



April 15, 2026

The Honorable Akilah Weber Pierson, MD
Chair, Senate Health Committee
1020 N Street, Room 3310
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: SB 980 (Hurtado) – Oppose Unless Amended

Dear Senator Weber Pierson:

While we appreciate this bill's intent to reduce financial barriers for families seeking health-related documentation for school and childcare enrollment, we have significant concerns that the bill's operative language creates ambiguity that could inadvertently prohibit health care providers from collecting appropriate fees, co-payments, and cost-sharing amounts associated with the clinical examinations often required to complete these very forms.

For these reasons, the California Hospital Association (CHA), on behalf of nearly 400 hospitals and health systems, opposes SB 980 unless it is amended to address the concerns detailed below.

SB 980 amends Health and Safety Code Section 123114 to prohibit a health care provider from "charging a fee to a patient for completing health-related forms required by an educational institution or childcare provider." On its face, this language appears directed at the administrative act of filling out a form. However, these forms, specifically those required for students to participate in athletic events, often require a physical exam.

A patient's health plan, Medi-Cal, or self-pay arrangement may require a co-payment, deductible contribution, or other cost-sharing amount for an office visit or examination. When that examination exists solely to generate the clinical information needed to complete a school or childcare form, the provider would not be able to collect the appropriate *health exam related fee*. SB 980 is silent on the distinction between the administrative act of completing a form and the clinical service of conducting an examination. That leaves providers exposed to potential liability for routine billing practices. If a form requires, for example, a medical exam or service, appropriate fees should apply for that medical exam.

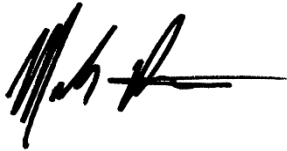
Existing laws already prohibit fees for the clinical task of transferring information onto a form in the context of public benefit programs. SB 980 extends that prohibition to school and childcare forms without acknowledging that these forms frequently require examinations, including physical exams, immunization assessments, and screenings.

To resolve these concerns, CHA suggests the following language be added at the end of Section 123114(b): “Nothing in this section shall be interpreted to prevent a health care provider from charging a fee, including any applicable copay, coinsurance, or deductible, for performing an examination.”

For these reasons, CHA opposes SB 980 unless it is amended.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Farouk', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mark Farouk
Vice President, California Hospital Association

cc: The Honorable Melissa Hurtado
The Honorable Members of the Senate Health Committee
Vince Marchand, Principal Consultant, Senate Health Committee
Joe Parra, Health Policy Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus