



June 9, 2025

The Honorable Caroline Menjivar
Chair, Senate Health Committee
1021 O Street, Room 3310
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: AB 539 (Schiavo) — SUPPORT

Dear Senator Menjivar:

When timely access to medically necessary care is delayed or denied, waiting patients suffer and medical outcomes are compromised. One major cause of delays in access to care and hospital discharge is the process known as prior authorization.

The California Hospital Association (CHA), on behalf of more than 400 hospitals and health systems, supports Assembly Bill (AB) 539, which would require a prior authorization for a health care service by a health care service plan or a health insurer to remain valid for a period of at least one year from the date of approval, or throughout the course of prescribed treatment if less than one year.

Applied correctly, prior authorization can be a valuable tool to manage utilization and support the delivery of safe and appropriate patient care. Too often, however, prior authorization becomes a barrier; when the timeline or duration of an authorization is overly limited, harmful interruptions and delays in care can occur. For example, a patient who requires a specific surgery or procedure may be subject to a delay for any number of reasons, secondary to patient status or even provider capacity.

Similarly, patients who receive ongoing care for a chronic condition should not have to risk an interruption in treatment if/when an authorization expires and has to be renewed. Requiring the provider to seek re-authorization or extension in such cases may lead to additional unnecessary delays in access, which would negatively impact patient care.

AB 539 represents a reasonable and necessary improvement to existing requirements for a health care plan's prior authorization process. This change would contribute to the comprehensive prior authorization reform that is needed to ensure that California's residents receive the care that they need when they need it.

For these reasons, **CHA requests your “AYE” vote on AB 539.**

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 Pilar Schiavo
The Honorable Members of the Senate Health Committee
Teri Boughton, Principal Consultant, Senate Health Committee
Tim Conaghan and Joe Parra, Health Policy Consultants, Senate Republican Caucus