

# Senate Bill 732

## The Pallid Bat Act of 2023

Senator Caroline Menjivar (D – San Fernando Valley)

### SUMMARY

---

SB-732 will designate the Pallid Bat as the official state bat of California. The goal is to bring awareness to the benefits of having bats in our state and to inspire future conservation efforts for this under-protected category of animals.

### PROBLEM

---

People fear bats unnecessarily. Misinformation about the relationship between bats and disease dominates the media, but bats are more likely to make us safer because they eat so many harmful insects. This lack of knowledge and unfounded fear leads people to treat bats as dispensable, eradicating them like pests and often not realizing the benefits they have for keeping our backyards, agricultural fields, and forests free from truly harmful pests.

### BACKGROUND

---

Bats eat many pest species including those that contribute to health risks such as mosquitoes, wasps, and flies. A female bat nursing her young will eat more than two-thirds of her weight in insects and arthropods every night. Though individual bats are small, large colonies can eat pests weighing as much as an elephant every night. Statewide, bats provide more than \$1 billion worth of pest control to California agriculture. Bats eat bark beetles and wood borers, reducing wildfire risk in California forests. And our urban areas have less exposure to mosquito-borne illnesses like Zika and West Nile thanks to bats that live in backyards and go almost entirely unnoticed every night.

Bats can live up to 40 years and typically raise just one pup a year. This low birth rate makes their populations particularly vulnerable to disruptions like humans encroaching on their habitat and climate change.

The pallid bat is as diverse as Californians – pallid bats live in California's deserts, oak woodlands, coastal redwood forests, and high up into the mountain forests of the Sierra Nevada. They live in social colonies and have a rich language of calls to communicate with one another.

### SOLUTION

---

Naming the pallid bat as the official state bat of California will promote appreciation, study, and protection of bats in this state.

### STATUS

---

Introduced – February 17, 2023

### SUPPORT

---

Bat Working Group

### CONTACT

---

Diego Nelson  
Office of Senator Caroline Menjivar  
(916) 651-4424