

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 2nd Session of the 60th Legislature (2026)

3 SENATE BILL 1778

By: Pugh

6 AS INTRODUCED

7 An Act relating to the Strong Readers Act; amending
8 70 O.S. 2021, Section 1210.508C, as last amended by
9 Section 2, Chapter 297, O.S.L. 2025 (70 O.S. Supp.
10 2025, Section 1210.508C), which relates to
11 assessments for reading skills; requiring a public
12 school district's strong readers plan to include
13 certain plan for transitional instruction; expanding
14 grade levels of students to be given intensive
15 intervention services under certain circumstances
16 beginning in certain school year; requiring certain
17 first-, second-, and third-grade students to
18 participate in a summer academy beginning in certain
19 school years; allowing promotion of student to the
20 next grade level under certain circumstances;
21 requiring certain first- and second-grade students to
22 be placed in certain transitional classroom or
23 provided certain transitional instruction; requiring
24 additional opportunity to meet certain grade-level
targets; requiring retention of certain third-grade
students; providing exception; requiring school
districts to report certain information; requiring
certain written notification to a parent or legal
guardian to include certain information; requiring
the Strong Readers Report to include certain
information; amending 70 O.S. 2021, Section
1210.508E, as amended by Section 7, Chapter 411,
O.S.L. 2024 (70 O.S. Supp. 2025, Section 1210.508E),
which relates to summer academies; requiring certain
notification to a parent or legal guardian to include
certain information; updating statutory language;
updating statutory references; providing an effective
date; and declaring an emergency.

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3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

4 SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 1210.508C,
5 as last amended by Section 2, Chapter 297, O.S.L. 2025 (70 O.S.
6 Supp. 2025, Section 1210.508C), is amended to read as follows:

7 Section 1210.508C. A. To identify students who have
8 characteristics of dyslexia that lead to or cause reading
9 difficulty, each student enrolled in kindergarten and first, second,
10 and third grade in a public school in this state shall be screened
11 at the beginning, middle, and end of each school year for reading
12 skills including, but not limited to, phonological awareness,
13 decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. A screening
14 instrument approved by the State Board of Education, in consultation
15 with the Commission for Educational Quality and Accountability and
16 the Secretary of Education, shall be utilized for the purposes of
17 this section. In determining which screening instrument to approve,
18 the State Board of Education, the Commission for Educational Quality
19 and Accountability, and the Secretary of Education shall take into
20 consideration at a minimum the following factors:

21 1. The time required to conduct the screening instrument with
22 the intention of minimizing the impact on instructional time;

1 2. The timeliness in reporting screening instrument results to
2 teachers, administrators, and parents and legal guardians of
3 students; and

4 3. The integration of the screening instrument into reading
5 curriculum.

6 B. Beginning in the 2025-2026 school year, the State Board of
7 Education shall approve no fewer than three screening instruments
8 for use at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year for
9 monitoring of progress and for measurement of reading skills as
10 required in subsection A of this section. The screening instruments
11 shall meet the following criteria:

12 1. Assess for phonological awareness, decoding, fluency,
13 vocabulary, and comprehension;

14 2. Document the validity and reliability of each assessment;

15 3. Can be used for identifying students who are at risk for
16 reading deficiency and progress monitoring throughout the school
17 year;

18 4. Can be used to assess students with disabilities and English
19 language learners; and

20 5. Accompanied by a data management system that provides
21 profiles of each student, class, grade level, and school building.

22 The profiles shall identify each student's instructional point of
23 need and reading achievement level. The ~~State~~ Board shall also

determine other comparable reading assessments for diagnostic purposes to be used for students at risk of reading failure.

C. 1. Exemptions to the screening requirements of this section may be provided to students who have documented evidence that they meet at least one of the following criteria as related to the provision of classroom instruction:

- a. the student participates in the Oklahoma Alternate Assessment Program (OAAP) and is taught using alternate methods,
- b. the student's primary expressive or receptive communication is sign language,
- c. the student's primary form of written or read text is Braille, or
- d. the student's primary expressive or receptive language is not English, the student is identified as an English learner using a state-approved identification assessment, and the student has had less than one (1) school year of instruction in an English-learner program.

2. A public school that grants an exemption pursuant to paragraph 1 of this subsection shall provide ongoing evidence of student progression toward English language acquisition with the same frequency as administration of screening assessments. Evidence may include, but not be limited to, student progression toward OAAP

1 reading essential elements, proficiency in sign language and reading
2 comprehension, and proficiency in Braille and reading comprehension.

3 D. 1. Students who are administered a screening instrument
4 pursuant to subsection A of this section and are found not to be
5 meeting grade-level targets shall be provided a program of reading
6 instruction designed to enable students to acquire the appropriate
7 grade-level reading skills. The program of reading instruction
8 shall be based on scientific reading research and align with the
9 subject matter standards adopted by the State Board of Education. A
10 program of reading instruction shall include:

11 a. sufficient additional in-school instructional time for
12 the acquisition of phonological awareness, decoding,
13 fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension,

14 b. if necessary and if funding is available, tutorial
15 instruction after regular school hours, on Saturdays,
16 and during summer; however, such instruction may not
17 be counted toward the ~~one hundred eighty day one-~~
18 hundred-eighty-one-day or ~~one thousand eighty hour~~
19 one-thousand-eighty-six-hour school year required in
20 Section 1-109 of this title,

21 c. assessments identified for diagnostic purposes and
22 periodic monitoring to measure the acquisition of
23 reading skills including, but not limited to,
24 phonological awareness, decoding, fluency, vocabulary,

1 and comprehension, as identified in the student's
2 program of reading instruction,
3 d. high-quality instructional materials grounded in
4 scientifically based reading research, and
5 e. a means of providing every family of a student in
6 prekindergarten, kindergarten, and first, second, and
7 third grade access to free online evidence-based
8 literacy instruction resources to support the
9 student's literacy development at home.

10 2. A student enrolled in kindergarten or first, second, or
11 third grade who exhibits a deficiency in reading at any time based
12 on the screening instrument administered pursuant to subsection A of
13 this section shall receive an individual reading intervention plan
14 no later than thirty (30) days after the identification of the
15 deficiency in reading. The reading intervention plan shall be
16 provided in addition to core reading instruction that is provided to
17 all students. The reading intervention plan shall:

18 a. describe the research-based reading intervention
19 services the student will receive to remedy the
20 deficiency in reading,
21 b. provide explicit and systematic instruction in
22 phonological awareness, decoding, fluency, vocabulary,
23 and comprehension, as applicable,

- c. monitor the reading progress of each student's reading skills throughout the school year and adjust instruction according to the student's needs, and
- d. continue until the student is determined to be meeting grade-level targets in reading based on screening instruments administered pursuant to subsection A of this section or assessments identified for diagnostic purposes and periodic monitoring pursuant to subparagraph c of paragraph 1 of this subsection.

3. The reading intervention plan for each student identified with a deficiency in reading shall be developed by a Student Reading Proficiency Team and shall include supplemental instructional services and supports. Each team shall be composed of:

- a. the parent or legal guardian of the student,
- b. the teacher assigned to the student who had responsibility for reading instruction in that academic year,
- c. a teacher who is responsible for reading instruction and is assigned to teach in the next grade level of the student, and
- d. a certified reading specialist or an individual with advanced training or specialization in literacy instruction, if one is available.

1 4. A school district shall notify the parent or legal guardian
2 of any student in kindergarten or first, second, or third grade who
3 exhibits a deficiency in reading at any time based on the screening
4 instrument administered pursuant to subsection A of this section.
5 The notification shall occur no later than thirty (30) days after
6 the identification of the deficiency in reading.

7 E. 1. Every school district shall adopt and implement a
8 district strong readers plan which has had input from school
9 administrators, teachers, and parents and legal guardians and if
10 possible a reading specialist, and which shall be submitted
11 electronically to and approved by the State Board of Education. The
12 plan shall be updated annually. School districts shall not be
13 required to electronically submit the annual updates to the Board if
14 the last plan submitted to the Board was approved and expenditures
15 for the program include only expenses relating to individual and
16 small group tutoring, purchase of and training in the use of
17 screening and assessment measures, summer school programs, and
18 Saturday school programs. If any expenditure for the program is
19 deleted or changed or any other type of expenditure for the program
20 is implemented, the school district shall be required to submit the
21 latest annual update to the Board for approval. The district strong
22 readers plan shall include a plan for each site which includes an
23 analysis of the data provided by the Oklahoma School Testing Program
24 and other reading assessments utilized as required in this section,
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1 and which outlines how each school site will comply with the
2 provisions of the Strong Readers Act.

3 2. The district strong readers plan shall include a plan for
4 how to provide transitional instruction to students identified
5 pursuant to subsection G of this section. The plan shall stipulate
6 whether the district will provide a stand-alone transitional
7 classroom or targeted transitional intervention instruction in pull-
8 out sessions.

9 3. The State Board of Education shall adopt rules for the
10 implementation and evaluation of the provisions of the Strong
11 Readers Act. The evaluation shall include, but not be limited to,
12 an analysis of the data required in subsection ~~E~~ M of this section.

13 F. 1. Any first-grade, second-grade, or third-grade student
14 who demonstrates proficiency in reading through a grade-level
15 appropriate screening instrument approved pursuant to subsection B
16 of this section shall not require a program of reading instruction
17 or an individual reading intervention plan. After a student has
18 demonstrated proficiency through a screening instrument, the
19 district shall provide notification to the parent or legal guardian
20 of the student that he or she has satisfied the requirements of the
21 Strong Readers Act. The district shall continue to monitor the
22 student in the next successive grade level to ensure he or she
23 maintains proficiency.

1 2. G. 1. Beginning with the 2025-2026 2026-2027 school year,
2 if a first-, second-, or third-grade student is identified at any
3 point of the academic year as having a significant reading
4 deficiency, which shall be defined as not meeting grade-level
5 targets on a screening instrument administered pursuant to
6 subsection A of this section, the district shall provide the student
7 with intensive intervention services for the appropriate amount of
8 the instructional day consistent with the individual reading
9 intervention plan developed pursuant to paragraph 2 of subsection D
10 of this section and as determined by the Student Reading Proficiency
11 Team. Intensive intervention services shall continue until the
12 student demonstrates proficiency at his or her grade level based on
13 a screening instrument administered pursuant to subsection A of this
14 section.

15 2. a. Beginning with the 2027-2028 school year, if a first-
16 grade student identified pursuant to paragraph 1 of
17 this subsection is not meeting grade-level targets
18 based on a screening instrument approved pursuant to
19 subsection B of this section or an assessment
20 identified pursuant to subparagraph c of paragraph 1
21 of subsection D of this section by the end of the
22 first grade, the student shall participate in a summer
23 academy as provided for in Section 1210.508E of this
24 title.

b. If a first-grade student who participates in a summer academy pursuant to the provisions of this paragraph meets grade-level targets based on a screening instrument approved pursuant to subsection B of this section or an assessment identified pursuant to subparagraph c of paragraph 1 of subsection D of this section by the end of the summer academy, the student may be promoted to the second grade.

c. If a first-grade student does not participate in a summer academy as required by the provisions of this paragraph or participates in a summer academy and does not meet grade-level targets based on a screening instrument approved pursuant to subsection B of this section or an assessment identified pursuant to subparagraph c of paragraph 1 of subsection D of this section by the end of the summer academy, the district shall place the student in a stand-alone transitional second-grade classroom or promote the student to second grade while providing targeted transitional intervention instruction in pull-out sessions.

3. a. Beginning with the 2028-2029 school year, if a second-grade student identified pursuant to paragraph 1 of this subsection is not meeting grade-level targets based on a screening instrument approved pursuant to

subsection B of this section or an assessment
identified pursuant to subparagraph c of paragraph 1
of subsection D of this section by the end of the
second grade, the student shall participate in a
summer academy as provided for in Section 1210.508E of
this title.

b. If a second-grade student who participates in a summer academy pursuant to the provisions of this paragraph meets grade-level targets based on a screening instrument approved pursuant to subsection B of this section or an assessment identified pursuant to subparagraph c of paragraph 1 of subsection D of this section by the end of the summer academy, the student may be promoted to the third grade.

c. If a second-grade student does not participate in a summer academy as required by the provisions of this paragraph or participates and does not meet grade-level targets based on a screening instrument approved pursuant to subsection B of this section or an assessment identified pursuant to subparagraph c of paragraph 1 of subsection D of this section by the end of the summer academy, the district shall place the student in a stand-alone transitional third-grade classroom or promote the student to third grade while

1 providing targeted transitional intervention
2 instruction in pull-out sessions.

3 4. a. Beginning with the 2029-2030 school year, if a third-
4 grade student identified pursuant to paragraph 1 of
5 this subsection is not meeting grade-level targets
6 based on a screening instrument approved pursuant to
7 subsection B of this section, an assessment identified
8 pursuant to subparagraph c of paragraph 1 of
9 subsection D of this section, or the scores for the
10 standards for reading foundations/processes and
11 vocabulary portions of the statewide third-grade
12 assessment administered pursuant to Section 1210.508
13 of this title by the end of the third grade, the
14 student shall participate in a summer academy as
15 provided for in Section 1210.508E of this title.

16 b. If a third-grade student who participates in a summer
17 academy pursuant to the provisions of this paragraph
18 meets grade-level targets based on a screening
19 instrument approved pursuant to subsection B of this
20 section or an assessment identified pursuant to
21 subparagraph c of paragraph 1 of subsection D of this
22 section by the end of the summer academy, the student
23 may be promoted to the fourth grade.

1 c. If a third-grade student does not participate in a
2 summer academy as required by the provisions of this
3 paragraph or participates in a summer academy and does
4 not meet grade-level targets based on a screening
5 instrument approved pursuant to subsection B of this
6 section or an assessment identified pursuant to
7 subparagraph c of paragraph 1 of subsection D of this
8 section by the end of the summer academy, the student
9 shall be retained in the third grade. Intensive
10 intervention services shall continue until the student
11 demonstrates proficiency at his or her grade level.

12 d. A third-grade student subject to retention as provided
13 for in subparagraph c of this paragraph shall be
14 provided an additional opportunity to meet grade-level
15 targets based on a screening instrument approved
16 pursuant to subsection B of this section or an
17 assessment identified pursuant to subparagraph c of
18 paragraph 1 of subsection D of this section. The
19 student shall be administered the screening instrument
20 or assessment no fewer than two (2) weeks prior to the
21 start of the next school year. If the student meets
22 grade-level targets, he or she shall be promoted to
23 the fourth grade, and if the student does not meet

grade-level targets, he or she shall be retained as provided for in subparagraph c of this paragraph.

e. A third-grade student subject to retention as provided for in subparagraph c of this paragraph who does not meet grade-level targets as provided for in subparagraph d of this paragraph may be promoted to the fourth grade only with the written consent of the student's parent or legal guardian.

G. H. Each school district shall annually report in an electronic format to the State Department of Education, the Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, and the Secretary of Education the number of students in kindergarten through third grade per grade level who exhibit grade-level reading proficiency, the number of students per grade level who received intensive intervention services pursuant to paragraph 2 1 of subsection F G of this section, the number of students per grade level who attended a summer academy as provided for in Section 1210.508E of this title, the number of students per grade level who exhibited improved reading proficiency after completion of intensive intervention services, the number of students retained pursuant to subparagraphs c and d of paragraph 4 of subsection G of this section, the number of students promoted pursuant to subparagraphs b and e of paragraph 4 of subsection G of this section, and the number of students per grade level who are still in need of intensive intervention

1 services. The State Department of Education shall publicly report
2 the aggregate and district-specific numbers submitted pursuant to
3 this subsection on its website and shall provide electronic copies
4 of the report to the Governor, Secretary of Education, President Pro
5 Tempore of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and
6 to the respective chairs of the committees with responsibility for
7 common education policy in each legislative chamber.

8 H. I. The parent or legal guardian of any student who is found
9 to have a reading deficiency and is not meeting grade-level reading
10 targets and has been provided a program of reading instruction as
11 provided for in paragraph 1 of subsection D of this section shall be
12 notified in writing of the following:

13 1. That the student has been identified as having a substantial
14 deficiency in reading;

15 2. A description of the current services that are provided to
16 the student pursuant to subsection D of this section;

17 3. A description of the proposed intensive intervention
18 services and supports that will be provided to the student that are
19 designed to remediate the identified area of reading deficiency as
20 provided for in paragraph 2 1 of subsection F G of this section;

21 4. A description of the requirements of subsection G of this
22 section including, but not limited to, participation in summer
23 academies, placement in a transitional classroom or the provision of

1 targeted transitional intervention instruction in pull-out sessions,
2 and potential retention of the student;

3 5. That a student who is promoted to the fourth grade pursuant
4 to subparagraph b and e of paragraph 4 of subsection G of this
5 section shall receive supplemental intensive intervention services;

6 5. 6. Strategies for parents and legal guardians to use in
7 helping their child succeed in reading proficiency; and

8 6. 7. The grade-level performance scores of the student.

9 I. No J. Except as provided for in subparagraph e of paragraph
10 4 of subsection G of this section, no student may be assigned to a
11 grade level based solely on age or other factors that constitute
12 social promotion.

13 J. K. 1. Each school district board of education shall
14 annually publish on the school website and report electronically to
15 the State Department of Education, the Office of Educational Quality
16 and Accountability, and the Secretary of Education by September 1 of
17 each year the following information on the prior school year:

18 a. the policies and procedures adopted by the school
19 district board of education to implement the
20 provisions of this section. The information submitted
21 shall include expenditures related to implementing the
22 provisions of this section, the number of staff
23 implementing the provisions of this section, and

average daily classroom time devoted to implementing the provisions of this section,

- b. by grade, the number and percentage of all students in kindergarten through third grade who did not meet grade-level targets based on a screening instrument administered pursuant to subsection A of this section,
- c. by grade, the number and percentage of all students in kindergarten through third grade who have been enrolled in the district for fewer than two (2) years,
- d. by grade, the number and percentage of students in kindergarten through third grade who demonstrated grade-level proficiency based on a screening instrument administered pursuant to subsection A of this section, and
- e. by grade, the number and percentage of students in kindergarten through third grade who are on an individualized education program (IEP) in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and who demonstrated grade-level proficiency based on a screening instrument administered pursuant to subsection A of this section or an alternative assessment prescribed by the student's IEP.

2. The State Department of Education shall establish a uniform

format for school districts to report the information required in

1 this subsection. The format shall be developed with input from
2 school districts and shall be provided not later than ninety (90)
3 days prior to the annual due date. The Department shall annually
4 compile the information required, along with state-level summary
5 information, and electronically report the information to the
6 public, the Governor, the Secretary of Education, the President Pro
7 Tempore of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of
8 Representatives.

9 K. L. The State Department of Education shall provide technical
10 assistance as needed to aid school districts in administering the
11 provisions of the Strong Readers Act.

12 L. M. On or before January 31 of each year, the State
13 Department of Education shall electronically submit to the Governor,
14 the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of
15 Representatives, and members of the committees with responsibility
16 over common education in both houses of the Legislature a Strong
17 Readers Report which shall include, but is not limited to, trend
18 data detailing three (3) years of data, disaggregated by student
19 subgroups to include economically disadvantaged, major racial or
20 ethnic groups, students with disabilities, and English language
21 learners, as appropriate for the following:

22 1. The statewide aggregate number and percentage of students in
23 kindergarten through third grade determined to be at risk for
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1 reading difficulties compared to the total number of students
2 enrolled in each grade;

3 2. The statewide aggregate number and percentage of students in
4 kindergarten who continue to be at risk for reading difficulties as
5 determined by the year-end administration of the screening
6 instrument required in subsection A of this section;

7 3. The statewide aggregate number and percentage of students in
8 kindergarten through third grade who have successfully completed
9 their program of reading instruction and are reading on grade level
10 as determined by the results of screening instruments administered
11 pursuant to subsection A of this section;

12 4. The statewide aggregate and district-specific number and
13 percentage of students that meet or do not meet grade-level targets
14 for reading based on screening instruments administered pursuant to
15 subsection A of this section;

