



March 30, 2026

The Honorable Nick Schultz
Chair, Assembly Public Safety Committee
1020 N Street, Room 111
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: AB 1922 (Lowenthal) As Amended March 26 — Oppose

Dear Assemblymember Schultz:

At a time when hospital workers are under unprecedented strain, protecting their safety and well-being is vital. With a surge in patient volume and workplace violence over the past several years, policies that would reduce a hospital's ability to protect its patients and staff threaten to exacerbate systemwide stress rather than relieve it.

That's why the California Hospital Association (CHA), on behalf of nearly 400 hospitals and health systems, opposes Assembly Bill (AB) 1922 (Lowenthal, D-Long Beach), which would prohibit the use of mechanical security restraints on incarcerated hospital patients, regardless of their risk for violence.

Hospitals strive to provide compassionate care to all patients they serve. However, even after carefully considering the March 26 amendments to bill, AB 1922 still poses unacceptable risks that could jeopardize the safety of everyone in a hospital.

AB 1922 would prohibit correctional and juvenile facility staff from using handcuffs or other mechanical restraints on patients admitted to hospitals for certain medical interventions — regardless of an incarcerated individual's criminal history or violence risk. It would apply even if an incarcerated patient started to exhibit violent behavior in the hospital. Under AB 1922, correctional staff could only use mechanical restraints *after* an incarcerated individual has already attempted to escape a hospital — a dangerous scenario that would incite panic, fear, and possible injuries to staff, patients, and others as the incarcerated patient attempts to flee. It is unacceptable to put hospital staff and patients at risk in this way. As amended, the bill continues to shift full responsibility for responding to a violent inmate to hospital staff, rather than maintaining correctional officers' ability and duty to protect the public and keep inmates secure while outside of a prison setting.

The only permitted use of restraint devices for incarcerated patients who exhibit violent behavior would be **medical restraints**, when ordered by appropriate clinical staff, and only after an "imminent physical threat" — when it might be too late. Licensed hospital staff are currently authorized to use highly regulated, Food and Drug Administration-approved medical restraints for patients **but only under exceedingly rare and limited circumstances and not without a prescription.** Devices such as soft wrist

restraints, hand mitts, or four-sided bed rails may be used in general acute care hospitals as a last resort. This bill treats medical restraint devices as violence-response tools — which they are not.

While recent amendments to AB 1922 restrict correctional staffs' use of mechanical restraints to incarcerated patients receiving a specific set of medical interventions and after an attempted escape, the bill continues to shift responsibility for escape attempts, violence prevention, and response to hospital staff and introduces unacceptable new safety risks and liability concerns for patients, staff, and the surrounding community.

For these reasons, CHA strongly requests your “No” vote on AB 1922.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued commitment to the health and safety of our communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kalyn Dean". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kalyn Dean
Vice President, State Advocacy

cc: The Honorable Josh Lowenthal
The Honorable Members of the Assembly Public Safety Committee
Andrew Ironside, Chief Counsel, Assembly Public Safety Committee
Gary Olson, Public Safety Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus
Milan Wilkerson, Legislative Assistant, Office of Assemblymember Josh Lowenthal