May 7, 2026

The Honorable Sabrina Cervantes
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
1021 O Street, Room 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: SB 915 (Menjivar) — OPPOSE UNLESS AMENDED

Dear Senator Cervantes:

Caring for the sick and healing the injured — without regard to a patient's ethnicity, national origin, or citizenship status — is the mission of all hospitals. There is a special trust between patients and health care providers, and no one should ever be afraid to seek care for themselves or their loved ones because they fear being deported. This is why the California Hospital Association (CHA) supported last year's Senate Bill (SB) 81 (Arregúin, D-Oakland), which strengthened patient protections against unlawful immigration actions. It also ensured that hospitals remain focused on their core mission, while preserving their ability to develop internal policies that foster a safe environment for workers, patients, and visitors.

While hospitals are committed to providing safe, timely, and equitable care to all — regardless of their circumstances — SB 915 (Menjivar, D-Van Nuys) would impose requirements that risk fundamentally changing the role of hospitals and their workers by positioning them as intermediaries between federal immigration enforcement officers and patients in their custody.

For these reasons, CHA, on behalf of nearly 400 hospitals and health systems, must oppose SB 915 unless it is amended.

While recent amendments attempt to address some concerns, our primary concern remains that the bill places hospitals and health care workers in the inappropriate role of managing interactions between patients and federal immigration enforcement officers. SB 915 would require staff to request and document officers' identities and agencies, and under specified circumstances ask officers to leave patient care areas, creating operational challenges and potentially escalating confrontations in a manner that could jeopardize the safety of patients and staff — particularly patients in custody — while diverting attention from patient care. While we appreciate the bill's intent and the inclusion of liability protections recognizing hospitals' good-faith efforts to comply, those protections do not resolve these underlying concerns.

Additionally, technical and clarifying amendments are still needed. For example, Section 24259(b)(1) would require hospitals to "verify and document" the identities and agencies of immigration enforcement officers; in practice, hospitals may request this information but have no ability to independently verify it.

In addition, the bill does not clearly define the hospital settings to which these requirements apply. At a minimum, the bill should be limited to emergency department and inpatient settings when a patient is admitted and should not apply to individuals in custody receiving care through scheduled and pre-arranged outpatient services.

For these reasons, CHA is opposed to SB 915 unless it is amended. CHA appreciates the author's continued engagement and looks forward to continued dialogue to address these concerns.

Sincerely,

Vanessa Gonzalez
Vice President, State Advocacy

cc: The Honorable Caroline Menjivar
The Honorable Members of the Senate Appropriations Committee
Agnes Lee, Consultant, Senate Appropriations Committee
Joe Parra, Health Policy Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus