

Date of Hearing: April 7, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Mike Fong, Chair

AB 1845 (Krell) – As Introduced February 11, 2026

[Note: This bill is double referred to the Assembly Committee on the Judiciary, where the Committee will hear it as it relates to issues under its jurisdiction.]

SUBJECT: Student safety: human trafficking

SUMMARY: Establishes specific policies and procedures postsecondary education institutions must adopt to address incidents of human trafficking on campus. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Requires a postsecondary education institution by July 1, 2027 to offer as part of the institution's sexual harassment training a component containing the following elements:
 - a) The definition of human trafficking, including sex trafficking and labor trafficking;
 - b) Myths and misconceptions about human trafficking;
 - c) Physical and mental signs to be aware of that may indicate that human trafficking is occurring;
 - d) Guidance on how to identify individuals who are most at risk for human trafficking; and,
 - e) Protocols for how to report human trafficking to campus and non-campus authorities.
- 2) Requires a postsecondary education institution by July 1, 2027 to annually mandate each employee to complete the sexual harassment training with the human trafficking component pursuant to (1) of this analysis.
- 3) Permits a postsecondary education institution to incorporate materials and information provided by either: California Department of Justice or private nonprofit organizations that represent the interests of human trafficking victims, into the training.
- 4) Provides a liability shield to the postsecondary education institutions by stating an employee's failure to report human trafficking incidents to the authorities or to the postsecondary education institution does not by itself result in a liability for the postsecondary education institution.
- 5) Requires a postsecondary education institution to post and display the model notice developed by Civil Rights Code Section 52.6 on the institution's internet website and in a prominent location on campus.
- 6) Requires every postsecondary education who receives student financial aid assistance from the state to do all the following:
 - a) Require the appropriate officials at each campus within their respective jurisdiction to compile records of all occurrences of crimes on campus that involve violence, human trafficking, hate violence, theft, destruction of property, illegal drugs, or alcohol

intoxication that were reported to campus police, campus security, or campus safety authorities. The occurrences as reported will also include arrests conducted by campus police, campus security, or campus safety authorities; and,

- b) Require any report made by either a survivor of human trafficking or by an employee to campus security for the purpose of notifying either the institution or law enforcement, to be immediately or as soon as practicably possible disclosed to local law enforcement in the same manner as a disclosure for a violent crime, sexual assault, or hate crime.
- 7) Removes language excluding the California Community Colleges (CCC) from disclosing and reporting specific crimes that occur on campus to the authorities and the public.
 - 8) Amends the Kristen Smart Campus Safety Act of 1998 to include the community colleges and human trafficking requirements. Specifically, requires the governing boards of community college districts, the board of trustees of the California State University (CSU), the board of regents of the University of California (UC), and the governing board of postsecondary education institutions to adopt rules requiring each campus to enter into written agreements with local law enforcement for the operational clarity regarding the responsibilities of investigating of human trafficking, Part 1 violent crimes, sexual assaults, and hate crimes occurrences on campus. Clarifies the written agreements will designate which law enforcement agency will have operational responsibility for investigating each human trafficking incident, each Part 1 violent crime incident, each sexual assault incident, and each hate crime incident. The written agreement will also delineate the specific geographical boundaries of each agency's operational responsibility. If the existing agreements between the campus and the local authorities contain the requirements as stipulated above, the existing agreement remains intact.
 - 9) Repeals Education Code Section 67381.1 as it is no longer operationally necessary.
 - 10) Makes the following findings and declarations on behalf of the Legislature:
 - a) Human trafficking is inimical to every postsecondary education institution's core values and inherently harmful and dehumanizing; and,
 - b) Human trafficking is a violation of human rights and a violation of federal and state law.
 - 11) Conditions the receipt of state funds for student financial assistance to the CCC, CSU, UC, or an independent postsecondary education institution, upon the adoption of a policy regarding incidents of human trafficking that involve a student, faculty, or staff of the institution. The policy must include all of the following:
 - a) A statement that human trafficking is a state and federal crime;
 - b) A statement that human trafficking is a violation of the student and employee code of conduct;
 - c) The physical and mental signs to be aware of that may indicate that human trafficking is occurring;
 - d) Guidance on how to identify individuals who are most at risk for human trafficking; and,

- e) The protocols for how to report an incident of human trafficking to local law enforcement, the appropriate campus authorities, and the contact information for national hotlines for reports of human trafficking.
- 12) Conditions the ability for a public or independent institution of higher education to participate in the Cal Grant program upon a requirement that each institution will by July 1, 2027 implement written policies and procedures to ensure that any report of human trafficking received by campus authorities that is made for the purpose of notifying the institution or law enforcement is immediately or as soon as practically possible forwarded to the appropriate law enforcement agency. Maintains requirements for a victim's identity to be withheld unless the victim consents to disclosure. Clarifies if a campus law enforcement authority is maintained by the institution, they will be considered the local law enforcement agency; however, if the institution does not maintain a local law enforcement agency, the report will be forwarded to the a local law enforcement agency.
 - 13) Defines for purpose of the entire measure "human trafficking" as a violation of section 236.1 of the Penal Code.
 - 14) Makes confirming and technical amendments to multiple provisions of the Education Code.

EXISTING LAW: *Federal law.*

- 1) Conditions the receipt of federal financial aid funding upon a requirement that higher education institutions record specific campus crime statistics and safety policies for consumer protections. The crimes required to be reported are as follows: murder, sex offenses, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, motor vehicle theft, manslaughter, arson, arrests or persons referred for disciplinary action for liquor law violations, drug-related violations, and weapons possession, hate crimes, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking incidents, and hazing incidents (20 USC 1092, subdivision (f)).
- 2) No person in the United States will, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance except for specified circumstances including membership of fraternities and sororities (United States Code Title 20, Chapter 38, Section 1681... colloquially known as Title IX).
- 3) Outlines the required response pursuant to Title IX, of a postsecondary higher education institution when the institution is made aware of an alleged sexual harassment incident on campus. The regulations include a requirement for a formal complaint, a grievance procedure for an investigation into whether the incident based on a standard of evidence occurred, a hearing by which advisors are provided an opportunity to cross-examine, and a method of appealing the outcome of the grievance process (Federal Code of Regulations Title 34, Subtitle B, Chapter 1, Subpart D, Section 106.45).
- 4) Defines sexual harassment as conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies at least one of the following:
 - a) An employee of the postsecondary education institution conditions aid, benefit, or services to a recipient on the individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;

- b) Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the recipient's education program or activity; and,
- c) Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking, as defined in the United States Code (Federal Code of Regulations, Title 34, Subpart D, Section 106.30).

State law.

- 1) Conditions the receipt of state financial aid assistance for students upon a requirement that each postsecondary education institution do all the following:
 - a) Require the appropriate officials at each campus to compile records of both of the following:
 - i) All occurrences and arrests conducted by or reported to campus police, campus security personnel, or campus safety authorities for crimes that are committed on campus that involved violence, hate violence, theft, destruction of property, illegal drugs, or alcohol intoxication.
 - ii) All occurrences of noncriminal acts of hate violence, as defined.
 - b) Require any written record of noncriminal hate violence to include a description of the hate violence and the victim's and offender's characteristics.
 - c) Make information concerning any crime reported pursuant to (a) to be made available within two days following the request from any student, employee, or the media, unless the information is exempt. The disclosure shall be done in a manner that does not disclose the identify of the victim without the permission of the victim.
 - d) Require the appropriate officials at each campus to prepare and make available a campus safety plan;
 - e) Requires appropriate officials at each campus to report information regarding hate violence on campus; which will be made available to the appropriate governing board and the public.
 - f) Requires any report made regarding a Part 1 violent crime, sexual assault, or hate crime received by campus security authorities to be immediately reported to appropriate local law enforcement agency for investigation. The reporting will be done in a manner that withholds the victim's identity unless the victim has consented to being identified.

Clarifies this code section does not apply to institutions with less than 1,000 students and does not apply to the CCC unless the Legislature has made funds available for the above intended purpose (Education Code (EDC) Section 67380).

- 2) Requires the CSU, the UC, and the governing boards of independent postsecondary institutions to adopt rules requiring their respective campuses to enter into written agreements with local law enforcement agencies to clarify the operational responsibilities for the investigation of Part 1 violent crimes, sexual assaults, and hate crimes. This section is known as the Kristin Smart Campus Safety Act of 1998 (EDC Section 67381).

- 3) Requires the CCC to adopt a rule requiring community college campuses to enter into an agreement with local law enforcement agencies for the operational responsibilities for the investigation of Part 1 violent crimes. Stipulates that once a governing board of a community college updates the requirements of this section, it will also be required to enter into a written agreement for the investigation of sexual assaults and hate crimes (EDC Section 67381.1).
- 4) Conditions the ability for a public or independent institution of higher education to participate in the Cal Grant program upon a requirement that each institution will by July 1, 2015 implement written policies and procedures to ensure that any report of Part 1 violent crime, sexual assault, or hate crime received by campus authorities that is made for the purpose of notifying the institution or law enforcement is immediately or as soon as practically possible forwarded to the appropriate law enforcement agency. Maintains requirements for a victim's identity to be withheld unless the victim consents to disclosure. Clarifies if a campus law enforcement authority is maintained by the institution, they will be considered the local law enforcement agency; however, if the institution does not maintain a local law enforcement agency, the report will be forwarded to a local law enforcement agency (EDC Section 67383).

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown.

COMMENTS: *Intent.* As described by the author the intent of AB 1845 (Krell) is to do the following: “ensure college campuses and their staff are equipped to address, resolve and manage situations in which a student may be a victim of or is actively being trafficked. Requiring annual staff training and updating policies that reflect the seriousness of this crime will lead to safer and healthier campuses.”

The author further contends that “California colleges are in a unique position to reach students who may be vulnerable to exploitation and sex trafficking due to environmental risk factors such as housing instability, lack of social or familial support, or naivety to exploitive situations. AB 1845 ensures that campus policies are updated to include human trafficking identification and prevention. Expanding existing strategies to prevent human trafficking recruitment is vital to protecting the safety of college students.”

Need for the measure. The California Department of Justice defines “human trafficking” as “a crime that involves compelling or coercing a person to provide labor or services, or to engage in commercial sex acts. The coercion can be subtle or overt, physical or psychological, and may involve the use of violence, threats, lies, or debt bondage. Exploitation of a minor for commercial sex is human trafficking, regardless of whether any form of force, fraud, or coercion was used. Human trafficking does not require travel or transportation of the victim across local, state, or international borders.”¹ Each year, the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) collects crime data through the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program from more than 18,000 city, university and college, county, state, tribal and federal law enforcement agencies. The data is consolidated into a dashboard by the FBI, which is available to the public and can be disaggregated by crime, agency, or state. According to the UCR dashboard, from March 2025 to March 2026 there were 406 offenses of human trafficking: sex offenses and 168 offenses human trafficking: involuntary servitude in California.² The same dashboard includes data provided by

¹ <https://oag.ca.gov/human-trafficking/what-is>

² cde.ucr.cjis.gov/LATEST/webapp/#/pages/explorer/crime/crime-trend

California colleges and universities. Committee staff reviewed data provided by campuses of the UC, CSU, and CCC. While most campuses reported no incidents of human trafficking of any kind, two campuses reported incidents of human trafficking in the one-year period between March 2025 and March 2026. UC Merced reported an incident of human trafficking: sex offense and UC Berkeley reported three incidents of human trafficking: involuntary servitude.

