



April 25, 2025

The Honorable Anna Caballero  
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee  
1021 O St., #7620  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: OPPOSE – SB 632 (Arreguin): Workers' compensation: hospital employees**

Dear Chair Caballero,

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 opposition to SB 632 (Arreguín). This bill would presume that illnesses, including COVID-19 and other respiratory and infectious diseases, arose while providing patient care.

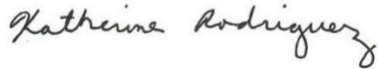
California's 17 public health care systems, which include county-operated and affiliated facilities and the five University of California health systems, are the core of the state's health care safety net. County public health care systems have a mission and mandate to deliver high-quality care to all, regardless of ability to pay or insurance status, across a comprehensive range of services. Despite representing only 6% of all hospitals statewide, public health care systems provide 35% of all Medi-Cal and uninsured hospital care. They contribute over \$4 billion annually to the Medi-Cal program, in place of the state's share, with many of their payments uniquely tied to quality and performance improvements. Additionally, these systems train a diverse and inclusive workforce, including nearly half of all new doctors in hospitals across the state.

Public health care systems prioritize employee safety; however, work-related injuries can sometimes occur. Many of the conditions SB 632 would cover are already addressed in the current workers' compensation system. In those cases, employees have access to California's no-fault workers' compensation system, designed to support employees. When a disagreement arises, the current resolution process provides a fair and robust procedure administered by the Division of Workers' Compensation.

SB 632 would indefinitely extend a presumption for COVID-19 well beyond the expiration of the state's public health emergency, without any evidence to justify that expansion. This sets a troubling precedent and has the potential to significantly alter the state's workers' compensation system. Any increase in workers' compensation costs will have a direct and immediate impact on public health care systems' financial ability to protect access to high-quality care, a position already in jeopardy due to the threats of federal Medicaid threats. The cost of this new mandate, while difficult to quantify, could be enormous; several cases together could potentially be devastating.

For these reasons, we oppose SB 632 (Arreguin). If you have any questions regarding our position on this bill, please contact Kelly Brooks-Lindsey, our Sacramento representative, at 916-272-0011. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Katherine Rodriguez".

Katie Rodriguez  
Vice President of Policy and Government Relations  
California Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems

CC: The Honorable Jesse Arreguin  
The Honorable Members of the Senate Appropriations Committee  
Agnes Lee, Consultant, Senate Appropriations Committee  
Cory Botts, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus