Place on hospital/system letterhead.

March xx, 2025

The Honorable Lola Smallwood-Cuevas

Chair, Senate Committee on Labor, Public Employment and Retirement

1021 O Street, Room 6740

Sacramento, CA 95814

**SUBJECT:** **SB 632 (Arreguín) — Oppose**

Dear Senator Smallwood-Cuevas:

HOSPITAL NAME takes great pride in our efforts to protect our health care workers, including making sure they receive exceptional care should they be injured or get sick while on the job.

As a result, HOSPITAL NAME approves, on average, XX% of workers’ compensation claims annually [IF APPLICABLE]. With an abiding principle of support for our invaluable health care workers, HOSPITAL NAME requests your opposition to Senate Bill (SB) 632.

Creation of the state’s first-ever broad-based private sector workers’ compensation presumption would make patient care more difficult, jeopardize a health care system already bracing for massive federal Medi-Cal cuts, and upend a highly effective and proven workers’ compensation system.

Any increase in workers’ compensation costs will directly and immediately increase the cost of health care at a time when affordability of care is a priority. This action would also make NAME OF HOSPITAL — already steeling for likely Medicare and Medicaid cuts — even more vulnerable and challenged in providing access to high-quality care. The cost of this new mandate, while difficult to quantify, would likely be astronomical. Even a single claim, which could be filed up to 10 years after employment ends, could be valued in the hundreds of thousands of dollars.

SB 632 would apply only to hospital employees and create a series of workers’ compensation rebuttable presumptions that illness from a variety of conditions — including COVID-19 — arose out of and in the course of providing direct patient care. Not only is the creation of these presumptions unsupported by data, but the presumptions do not further the goal of maintaining and strengthening existing health and safety practices in California’s hospitals.

With a presumption, workers would need to provide little to no evidence that their injuries are work-related when making a claim for workers’ compensation. More importantly, no evidence whatsoever of improperly denied claims has ever been provided to justify the creation of these presumptions.

In addition, SB 632 allows for eligibility for post-termination benefits of three months for every year of service, set at a minimum of five years and capped at a maximum of 10 years, depending upon the illness. Creating a workers compensation presumption for illnesses that may materialize months or even years after employment is not what the workers’ compensation system was set up for, especially when it is well established that many illnesses are spread throughout the community, making it very unlikely that these ailments occurred while employed.

An unnecessarily expansive policy such as this will have the opposite effect of its intent, making it more costly to care for workers and leading to reduced employment and protections as a result.

The current workers’ compensation system is highly effective in caring for employees who are injured or become ill due to occupational hazards. For any non-work-related illnesses or injuries, NAME OF HOSPITAL fully supports ensuring workers have access to high-quality health care.

Unfortunately, the presumptions that would be created by SB 632 fail to balance what the system is designed to do with the impact on patients, health care workers, and hospitals — especially given volatility and uncertainty around Medi-Cal financing.

For these reasons, [Hospital/Health System Name] respectfully asks for your “NO” vote on SB 632.

Sincerely,

[Your name and contact information]

cc: The Honorable Jesse Arreguín, Senate District 7

The Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Labor, Public Employment and Retirement

Jazmin Marroquin, Consultant, Senate Committee on Labor, Public Employment and Retirement

Cory Botts, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus