



## **AB 956 (Alvarez): State Auditor Fingerprint Bill**

### **Bill Summary**

AB 956 would require the California State Auditor to require fingerprint images and associated information from a prospective employee and engage with the Department of Justice to gather the information required to create a complete background check, thereby allowing the State Auditor's Office to continue to receive data from the FBI Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) system.

### **Background**

The federal law that authorizes the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to collect criminal history information, which is stored on the CJIS system, and to disseminate that information to a state agency for employment purposes is contained in Public Law 92-544. That law, among other things, authorizes the FBI to exchange identification records with officials of state and local governments for purposes of employment and licensing if authorized by a state statute that has been approved by the United States Attorney General.

Late last year, the FBI announced that it would no longer allow access to CJIS based on existing statutes. They require a legislative fix that explicitly requires background checks of employees and the authority to engage with the Department of Justice to gather necessary federal information for a complete background check.

### **Conclusion**

AB 956 is vital for the State Auditor's Office to continue vetting its employees with important information from the DOJ. If enacted, the State Auditor's Office should continue to have a full

right of access to the records it is often asked to review as part of its work without interruption.

This bill does not create something new for the State Auditor's Office—it has been fingerprinting staff and consultants for a very long time. Instead, this bill is necessary to provide the office continued access to CJIS data for purposes of obtaining state and federal criminal history information, as the federal government has apparently informed the CA DOJ that each department requesting information from CJIS needs its own specific authorizing statute.

### **Support**

- State Auditor's Office

### **For More Information**

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