

Assembly Bill No. 1909

CHAPTER 879

An act to amend Section 141 of the Penal Code, relating to crimes.

[Approved by Governor September 30, 2016. Filed with
Secretary of State September 30, 2016.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1909, Lopez. Falsifying evidence.

Existing law makes it a misdemeanor for a person, or a felony for a peace officer, to knowingly, willfully, intentionally, and wrongfully alter, modify, plant, place, manufacture, conceal, or move any physical matter, digital image, or video recording, with the specific intent that the action will result in a person being charged with a crime.

This bill would make it a felony punishable by imprisonment for 16 months or 2 or 3 years for a prosecuting attorney to intentionally and in bad faith alter, modify, or withhold any physical matter, digital image, video recording, or relevant exculpatory material or information, knowing that it is relevant and material to the outcome of the case, with the specific intent that the physical matter, digital image, video recording, or relevant exculpatory material or information will be concealed or destroyed, or fraudulently represented as the original evidence upon a trial, proceeding, or inquiry.

By creating a new crime, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 141 of the Penal Code is amended to read:

141. (a) Except as provided in subdivisions (b) and (c), a person who knowingly, willfully, intentionally, and wrongfully alters, modifies, plants, places, manufactures, conceals, or moves any physical matter, digital image, or video recording, with specific intent that the action will result in a person being charged with a crime or with the specific intent that the physical matter will be wrongfully produced as genuine or true upon a trial, proceeding, or inquiry, is guilty of a misdemeanor.

(b) A peace officer who knowingly, willfully, intentionally, and wrongfully alters, modifies, plants, places, manufactures, conceals, or moves any physical matter, digital image, or video recording, with specific intent that the action will result in a person being charged with a crime or with the specific intent that the physical matter, digital image, or video recording will be concealed or destroyed, or fraudulently represented as the original evidence upon a trial, proceeding, or inquiry, is guilty of a felony punishable by two, three, or five years in the state prison.

(c) A prosecuting attorney who intentionally and in bad faith alters, modifies, or withholds any physical matter, digital image, video recording, or relevant exculpatory material or information, knowing that it is relevant and material to the outcome of the case, with the specific intent that the physical matter, digital image, video recording, or relevant exculpatory material or information will be concealed or destroyed, or fraudulently represented as the original evidence upon a trial, proceeding, or inquiry, is guilty of a felony punishable by imprisonment pursuant to subdivision (h) of Section 1170 for 16 months, or two or three years.

(d) This section does not preclude prosecution under both this section and any other law.

SEC. 2. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution.