

May 23, 2025

CHA Position: **Vote YES on SB 32**

To: The Honorable Members of the California State Senate

From: Vanessa Gonzalez, Vice President, State Advocacy

SB 32 (Weber Pierson) — Support

Driven by many factors — including low birth volumes, workforce shortages, and ongoing financial instability — maternal care deserts are a persistent and growing threat to the health of mothers and babies. Approximately 3 million Californians reside in areas with either no labor and delivery (L&D) hospital units or L&D units at significant risk of closure.

Reversing this concerning maternal care access trend in rural and underserved areas will require a multifaceted approach and long-term commitment from all stakeholders: doctors, payers, hospitals, and more.

That's why the California Hospital Association (CHA), on behalf of more than 400 hospitals and health systems, supports Senate Bill (SB) 32. This bill would require California agencies overseeing health insurance to develop geographic accessibility standards specifically for L&D hospital units — standards that all state-regulated health plans and insurers would be required to meet.

Establishing timely access standards for L&D services under SB 32 would:

- Reduce health risks for mothers and newborns
- Encourage health plans to actively participate in strengthening maternity care networks
- Help address gaps in care across the state

For these reasons, CHA strongly urges your YES vote on SB 32.