

Calif. Assembly refuses to make public its members' salaries

By Jim Sanders, Sacramento Bee

The California Assembly says the public has no right to see lawmakers' current office budgets and spending projections, documents that could show whether punishment is doled out for key votes.

Assemblyman Anthony Portantino raised the issue last month, saying that his budget was slashed shortly after casting the lone Democratic vote in the Assembly against this year's controversial budget.

Portantino, the *Bee* and other media outlets submitted Legislative Open Records Act requests seeking, among other things, current office budgets for each Assembly member and any changes to them.

The answer came Monday: No way.

The Assembly Rules Committee, under the control of Assembly Speaker John A. Pérez, said that such documents are exempt under a provision covering "preliminary drafts, notes or legislative memoranda" and correspondence to lawmakers' offices.

"Therefore, records relating to budgets and changes to budgets of the members of the Assembly and Assembly Committees are not subject to mandatory production," said the Assembly's written response.

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