



March 19, 2025

The Honorable Alex Lee
Chair, Assembly Human Services Committee
1020 N Street, Room 124
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: AB 1161 (Harabedian) – SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Lee:

With roughly one-third of California’s population receiving health care coverage through Medi-Cal, it is critical to ensure beneficiaries receive necessary care — especially in cases of displacement caused by emergency conditions following such events as the 2025 Eaton and Palisades fires in Los Angeles County. These life-altering conditions often interrupt patient care and exacerbate underlying health issues, alongside a myriad of other negative consequences to the affected communities. Thus, it is of vital importance to ensure that adversely impacted Medi-Cal beneficiaries continue to receive uninterrupted care throughout a declared state of emergency or health emergency.

For this reason, the California Hospital Association (CHA), on behalf of more than 400 hospitals and health systems, supports Assembly Bill (AB) 1161, which would require the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to provide Medi-Cal beneficiaries continuous eligibility if they have been displaced or affected by a declared state of emergency or health emergency. The bill would further require other state departments overseeing vital social services benefit programs — including the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) program and CalFresh — to similarly ensure continuous eligibility throughout the duration of these emergency periods.

The Eaton and Palisades fires displaced approximately 150,000 Los Angeles County residents and affected many more. Throughout the duration of these fires and periods following, DHCS and the hospital community continue to prioritize the health and safety of those impacted. By enacting AB 1161, the state is better equipped to more efficiently maintain this prioritization of health and safety during future emergencies.

CHA is committed to ensuring that the health care needs of all Californians are prioritized, especially those adversely impacted by emergency conditions. For these reasons, **CHA strongly requests your “AYE” vote for AB 1161.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Farouk", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mark Farouk
Vice President, State Advocacy

cc: The Honorable John Harabedian
The Honorable Members of the Assembly Human Services Committee
Alexandria Smith, Principal Consultant, Assembly Human Services Committee
Eric Dietz, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus