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Health Care Coalition Issues Call to Administration to Preserve Drug Discount Program
Safety-net providers travel to the Capitol to protect a vital program for California's most vulnerable patients

SACRAMENTO (May 23, 2018) - A diverse coalition of health care providers and patients gathered at the Capitol today to warn that an Administration budget proposal to eliminate the 340B Drug Discount Program would have devastating consequences for California's underserved and most vulnerable residents.

Since Congress created the 340B Drug Discount Program in 1992, it has successfully provided savings to hospitals, clinics, and other safety-net providers that fund critical patient care services, while also offering free or discounted life-saving medications to low-income, vulnerable patients. Programs made possible by these savings include chemotherapy infusion centers, mobile health clinics, and specialized treatment for Hepatitis C and other serious or chronic diseases.

"The 340B Drug Discount program has been the source of important funds for hospitals and clinics to provide care for Californians on Medi-Cal. The state government needs to ensure these resources remain available for patient care," said Sen. Richard Pan (D-Sacramento).

Dozens of health care providers and patients participated in a day of action in Sacramento to urge lawmakers and the Administration to protect the 340B Drug Discount Program.

"The 340B Drug Discount Program is integral to our ability to treat and care those in the LGBT community who are at risk of, or living with HIV," said Aaron Fox, Director of Government Relations with the Los Angeles LGBT Center. "The elimination of the program would result in a substantial disruption in care for the extraordinarily vulnerable portion of the population that we serve."

The 340B Drug Discount Program involves no cost to taxpayers, as drug manufacturers provide the discounts directly to hospitals and other providers. The savings provided are important to clinics like the Sacramento Native American Health Center, one of 1,300 community health centers statewide that provide care to one in six Californians.

“We respectfully urge the Administration not to go forward with its proposed changes to the 340B Drug Discount Program and instead work with community health centers statewide to strengthen the existing program so that our patients can continue to receive these important benefits,” said Britta Guerrero, Chief Executive Officer for the Sacramento Native American Health Center.

The fate of the 340B Drug Discount Program is being reviewed by legislative budget committees as part of a process that requires a new state budget to be passed by June 15.

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