

AMENDED IN SENATE AUGUST 12, 2013

AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 28, 2013

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 6, 2013

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2013–14 REGULAR SESSION

## **ASSEMBLY BILL**

**No. 683**

---

---

**Introduced by Assembly Member Mullin**

February 21, 2013

---

---

An act to amend, repeal, and add Section 53069.4 of the Government Code, relating to local government.

### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

AB 683, as amended, Mullin. Local government: fines and penalties: assessments.

Existing law authorizes the legislative body of a local agency to make any violation of any ordinance enacted by the local agency subject to an administrative fine or penalty, as specified.

This bill would, until January 1, 2020, authorize a city, county, city and county, or special district to, after notice and public hearing, specially assess any fines or penalties not paid after demand by the city, county, city and county, or special district against real property owned by the person owing those fines or penalties, where the fines or penalties are related to ordinance violations on the real property upon which the fines or penalties would be specially assessed, and the ordinance violations constitute a threat to public health and safety. This bill would require a city, county, city and county, or special district to comply with certain notice requirements. The bill would provide that the assessment may be collected at the same time and in the same manner as ordinary county taxes are collected, and shall be subject to the same penalties

and the same procedure and sale in case of delinquency as are provided for ordinary county taxes, and would authorize the city, county, city and county, or special district to record a lien against the property. This bill would authorize a local agency to appoint a hearing officer to hear and decide issues regarding ordinance violations and the imposition of administrative fines and penalties.

This bill would, until January 1, 2020, provide that the powers given to the legislative body of a city, county, city and county, or special district under these provisions are in addition to any other powers of a city, county, city and county, or special district under its charter or any other legal authority.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no.  
State-mandated local program: no.

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

1     SECTION 1. Section 53069.4 of the Government Code is  
2     amended to read:  
3     53069.4. (a) (1) The legislative body of a local agency, as the  
4     term “local agency” is defined in Section 54951, may by ordinance  
5     make any violation of any ordinance enacted by the local agency  
6     subject to an administrative fine or penalty. The local agency shall  
7     set forth by ordinance the administrative procedures that shall  
8     govern the imposition, enforcement, collection, and administrative  
9     review by the local agency of those administrative fines or  
10    penalties. Where the violation would otherwise be an infraction,  
11    the administrative fine or penalty shall not exceed the maximum  
12    fine or penalty amounts for infractions set forth in subdivision (b)  
13    of Section 25132 and subdivision (b) of Section 36900. The powers  
14    given to the legislative body of a city, county, city and county, or  
15    special district under this section are in addition to any other  
16    powers of a city, county, city and county, or special district under  
17    its charter or any other legal authority.  
18    (2) (A) The administrative procedures set forth by ordinance  
19    adopted by the local agency pursuant to paragraph (1) shall provide  
20    for a reasonable period of time, as specified in the ordinance, for  
21    a person responsible for a continuing violation to correct or  
22    otherwise remedy the violation prior to the imposition of  
23    administrative fines or penalties, when the violation pertains to

1 building, plumbing, electrical, or other similar structural or zoning  
2 issues, that do not create an immediate danger to health or safety.

3 (B) Pursuant to Chapter 14 (commencing with Section 27720)  
4 of Part 3 of Division 1 of Title 3, or other applicable law, the  
5 administrative procedures adopted by ordinance pursuant to  
6 paragraph (1) may authorize the appointment of one or more  
7 hearing officers to hear and decide issues regarding ordinance  
8 violations and the imposition of administrative fines or penalties.

9 (C) A city, county, city and county, or special district may, by  
10 ordinance, combine the administrative procedures adopted pursuant  
11 to paragraph (1) with nuisance abatement procedures adopted by  
12 ordinance pursuant to Sections 25845, 38773.1, and 38773.5.

