



July 7, 2025

The Honorable Thomas Umberg  
Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee  
1021 O Street, Room 3240  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**SUBJECT: AB 485 (Ortega) As Amended July 1, 2025 — Oppose Unless Amended**

Dear Senator Umberg:

Hard-working Californians should never be denied earned wages or health care services. California hospitals are committed to delivering high-quality health care to the communities they serve and competitive wages to the workers they employ.

However, Assembly Bill (AB) 485 (Ortega, D-Hayward) goes too far by proposing to expand existing wage theft enforcement mechanisms to include threatening licensure — an aggressive step that could result in health care facility closures that jeopardize patients' access to vital health care services. **For this reason, the California Hospital Association (CHA), on behalf of nearly 400 hospitals and health systems, is opposed to AB 485 unless it is amended to allow exemptions for other critical health care entities — not just hospitals.**

Under existing law, the Labor Commissioner may use an array of enforcement mechanisms to compel the payment of unpaid wages, including issuing a stop work order against an employer that has ignored a judgment for unpaid wages. AB 485 would take this one step further by giving licensing agencies the authority to withhold issuing or renewing a license or permit until the outstanding judgment is satisfied.

Recent amendments account for the negative impact hospital closures would have on public health by permitting the state public health officer to exempt a hospital, but these amendments do not consider the fact that hospitals are part of a broader continuum of care — and each part of this comprehensive delivery system is critical. The bill's language continues to subject other health care entities — such as skilled-nursing facilities, assisted living facilities, and senior living facilities — to its heightened enforcement, which could result in facility closures and significant disruption of the health care ecosystem. This would not only be detrimental to patients, but it would also have a cascading effect on the broader community — including hospitals, which would be challenged to find appropriate facilities to which they may discharge their patients. Just as hospital closures would negatively impact public health, so would the closure of any other type of health care facility.

Hospitals do not support or condone wage theft — but as a matter of policy, **hospitals must remain opposed to AB 485 unless it is amended to allow exemptions for health care entities across the continuum of care.**

Sincerely,



Kalyn Dean  
Vice President, State Advocacy

cc: The Honorable Liz Ortega  
The Honorable Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee  
Margie Estrada, Chief Counsel, Senate Judiciary Committee  
Morgan Branch, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus