



July 22, 2020

The Honorable Steven Glazer
Chair, Senate Business, Professions, and Economic Development Committee
State Capitol, Room 2053
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Support – AB 890 (Wood) Nurse Practitioners: Scope of Practice

Dear Chairman Glazer,

On behalf of the members of the California Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems and the millions of patients they serve, I am writing to voice our support for AB 890. This bill would expand the scope of practice for nurse practitioners, allowing for greater access to care for patients, which is especially important during a time when care delivery flexibilities are critically needed due to COVID-19.

As you know, California's 21 public health care systems are the core of the state's health care safety net, delivering high-quality care to more than 2.85 million patients annually, regardless of ability to pay or insurance status. Public health care systems include both county-operated or -affiliated facilities as well as the University of California medical centers. Most patients seen in public health care systems are either Medi-Cal beneficiaries or remain uninsured. Statewide, public health care systems provide nearly 40 percent of all hospital care to the state's uninsured, and 35 percent of all hospital care to Medi-Cal patients in the communities they serve. Public health care systems also operate over half of the state's top-level trauma and burn centers, and train half of all physicians in the state.

Nurse practitioners are registered nurses who have completed additional education at the graduate level, and who possess advanced practice skills in physical diagnosis and managing patients' physical and psychosocial health status. Current law requires that nurse practitioners work under a supervising physician. At this time, 22 states allow nurse practitioners to work independently, at the top of their license, to diagnose and treat patients – California remains the only western state that requires nurse practitioners to practice under a supervising physician.

During the pandemic, the State has allowed for some flexibilities to increase the number of nurse practitioners practicing under a supervising physician at hospitals. As this crisis persists, more flexibilities will be needed, and it is critical that we employ and expand new models of care to meet the needs of the health care safety-net, such as expanding the scope of practice for nurse practitioners. AB 890 would do just that, and would also fulfill a key recommendation in the California Future Health Workforce Commission's final report.

For these reasons, we support AB 890. We would be pleased to further discuss our position with you and answer any questions you may have. Please contact Kelly Brooks-Lindsey, our Sacramento representative, at 916-272-0011 if you would like to follow-up. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sarah Hesketh".

Sarah Hesketh
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cc: The Honorable Jim Wood
The Honorable Members of the Senate Business, Professions, and Economic
Development Committee
Elissa Silva, Committee Consultant
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