Committee staff note not every college and university in California reported human trafficking crimes that occurred on – or – near campus, as current reporting requirements, the federal Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (Clery Act), does not explicitly include human trafficking as a data element.

In August 2023, Professor Lianne Urada submitted research conducted on human trafficking in the San Diego region. *Committee staff note that the time this analysis was completed the research has yet to be peer-reviewed, but the data elements are salient to this analysis.* The research method deployed by Professor Urada was an online anonymous survey that was made available to campus communities at UC San Diego, University of San Diego, Point Loma Nazarene University, San Diego State University-Imperial Valley, California State University San Marcos, and the community college districts of San Diego, Southwest, Cuyamaca-Grossmont, and Imperial Valley.³ The research concluded the following data points for the San Diego/Imperial Valley Region:

- Nearly 1 in 5 of the 971 participants were either forced or coerced into selling sex as a college student;
- 2 out of 3 participants thought human trafficking was a medium-to-large threat to students on their campus; and,
- More than 1 in 5 had exchanged sexual activities for items with monetary value.³

Postsecondary education institutions have an implicit responsibility to provide an environment free from threats of violence, coercion, or sexual exploitation; and therefore, also have an implicit responsibility to protect students from the crime of human trafficking. AB 1845 (Krell) addresses this issue by enshrining in the California Education Code the duties and responsibilities of a higher education institution with regards to incidents of human trafficking involving students, faculty, and staff.

Existing protocols to address human trafficking on California collegiate campuses. Title IX protects students, faculty, and staff from experiencing discrimination on the basis of sex at postsecondary education institutions and provides the protocols an institution is to follow should a student, faculty, or staff experience discrimination. The intention of Title IX is to prevent sex discrimination, address and resolve incidents of sex discrimination, and restores educational access for survivors of sex discrimination. One may assume human trafficking would be encompassed in the definition of sexual violence and therefore would be addressed by Title IX; however, one would assume incorrectly. One could infer human trafficking falls within the authority of Title IX as it would be considered a form of sexual harassment that is both severe and pervasive enough to be addressed as a discriminatory behavior. However, since human

³ https://socialwork.sdsu.edu/_resources/files/nemeth-program-in-human-trafficking-research-on-college-students-final-results-urada.pdf

trafficking is not explicitly defined as one of the sexual assault crimes included within the jurisdiction of Title IX, it might not be adjudicated within the existing Title IX complaint processes.

In 2018, the *Innovative Higher Education Journal*, published a paper entitled “Sex trafficking and the Role of Institutions of Higher Education” which clarified a postsecondary education institution’s responsibility under Title IX for addressing human trafficking: “there is no explicit mention of sex trafficking in the current Title IX policy. However, the policy prohibits several types of sexual harassment, including exploitation. Individual institutions of higher education may adopt additional layers to Title IX policies that do address human trafficking, which some schools have done.”⁴ One of the recommendations from the paper was for institutions to: (1) adopt a clear definition of sex trafficking; (2) to adopt a policy to address incidents of sex trafficking; and, (3) to provide training to employees on how to identify sex trafficking and how to report incidents. With the passing of SB 493 (Jackson), Chapter 303, Statutes of 2020, California codified the recommendations of the aforementioned paper.

In a direct response to the Trump Administration’s roll back of sexual harassment protections with new regulations in 2020, then-Senator Jackson, decided to preserve definitions of what constitutes sexual harassment and to establish clear guidelines for how sexual harassment complaints should be resolved on California postsecondary education campuses. SB 493 (Jackson) amended Education Code Section 66262.5, expanding the definition of sexual harassment to include sexual battery, sexual violence, and sexual exploitation. Pursuant to the law, California-based postsecondary education institutions are required to prevent sexual exploitation, which includes “the trafficking of another person, defined as the inducement of a person to perform a commercial sex act, or labor or services, through force, fraud, or coercion.” If postsecondary education institutions are required to have policies which address sexual exploitation, the institutions are already required to address human trafficking as it is considered a form of discrimination. Human trafficking may not be explicitly addressed by Title IX but is specifically addressed by the provision of the Sex Equity Act in the California Education Code.

AB 1845 (Krell) seeks to add provisions to the Education Code to address human trafficking; however, as demonstrated above, human trafficking is already a form of sex-based discrimination and therefore, is addressed in higher education institutions required sexual violence and sexual harassment prevention policies.

SB 493 (Jackson) created a procedure for postsecondary education institutions to follow for resolving complaints of sexual exploitation as defined by the California Education Code. Additionally, SB 493 (Jackson) required all employees to be trained in the procedures and to report incidents of sexual exploitation to the coordinator who is responsible for addressing the complaints. The employee training required of SB 493 (Jackson) is limited to the procedures for how to address sexual exploitation complaints and does not include components on how to identify/determine what constitutes human trafficking.

⁴ Preble, K.M., Cook, M.A. & Fults, B. Sex Trafficking and the Role of Institutions of Higher Education: Recommendations for Response and Preparedness. *Innov High Educ* 44, 5–19 (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10755-018-9443-1>

AB 1845 (Krell) updates mandated trainings for employees to provide information on human trafficking that is aligned with best practice recommendations for addressing human trafficking on collegiate campuses.

The Clery Act requires postsecondary education institutions to prepare, publish, and distribute annual security reports disclosing campus crime statistics of specified crimes which occurred either on campus or within a limited geographical zone of the campus. As previously mentioned, the Clery Act does not require reporting on human trafficking. Additionally, the Clery Act requires colleges and universities to disclose to the public annual campus safety plans on the campus' intention to address specified crimes on campus. Committee staff reviewed several campus safety plans in preparation for this analysis. While some campuses, like Sonoma State University highlight a plan to address human trafficking; others, provide plans to address sexual exploitation without specifically naming human trafficking.

In a recent California State Audit on postsecondary education institutions compliance with the Clery Act, the State Auditor highlighted that California Law requires “the institution [to] immediately or as soon as practicably possible disclose to the local law enforcement agency with which the institution has a written agreement a report of a criminal homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft, arson, human trafficking, sexual assault, or hate crime.”⁵ However, as indicated by the Audit, not every institutions is reporting crimes to the full extent required by the law.

AB 1845 (Krell) addresses key gaps in federal reporting laws by amending the California Education Code to ensure (1) all incidents of human trafficking are recorded, and (2) are reported to local law enforcement.

Arguments in support. As stated by one of the co-sponsors of the measure, 3 Strands Global Foundation, “Human trafficking is one of the fastest-growing criminal enterprises in the world, and institutions of higher education are not immune to its reach. College campuses are uniquely positioned as both potential points of vulnerability and powerful hubs for prevention, early identification, and intervention. AB 1845 takes a critical and comprehensive approach to addressing these realities by equipping institutions with the tools necessary to better protect students, faculty, and staff. This bill meaningfully strengthens existing protections by integrating human trafficking awareness into required employee training frameworks, including those established under Title IX. By requiring annual, standardized training on the identification of trafficking indicators, myths and misconceptions, and reporting protocols, AB 1845 ensures that campus personnel are better prepared to recognize and respond to exploitation. Early identification is one of the most effective ways to disrupt trafficking, and this bill advances that goal in a practical and scalable way. Additionally, AB 1845 enhances transparency and accountability by requiring campuses to track and report incidents of human trafficking alongside other crimes. This data is essential to understanding the scope of the issue and informing effective prevention and response strategies. The bill also strengthens coordination between campuses and local law enforcement by clarifying investigative responsibilities, which is vital to ensuring timely and trauma-informed responses. Importantly, the bill requires institutions to adopt clear, victim-centered policies addressing human trafficking, including guidance on identifying at-risk individuals and accessing support services. These provisions align with best practices and reflect an understanding that prevention and response must be

⁵ <https://www.auditor.ca.gov/reports/2024-032/#introduction>

rooted in awareness, clarity, and survivor-centered approaches. At 3Strands Global Foundation, we have reached hundreds of thousands of students and educators through our prevention education programs. We have seen firsthand how increasing awareness can empower individuals to recognize exploitation and seek help. AB 1845 builds on this foundation by institutionalizing education and accountability measures across California's higher education systems. We also appreciate the bill's thoughtful consideration of institutional liability, ensuring that efforts to encourage reporting do not inadvertently create barriers to implementation. This balance is critical to fostering a culture of awareness and action. AB 1845 represents a significant step forward in safeguarding students and campus communities from exploitation. By embedding human trafficking awareness into existing systems, improving data collection, and strengthening collaboration, this legislation advances a proactive and prevention-focused approach that will have lasting impact."

Committee comments. While AB 1845 (Krell) may seem redundant in nature, the California Education Code is riddled with redundancies to ensure all higher education institutions are fully aware of their responsibilities to serve and protect their campus community. Furthermore, AB 1845 (Krell) provides necessary clarity on the type of training higher education institutions should be providing to ensure employees have a robust understanding of human trafficking and the requirements of reporting incidents to the appropriate campus authorities.

To provide agency to the higher education institutions to imbed the human trafficking components into annually mandated trainings, the Committee has suggested, and the Author has accepted the following amendments:

1) *Amends Education Code Section 66281.85 to read as follows:*

66281.85. (a) On or before July 1, 2027, a postsecondary institution shall include all of the following as part of the training it provides for ~~employees pursuant to paragraph (9) of subdivision (b) of Section 66281.8:~~ *employees:*

(1) The definition of human trafficking, including sex trafficking and labor trafficking.

(2) Myths and misconceptions about human trafficking.

(3) Physical and mental signs to be aware of that may indicate that human trafficking is occurring.

(4) Guidance on how to identify individuals who are most at risk for human trafficking.

(5) Protocols on how to report human trafficking, including, but not limited to, the national hotlines available by calling 1-888-373-7888 ~~and or~~ by texting 233-733, the contact information for local law enforcement agencies that an employee may use to make a confidential report, and the contact information of appropriate campus authorities consistent with the policy adopted pursuant to Section 67381.1.

(b) Beginning July 1, 2027, a postsecondary institution shall ensure that each employee annually completes the training described in ~~paragraph (9) of subdivision (b) of Section 66281.8, as supplemented pursuant to subdivision (a) of this section.~~

(c) This section does not require a postsecondary institution to provide separate training for identification of human trafficking. A postsecondary institution may include the training required by this section in an existing employee training required by the institution.

~~(e)~~

(d) The employee training described in this section may include information and materials used in training by private nonprofit organizations that represent the interests of human trafficking victims and information and materials produced by the Department of Justice.

~~(d)~~

(e) Failing to report human trafficking to a postsecondary institution or to local law enforcement agencies by an employee of the postsecondary institution shall not, by itself, result in the liability of a postsecondary institution.

~~(e)~~

(f) A postsecondary institution shall post and display the model notice developed pursuant to subdivision (d) of Section 52.6 of the Civil Code on the institution's internet website and in a prominent location on campus.

~~(f)~~

(g) For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

(1) "Human trafficking" means any violation of Section 236.1 of the Penal Code.

(2) "Postsecondary institution" means a campus of the University of California, the California State University, or the California Community Colleges, a private postsecondary educational institution, or an independent institution of higher education that receives state financial assistance.

(3) "Prominent location" means that location, or those locations, in the main administrative building or other area where notices regarding the institution's rules, regulations, and procedures, and standards of conduct are posted.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

3strands Global Foundation
American Association of University Women - California
California Survivor Coalition

Opposition

None on file.

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