



Tuesday, March 31, 2026

Senator Smallwood-Cuevas
1021 O Street, Suite 6530
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator Smallwood-Cuevas:

The California Association of Licensed Security Agencies, Guards & Associates (CALSAGA) must oppose SB 1203. CALSAGA has always been, and remains a strong proponent of California having the most stringent security officer training requirements in the United States. However, after careful analysis we respectfully believe that in its current form SB 1203 will result in several unintended consequences, including, not furthering the interests of enhancing public safety, serving as a significant bar to employment, and resulting in additional costs to both private and public sector employers in excess of one billion dollars.

CALSAGA is the only industry association in California dedicated to representing private security companies, in-house security operations, and private security facilities. CALSAGA represents more than 400 companies and an estimated 300,000 security officers. The mission of CALSAGA is to raise and improve the quality of service and public perception of the security industry by promoting education, training, industry growth and providing information, improved standards, legislative and regulatory agency advocacy, money-saving benefits, and personal development.

California has been the leader in professionalizing the contract security industry with nationally recognized training and background requirements. California law currently requires an individual who is registered and hired as a private security officer to complete 40 hours of training in security officer skills within 6 months from the date upon which registration is issued, or within 6 months of their employment with a private security employer. Included in the 40 hours of security officer training are 8-hours Powers to Arrest and Appropriate Use of Force and 4 of the 8-hours require mandatory in-person training with instructor present with students in the classroom. CALSAGA is unaware of any other state in the nation that comes even close to requiring 8-hours powers to arrest and appropriate use of force with in-person training.

SB 1203 would double the current 8-hours Powers to Arrest and Appropriate Use of Force training to 16 hours. This alone creates a bar to employment by doubling the already robust California training requirements without any demonstrated benefit. This will drive significant cost increases to the employer (including many state agencies) and prospective guards. This will add time and money driving security industry job applicants to seek other employment. Further, SB 1203 allows any organization other than a licensee (security company) to teach the 16-hour course. Disallowing licensed security companies from teaching the 16-hours Powers to Arrest and Appropriate Use of Force course will create a huge recruitment and hiring bottleneck and now employers will be reliant on a third party to conduct the training. Additionally, SB 1203 adds two hours to the initial 40 hours security officer training required and doubles required annual refresher training from 8 hours to 16 hours. It also eliminates any on the job training, which seems to be one of the unintended consequences

referenced above. CALSAGA estimates the additional cost of the training requirements alone will **exceed \$350 Million a year**. While some of this cost will necessarily be absorbed by business entities, the increased burden will also flow to state and local government entities. The bill also mandates a completely different training requirement that would be conducted by a labor organization but requires the employer to pay for the labor organization training. While many CALSAGA members have excellent relations with labor organizations, it is clear such organizations do not have any expertise in providing security officer training, which we feel is another unintended consequence.

There is also concern about the reconstitution of the Industrial Wage Commission (IWC). The IWC has been unfunded since 2004. This bill would reconstitute the IWC for the sole purpose of reviewing wages and working conditions of the property services industry. The IWC would be charged with increasing wages and working conditions for both contract and proprietary guards. Even a moderate increase of just \$1.00 per hour in wages would result in a \$750 million increase to businesses and state and local governments in California. Given recent other legislation that attempted to accomplish the same result, the increase proposed is likely to be much greater. Again, the effect on state and local governments would be significant.

As the bill states in its findings and declarations:

“California faces a police officer shortage”

“Security officers are essential to the safety and security of organizations, individuals, and the public”

While we support the sentiment and continuing need to ensure security officers are well-trained, SB 1203 will immediately make it more expensive and more difficult to employ security guards, resulting in an even greater shortage and delayed deployment of the exact individuals the bill seeks as necessary to provide protection to California citizens and visitors, especially in light of the upcoming world-wide events coming to California (e.g., 2026 FIFA World Cup in Inglewood and Santa Clara, Super Bowl LXI in Inglewood, LA 2028 Summer Olympics, etc.). SB 1203 will eliminate jobs making companies that seek to automate security functions more competitive thereby displacing the very people the bill intends to help. Cameras, computer screens, fences, and lighting will replace human security officers with the result of less support for our law enforcement officers. **SB1203 is a job killer.**

SB 1203 will increase unregulated and untrained security personnel at events throughout California jeopardizing public safety at a time of heightened risk. Unregulated activity is a significant problem in the security industry today and has been a primary focus for CALSAGA and the Bureau of Security and

Investigative Services (BSIS). SB 1203’s wage pressure on current lawful operators and those on the fringe will no doubt amplify and incentivize less than ethical providers to skip the licensing training requirements altogether. The bill will make the regulated companies uncompetitive in a marketplace that will be overrun by those calling themselves EVENT STAFF OR USHERS. The Department of Consumer Affairs and BSIS do not currently have the budget or resources to regulate this important issue. In essence, SB 1203 will start a race to



the bottom due to its costly provisions. That is, underground and unregulated security operators will proliferate.

California still suffers from retail significant theft and property crimes. If retail operators cannot afford to retain contract security providers, they are likely to go without, thereby increasing safety risks. By imposing a **billion dollars** in new annual costs to these struggling business, SB 1203 makes California more expensive and is antithetical to the stated goal of the legislation.

Finally, as we have seen across the nation, when the cost of retaining employees or providing human services escalates, those who would typically acquire such services (such as CALSAGA member clients) will turn to non-human resources (cameras, artificial intelligence, etc.). We believe that on this one point alone we occupy some common ground as we understand and support the desire to keep Californians working.

For these reasons, we must respectfully oppose SB 1203. We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you or your staff to discuss ways to achieve the stated goals of SB 1203 without the unintended consequences we believe are the likely result of the legislation in its current form.

For questions please contact our lobbyist Kelly Jensen at 916-402-3804 or KJensen@shjlobby.com.

Sincerely,

David Chandler

President, CALSAGA