
SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

Senator Nancy Skinner, Chair

2017 - 2018 Regular

Bill No: SB 1161 **Hearing Date:** June 26, 2018
Author: Stone
Version: April 25, 2018
Urgency: Yes **Fiscal:** No
Consultant: GC

Subject: *Inland Empire Rural Crime Prevention Program*

HISTORY

Source: Author

Prior Legislation: AB 157 (Reyes), Ch. 564, Stats. of 1999
SB 44 (Denham), Ch. 18, Stats. of 2003

Support: California Farm Bureau Federation; Riverside Sheriffs' Association

Opposition: None known

Assembly Floor Vote:

PURPOSE

The purpose of this bill is to authorize the Counties of Riverside and San Bernardino to create the Inland Empire Rural Crime Prevention Program. The bill also requires those counties, if they participate, to form a regional task force. The bill would allocate moneys appropriated to the program by the Legislature equally between the counties for these purposes.

Existing law authorizes the counties of Monterey, San Benito, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz, and San Luis Obispo to develop a Central Coast Rural Crime Prevention Program. Additionally, existing law provides for the development and administration of the program, rules for formation of the regional task force, rules and regulations, as well as collection of data on agricultural crimes. (Pen. Code, § 14180, et seq.)

Existing law authorizes the counties of Fresno, Kern, Madera, Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Tulare to develop a Central Valley Rural Crime Prevention Program which is administered by the county district attorney's office or the county sheriff's department of each respective county under a joint powers agreement. (Pen. Code, § 14171.)

This bill states that the Legislature encourages the Counties of Riverside and San Bernardino to develop, adopt, and implement an Inland Empire Rural Crime Prevention Program based on the Central Valley Rural Crime Prevention Program and the Central Coast Rural Crime Prevention Program.

This bill specifies that the Counties of Riverside and San Bernardino may develop within their respective jurisdictions an Inland Empire Rural Crime Prevention Program, which shall be

administered by the county district attorney's office or the county sheriff's department of each respective county under a joint powers agreement.

- 1) The parties to each agreement shall form a regional task force, known as the Inland Empire Rural Crime Task Force, that includes the respective county office of the county agricultural commissioner, the county district attorney, the county sheriff, and interested property owner groups or associations.
- 2) The task force shall be an interactive team working together to develop crime prevention, problem solving, and crime control techniques, to encourage timely reporting of crimes, and to evaluate the results of these activities.
- 3) The task force may operate from a joint facility in order to facilitate investigative coordination. The task force may also consult with experts from the United States Armed Forces, the California Military Department, the Department of Justice, other law enforcement entities, and various other state and private organizations, as deemed necessary to maximize the effectiveness of the program.
- 4) Media and community support may be solicited to promote the program.
- 5) Each of the participating counties shall adopt rules and regulations for the implementation and administration of the program.

This bill specifies that in order to receive funds for the program, each designated county shall agree to participate in the Inland Empire Rural Crime Task Force and shall appoint a representative to that task force.

This bill specifies that the Inland Empire Rural Crime Task Force may develop rural crime prevention programs containing a system for reporting rural crimes that enables the swift recovery of stolen goods and the apprehension of criminal suspects for prosecution.

This bill provides that the task force may develop computer software and use communication technology to implement the reporting system, although the task force is not limited to the use of these means to achieve the stated goals.

This bill provides that the Inland Empire Rural Crime Task Force may develop a uniform procedure for participating counties to collect, and each participating county may collect, data on agricultural crimes. The task force may also establish a central database for the collection and maintenance of data on agricultural crimes and designate one participating county to maintain the database. State funds the counties receive to operate the rural crime prevention programs may be used to implement the requirements of this paragraph. This paragraph does not prohibit counties from using their own funds to implement this paragraph's provisions, however, it is the Legislature's intent that this paragraph not be construed as creating a state-mandated local program.

This bill states that the staff for each program may consist of the personnel designated by the district attorney and sheriff for each county in accordance with the joint powers agreement.

This bill specifies that funds appropriated to the Inland Empire Rural Crime Task Force shall be allocated by the controller equally between the Counties of Riverside and San Bernardino.

COMMENTS

1. Need for This Bill

According to the author:

While there are many laws that have been passed trying to deter metal theft and other rural crimes, there still continues to be rampant thefts and crime throughout the business and farming communities of Riverside and San Bernardino Counties. SB 1161 gives these communities the resources needed to help law enforcement combat the unique rural-based crimes that face our agricultural businesses.

2. Rural Crime Prevention Programs in California

Rural crime prevention programs began with a pilot program in Tulare County, which was established as the Rural Crime Demonstration Project. This project was administered by the Tulare County District Attorney's Office. The original project was formed under a joint powers agreement with the Tulare County Sheriff's Office entered into pursuant to Gov. Code, §§ 6500, et seq. In 1999, the initial pilot project in Tulare County was expanded to the Central Valley Rural Crime Prevention Program. This program eventually included seven counties (Fresno, Kern, Madera, Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Tulare).

In 2003 a second program was created as the Central Coast Rural Crime Prevention Program, which currently includes five California counties (Monterey, San Benito, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz, and San Luis Obispo).

3. Prior Versions have had Reporting Requirements

Prior versions of this legislation have required the Legislative Analyst Office to evaluate the program, and present its evaluation, including a detailed cost benefit analysis of the entire program to the Governor, the Joint Legislative Budget Committee, and the fiscal committees of the Legislature. This bill does not contain those provisions.

4. Argument in Support

According to the California Farm Bureau Federation:

California's rural communities are seeing a sharp increase in crime, specifically crop, equipment, metal and mail theft, cattle rustling, vandalism, illegal dumping, and drug production. These challenges require unique problem solving and broad cooperation from state, local and federal law enforcement, land owners and businesses. The costs to remediate impacts from rural crime, such as copper wire stripping from irrigation pipes and sprinkler heads, fall disproportionately on land holders who are already underserved by state and local crime prevention programs. With Riverside and San Bernardino counties accounting for \$1.732 billion in gross value in 2016, the agricultural industry in the Inland Empire deserves California's protection.

In response, SB 1161 (Stone) would authorize Riverside and San Bernardino counties to create a coordinated regional task force to address these unique challenges and develop systems to monitor, report, investigate and deter rural crimes. This program would be based on the existing Central Coast and Central Valley Rural Crime Prevention Programs. As such, each county has the overall discretion to tailor specific programs and would strengthen the ability of law enforcement agencies in rural areas to detect and monitor agricultural and rural-based crimes.

Farm Bureau believes that SB 1161 addresses a real issue plaguing rural Californians and will allow for improved communication and integration to take a significant bite out of rural crime.

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