

Date of Hearing: April 26, 2017

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON ACCOUNTABILITY AND ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW

Susan Talamantes Eggman, Chair

AB 434 (Baker) – As Amended March 21, 2017

SUBJECT: State Web accessibility: standard and reports

SUMMARY: Requires state agencies and entities to evaluate and report on the accessibility of their websites and for the California Department of Technology (CDT) to establish a state web accessibility standard. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Requires a state agency or entity to submit reports, as specified, to CDT regarding the frequency and method of its web accessibility testing and its efforts to resolve identified accessibility issues.
- 2) Specifies that a "state agency" means the Transportation Agency, Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Department of Veterans Affairs, the Business, Consumer Services, and Housing Agency, Natural Resources Agency, California Health and Human Services Agency, California Environmental Protection Agency, Labor and Workforce Development Agency, and the Department of Food and Agriculture.
- 3) Specifies that a "state entity" means an entity within the executive branch that is under the direct authority of the Governor, including departments, boards, bureaus, commissions, councils, and offices.
- 4) Requires CDT to adopt a state web accessibility standard after reviewing commonly accepted web accessibility standards.
- 5) Requires CDT to submit a report to the Legislature that references the adopted standard and includes a plan for the department to monitor accepted practices to ensure the state's policies and web sites remain current and within guidelines of the accessibility standard.
- 6) Requires CDT to assess the sufficiency of the testing and efforts in an agency or entity's report to determine if the entity met the state web accessibility standard, and to publish the assessment on its web site.
- 7) Requires CDT, if it determines that a web site does not meet the accessibility standard, to ensure it is updated to meet the standard.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability and ensures access to the benefits of any program or activity that is conducted, operated, or administered by the state or any state agency.

- 2) Requires state agencies when procuring, maintaining, or using electronic or information technology to provide those with disabilities public access to information that is comparable to access available to others.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS: This bill requires a state agency or entity to submit a report before July 1, 2018 to CDT regarding the frequency and method of its web accessibility testing and its efforts to resolve accessibility issues. This bill requires future reports every other year after the initial report is submitted.

This bill also directs CDT to establish web accessibility standards by December 31, 2018, and to submit a report to the Legislature that describes how the department will monitor accepted practices to ensure state policy and web sites remain current and within guidelines of the accessibility standards. CDT must also assess agency and entity reports against the standards and resolve web site accessibility issues.

According to the author, this bill is in response to a 2015 California State Auditor's report that reviewed accessibility of some state websites. The report found that some accessibility problems were so severe that, in some circumstances, they could prevent people with disabilities from accessing online services. Some potential access issues identified in the report include how web site users apply for state jobs, submit tax returns, and apply for college.

Requiring state agencies and entities to review their websites for accessibility and specifying CDT's policy and oversight role could help make it easier for people with disabilities to access state web sites.

DOUBLE REFERRAL: This bill was heard in the Assembly Committee on Privacy and Consumer Protection on April 18, 2017, with a vote of 10-0.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Coalition of California Welfare Rights Organizations
State Council on Developmental Disabilities

Opposition

None on file.

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