# Assembly Bill 1586

## Replacing Animals in Science Education (RAISE) Act

Assembly Member Ash Kalra

### SUMMARY

AB 1586 would establish the Replacing Animals in Science Education (RAISE) Act, which would require California schools to replace animal dissection activities with contemporary and humane teaching methods in line with industry standards and best practices.

### BACKGROUND

Learning about anatomy in schools is important scientific pedagogy but dissection presents a significant impact on the environment and our fragile ecosystems. Advancements in educational technology have expanded access to this important scientific instructional methodology without having to rely on animals.

However, dissecting animals can be costly, exposes students and educators to carcinogenic chemicals, and negatively impacts animals and the environment. Additionally, attendance and completion of a course in dissection is not referenced in the recently adopted California Next Generation Science Standards, nor is it required as a course necessary for graduation.

The popular understanding of dissection in schools is the dissection of frogs and worms. However, a recent survey of schools that require dissection as a part of their science curricula include fetal pigs, cats, sharks, sheep and other animals. The use of these animals can number in the thousands per academic school year.

When accounted for in totality it provides a clearer picture of both the fiscal impact to schools and the impact that the sourcing of these animals can have on the environment and fragile ecosystems.

Animals used for dissection do not die of natural causes, rather many animals used for dissection are taken from the wild, which in turn decimates wild life populations and disrupts fragile ecosystems, many of which are already under threat due to urban encroachment, water contamination, and global warming.

With the development technological alternatives, virtual and computer-based science teaching practicum offer more humane teaching methods that help to better prepare students for higher education and careers in science.

Advances in medical-simulation technology, educators' need for better teaching and assessment tools, and growing concern about animal use in laboratory experiments have all contributed to a paradigm shift in biomedical education. Today, simulation-based learning is more widely available.

Alternative teaching methodologies include 3-D replicas and online and virtual dissection programs. Use of these alternatives has proven to be more cost effective for schools, helped to increase interest among students to participate in dissection, and provided a more humane way to reach the same scientific educational outcome.

### SOLUTION

By replacing “live” dissection with more humane dissection alternatives, California can lead the country in implementing a more cost-effective, environmentally friendly way to ensure that teachers can provide needed scientific instruction while affording students the same educational benefits.

### SPONSORS

Social Compassion in Legislation

### CONTACT

Erika Salazar, Legislative Assistant
erika.salazar@asm.ca.gov
(916) 319-2027