13 (3) (A) If the owner of real property fails to pay fines or  
14 penalties upon demand by a city, county, city and county, or special  
15 district, the city, county, city and county, or special district may,  
16 after notice and public hearing, order the fines or penalties to be  
17 specially assessed against the parcel if the fines or penalties are  
18 related to ordinance violations on the real property upon which  
19 the fines or penalties would be specially assessed and the ordinance  
20 violations constitute a threat to public health and safety. The city,  
21 county, city and county, or special district shall mail or deliver  
22 notice of the hearing at least 15 days prior to the hearing to the  
23 owner of the parcel. For purposes of notice, ownership of the parcel  
24 shall be determined by the latest assessment roll, the records of  
25 the county assessor, or the records of the tax collector, whichever  
26 is most recent. The assessment may be collected at the same time  
27 and in the same manner as ordinary county taxes are collected,  
28 and shall be subject to the same penalties and the same procedure  
29 and sale in case of delinquency as are provided for ordinary county  
30 taxes. All laws applicable to the levy, collection, and enforcement  
31 of county taxes are applicable to the special assessment, except  
32 that the special assessment is not subject to the priority for special  
33 assessment liens provided for in Article 13 (commencing with  
34 Section 53930) of Chapter 4 of Part 1 of Division 2. The  
35 assessment does not constitute a lien on real property until a notice  
36 of lien is recorded pursuant to this section.

37 (B) If any administrative fine or penalty remains unpaid for 10  
38 days following the conclusion of the public hearing described in  
39 subparagraph (A), the ~~tax collector~~ *county* may send to the owner  
40 of the parcel, by certified mail, a notice of enforcement that states

1 that if payment has not been received within 45 days following  
2 the date of the notice, a lien will be recorded. If, after the 45-day  
3 period following the notice, the fine or penalty has not been paid,  
4 the city, county, city and county, or special district may specially  
5 assess the cost of the administrative fines or penalties against the  
6 parcel and cause a notice of lien to be recorded to perfect the lien.  
7 The notice of lien shall, at a minimum, identify the assessor's  
8 parcel number and record owner, set forth the last known address  
9 of the record owner, set forth the date upon which assessment was  
10 ordered by the city, county, city and county, or special district,  
11 and the amount of the lien.

12 (C) Recordation of a notice of lien pursuant to subparagraph  
13 (B) has the same effect as recordation of an abstract of a money  
14 judgment recorded pursuant to Article 2 (commencing with Section  
15 697.310) of Chapter 2 of Division 2 of Title 9 of Part 2 of the Code  
16 of Civil Procedure. The lien created against the parcel has the same  
17 force, effect, and priority as a judgment lien on real property. Upon  
18 order of the city, county, city and county, or special district, or any  
19 officer authorized by the city, county, or city and county to act on  
20 its behalf, a lien created under this section may be released or  
21 subordinated in the same manner as a judgment lien on real  
22 property may be released or subordinated.

23 (b) (1) Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 1094.5 or  
24 1094.6 of the Code of Civil Procedure, within 20 days after service  
25 of the final administrative order or decision of the local agency is  
26 made pursuant to an ordinance enacted in accordance with this  
27 section regarding the imposition, enforcement, or collection of the  
28 administrative fines or penalties, a person contesting that final  
29 administrative order or decision may seek review by filing an  
30 appeal to be heard by the superior court, where the same shall be  
31 heard de novo, except that the contents of the local agency's file  
32 in the case shall be received in evidence. A proceeding under this  
33 subdivision is a limited civil case. A copy of the document or  
34 instrument of the local agency providing notice of the violation  
35 and imposition of the administrative fine or penalty shall be  
36 admitted into evidence as prima facie evidence of the facts stated  
37 therein. A copy of the notice of appeal shall be served in person  
38 or by first-class mail upon the local agency by the contestant.

39 (2) The fee for filing the notice of appeal shall be as specified  
40 in Section 70615. The court shall request that the local agency's

file on the case be forwarded to the court, to be received within 15 days of the request. The court shall retain the fee specified in Section 70615 regardless of the outcome of the appeal. If the court finds in favor of the contestant, the amount of the fee shall be reimbursed to the contestant by the local agency. Any deposit of the fine or penalty shall be refunded by the local agency in accordance with the judgment of the court.

(3) The conduct of the appeal under this section is a subordinate judicial duty that may be performed by traffic trial commissioners and other subordinate judicial officials at the direction of the presiding judge of the court.

(c) If no notice of appeal of the local agency's final administrative order or decision is filed within the period set forth in this section, the order or decision shall be deemed confirmed.

(d) If the fine or penalty has not been deposited and the decision of the court is against the contestant, the local agency may proceed to collect the penalty pursuant to the procedures set forth in its ordinance.

(e) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2020, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2020, deletes or extends that date.

SEC. 2. Section 53069.4 is added to the Government Code, to read:

53069.4. (a) (1) The legislative body of a local agency, as the term "local agency" is defined in Section 54951, may by ordinance make any violation of any ordinance enacted by the local agency subject to an administrative fine or penalty. The local agency shall set forth by ordinance the administrative procedures that shall govern the imposition, enforcement, collection, and administrative review by the local agency of those administrative fines or penalties. Where the violation would otherwise be an infraction, the administrative fine or penalty shall not exceed the maximum fine or penalty amounts for infractions set forth in subdivision (b) of Section 25132 and subdivision (b) of Section 36900.

(2) The administrative procedures set forth by ordinance adopted by the local agency pursuant to paragraph (1) shall provide for a reasonable period of time, as specified in the ordinance, for a person responsible for a continuing violation to correct or otherwise remedy the violation prior to the imposition of administrative fines or penalties, when the violation pertains to building, plumbing,

1 electrical, or other similar structural or zoning issues, that do not  
2 create an immediate danger to health or safety.

3 (b) (1) Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 1094.5 or  
4 1094.6 of the Code of Civil Procedure, within 20 days after service  
5 of the final administrative order or decision of the local agency is  
6 made pursuant to an ordinance enacted in accordance with this  
7 section regarding the imposition, enforcement or collection of the  
8 administrative fines or penalties, a person contesting that final  
9 administrative order or decision may seek review by filing an  
10 appeal to be heard by the superior court, where the same shall be  
11 heard de novo, except that the contents of the local agency's file  
12 in the case shall be received in evidence. A proceeding under this  
13 subdivision is a limited civil case. A copy of the document or  
14 instrument of the local agency providing notice of the violation  
15 and imposition of the administrative fine or penalty shall be  
16 admitted into evidence as prima facie evidence of the facts stated  
17 therein. A copy of the notice of appeal shall be served in person  
18 or by first-class mail upon the local agency by the contestant.

19 (2) The fee for filing the notice of appeal shall be as specified  
20 in Section 70615. The court shall request that the local agency's  
21 file on the case be forwarded to the court, to be received within  
22 15 days of the request. The court shall retain the fee specified in  
23 Section 70615 regardless of the outcome of the appeal. If the court  
24 finds in favor of the contestant, the amount of the fee shall be  
25 reimbursed to the contestant by the local agency. Any deposit of  
26 the fine or penalty shall be refunded by the local agency in  
27 accordance with the judgment of the court.

28 (3) The conduct of the appeal under this section is a subordinate  
29 judicial duty that may be performed by traffic trial commissioners  
30 and other subordinate judicial officials at the direction of the  
31 presiding judge of the court.

32 (c) If no notice of appeal of the local agency's final  
33 administrative order or decision is filed within the period set forth  
34 in this section, the order or decision shall be deemed confirmed.

35 (d) If the fine or penalty has not been deposited and the decision  
36 of the court is against the contestant, the local agency may proceed  
37 to collect the penalty pursuant to the procedures set forth in its  
38 ordinance.

- 1     (e) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2020.

O