



April 13, 2026

The Honorable Christopher Cabaldon
Member, California State Senate
1021 O Street, Suite 7320
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 1159 (Cabaldon) Artificial intelligence: transparency and governance.
Notice of SUPPORT (*Amended - 3/25/2026*)

Dear Senator Cabaldon,

The Sonoma County Mayor's and Councilmembers' Association is pleased to **support SB 1159 (Cabaldon)**, which would put important safeguards in place to protect the ability of the public to comment on matters before local agencies in an age of quickly evolving Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology.

California's open meeting and open governance laws are intended to not only allow the public to observe deliberations about issues that will affect their communities, but to participate as well. Local agencies accept public comment on matters both on the agenda and off. Technology has been a powerful tool to make public participation more accessible than ever, as agendas and the time and location of public meetings are posted online. Those unable to comment or observe in person can follow along online or submit written comments via email or web portal.

However, emerging AI and Large Language Model (LLM) tools have now made it easier than ever for bad actors to misrepresent public opinion in governance decisions. Automated engagement tools have the capacity to overwhelm government agencies, crowd out the voices of actual members of the public, and undermine the intent of California's transparent governance laws. Clarifying how these laws apply in the context of emerging technologies, particularly distinguishing between authentic public input and activity generated at scale by artificial intelligence systems, represents an important step toward protecting meaningful public participation, open governance, and critical staff resources for local agencies. With thoughtful refinement, SB 1159 will help address these challenges in a way that is both effective and implementable as technology continues to evolve quickly.



SONOMA COUNTY

Mayors' & Councilmembers' Association

We appreciate the author's attention to this emerging challenge and the importance of safeguarding meaningful public participation in local governance. As this proposal moves forward, we look forward to working collaboratively with the you.

For these reasons, Sonoma County Mayor's and Councilmembers' Association **support** SB 1159 (Cabaldon) and we thank you for authoring this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Jill McLewis

Jill McLewis (Apr 13, 2026 13:57:26 PDT)

Jill McLewis

Chair, Sonoma County Mayor's and Councilmembers' Association Legislative Committee
Mayor, City of Sebastopol

Cc:

Senator Mike McGuire

Assemblymember Damon Connolly

Assemblymember Cecilia Aguiar-Curry

Assemblymember Chris Rogers

League of California Cities






SB 1159 - SUPPORT

Final Audit Report

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