16 5. The statewide aggregate and district-specific number and
17 percentage of students retained pursuant to subparagraphs c and d of
18 paragraph 4 of subsection G of this section and the number of
19 students promoted pursuant to subparagraph e of paragraph 4 of
20 subsection G of this section;

21 6. The amount of funds received by each district for
22 implementation of the Strong Readers Act;

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1 6. 7. An evaluation and narrative interpretation of the report
2 data analyzing the impact of the Strong Readers Act on students'
3 ability to read at grade level;

4 7. 8. The type of reading instruction practices and methods
5 currently being used by school districts in the state;

6 8. 9. Socioeconomic information, access to reading resources
7 outside of school, and screening for and identification of learning
8 disabilities for students not reading at the appropriate grade level
9 in kindergarten and first through third grade;

10 9. 10. By grade level, the types of intensive intervention
11 efforts being conducted by school districts for students who are not
12 on an IEP and who are not reading at the appropriate grade level and
13 for students who are on an IEP and who are not reading at the
14 appropriate grade level; and

15 10. 11. Any recommendations for improvements or amendments to
16 the Strong Readers Act.

17 The State Department of Education may contract with an
18 independent entity for the reporting and analysis requirements of
19 this subsection.

20 M. N. Copies of the results of the screening instruments
21 administered pursuant to subsection A of this section shall be made
22 a part of the permanent record of each student.

1 SECTION 2. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 1210.508E,

2 as amended by Section 7, Chapter 411, O.S.L. 2024 (70 O.S. Supp.

3 2025, Section 1210.508E), is amended to read as follows:

4 Section 1210.508E. A. If a teacher determines that a student
5 in kindergarten or first through third grade is not reading at grade
6 level by the end of the second quarter of the school year, the
7 parent or legal guardian of the student shall be notified of:

8 1. The reading level of the student;

9 2. The program of reading instruction for the student as
10 required pursuant to the Strong Readers Act; and

11 3. The potential need for the student to participate in a
12 summer academy or other program designed to assist the student in
13 attaining grade-level reading skills; and

14 4. The requirement for students to participate in summer
15 academies pursuant to the provisions of subsection G of Section
16 1210.508C of this title.

17 B. A teacher who determines a student in kindergarten or first
18 through third grade is not meeting grade-level targets for reading
19 may, after consultation with the parent or legal guardian of the
20 student, recommend that the student participate in and complete a
21 summer academy or other program.

22 C. Summer academy programs shall be designed to ensure that
23 participating students successfully complete grade-level
24 competencies in reading to enhance next-grade readiness. A summer

1 academy reading program shall be a program that incorporates the
2 content of a scientifically research-based professional development
3 program administered by the Commission for Educational Quality and
4 Accountability or a scientifically research-based reading program
5 administered by the State Board of Education and is taught by
6 teachers who have successfully completed professional development in
7 the reading program or who are certified as reading specialists.

8 D. School districts may approve an option for students who are
9 unable to attend a summer academy. The optional program may
10 include, but is not limited to, an approved private provider of
11 instruction, approved computer- or Internet-based instruction, or an
12 approved program of reading instruction monitored by the parent or
13 legal guardian. School districts shall not be required to pay for
14 the optional program but shall clearly communicate to the parent or
15 legal guardian the expectations of the program and any costs that
16 may be involved.

17 E. Subject to the availability of funds, beginning one (1) year
18 after implementation of this section, the requirements of subsection
19 B of this section may be expanded to apply to students in fourth
20 grade. Each year thereafter, the requirements may be expanded by
21 one grade level until the requirements apply to third-grade students
22 through eighth-grade students. Summer academy programs shall be
23 designed for each grade level. Nothing in this section shall
24 prevent the State Board of Education or a school district board of

1 education from utilizing private, local, or federal funds to
2 implement this section.

3 F. The State Board of Education shall adopt rules to implement
4 the provisions of this section which shall include requirements for
5 instructional time for summer academy programs, teacher
6 qualifications, and evaluation of student achievement as a result of
7 summer academy programs or other optional programs.

8 SECTION 3. This act shall become effective July 1, 2026.

9 SECTION 4. It being immediately necessary for the preservation
10 of the public peace, health, or safety, an emergency is hereby
11 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and
12 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

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