

LEGISLATIVE REPORT
by James C. Lombardi, CEO
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ASSEMBLY BILL 829 FAILS
IN THE ASSEMBLY PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

As you know, AB 829 was introduced in the Assembly last year. This bill was meant to clarify intent by updating some of the Penal Code language to make state law conform to the federal Law Enforcement Officer's Safety Act regarding CCW protections for retired peace officers.

It was explained to the members of the Public Safety committee exactly who reserve officers are and the important duties they perform but, before the vote on January 10, 2012, the committee moved to "gut" the bill to limit it only to Level I reserves. Wanting to keep the bill alive and move it to the Senate, we agreed to all of their committee's proposed amendments. Reading the way that the committee supposedly wanted, passage should have been assured.

However, when the bill came up for the vote, the chair of the committee made the astounding statement that he "still had issues with the bill" and continued by saying that he "did not want to give additional authority to "alleged professionals," meaning reserve officers. That egregious statement led to the following vote:

Tom Ammiano, Chair (D-13) San Francisco	Abstain
Steve Knight, Vice Chair (R-3) Palmdale	Yes
Curt Hagman (R-6) Chino Hills	Yes
Gilbert Cedillo (D-45) Los Angeles	Yes
Holly Mitchell (D-47) Culver City	Abstain
Nancy Skinner (D-14) Oakland	No

Only one more yes vote would have moved the bill out of committee.

Please keep in mind that this bill had the strong support of the law enforcement community in general. That support was apparently not enough to convince some members of the committee, nor was the changed language sought by the leader of the committee.

Mr. Ammiano must not understand that Level I and II reserve officers have general law enforcement authority throughout the state and that both level I and II reserve officers receive more initial and recurrent training than many other categories of peace officers, including some who already have retirement CCW privileges.

Level I and II reserve officers answer calls for service in their communities and are exposed to the same dangers as full-time, salaried officers. Reserve officers have been

killed and injured in the line of duty. Many receive the same kinds of threats as do their full-time counterparts.

We presently have two members who were injured in the line of duty and who are being placed on permanent disability. This means that they will not be able to work as peace officers or at their full-time jobs. The chief of police of Los Angeles and the past chief of police of San Francisco and now its district attorney both started their careers as reserve officers. Does Mr. Ammiano consider these individuals “alleged professionals”?

We will not give up on this legislation. We will work to reintroduce a similar bill in the near future. We will keep you informed of its progress.

Jim Lombardi is the chief of Reserves at the Los Angeles Police Department and is the chair of CRPOA's legislative committee. He welcomes your questions and comments at lombardi@avradionet.com or by calling 661-944-6887.