together. Local officials made the case. Thousands of public safety professionals asked him to act. The Governor's answer was no. That is a profound failure of leadership."

California faces a public safety workforce crisis. Agencies struggle to attract qualified recruits and retain experienced personnel, while uncompetitive retirement benefits make it harder to compete with other careers and out-of-state employers. AB 1383 proposed targeted pension changes to strengthen recruitment and retention while preserving employee cost sharing, anti-spiking protections and actuarial oversight. It addressed a factor lawmakers can change: whether a career protecting California communities offers the long-term security needed to attract and keep the people doing it.

"When someone calls 911 because a violent suspect is outside the door or a loved one is in danger, they need help to arrive. They cannot afford to wait while the nearest available officer finishes another emergency," Marvel said. "Staffing determines whether help is minutes away or much farther out. The Governor vetoed a tool designed to put more qualified people into that response system and keep experienced people from leaving it."

Vacancies force departments to rely on overtime to maintain coverage. Repeated overtime accelerates exhaustion and burnout, making retention harder and leaving fewer personnel to answer the next call. When experienced officers leave, communities lose their judgment and skills while taxpayers pay again to recruit, hire and train replacements. AB 1383 was designed to help break that cycle.

"The current broken system is far more expensive than the cost of this bill," Marvel said. "Taxpayers are already paying for endless recruitment, repeated training and overtime to cover empty positions. Families pay when help takes longer to arrive. Officers and firefighters pay in exhaustion, injuries and burnout. Governor Newsom has left all of them with a broken status quo. There is nothing fiscally responsible about allowing that failure to continue."

PORAC, California Professional Firefighters and Assemblymember Tina McKinnor built an overwhelming bipartisan coalition behind AB 1383. The bill passed the Senate 33–0 and secured final Assembly approval 69–2. Dozens of local elected officials urged the Governor to sign, rejecting the claim that local government opposition was universal. More than 500 officers and firefighters rallied at the Capitol, and more than 8,500 letters were delivered to Governor Newsom's office.

“PORAC is grateful to the legislators, local officials, members and partners who helped advance AB 1383, and we will return next session. Governor Newsom owns this veto. We will keep fighting for the people who answer emergency calls—and the Californians waiting for them to arrive,” Marvel said.

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About the Peace Officers Research Association of California:

The Peace Officers Research Association of California (PORAC) was incorporated in 1953 as a professional federation of local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies. PORAC represents nearly 90,000 public safety members and over 960 associations, making it the largest law enforcement organization in California and the largest statewide association in the nation.