TEMPLATE LETTER – Please place on hospital letterhead and add hospital-specific details

DATE, 2021

The Honorable Dave Cortese

Chair, Senate Labor, Public Employment and Retirement Committee

State Capitol, Room 5035

Sacramento, CA 95814

**SUBJECT: SB 213 (Cortese) — Oppose, As Amended**

Dear Senator Cortese:

I am writing on behalf of HOSPITAL NAME to oppose Senate Bill (SB) 213. This bill would establish a presumption in the workers’ compensation program for a broad range of illnesses and injuries and relieve these employees from having to demonstrate that certain infectious diseases, musculoskeletal injuries, and respiratory diseases arose out of their work environment. The bill would also extend indefinitely a presumption for COVID-19.

As you know, employee safety is a top priority for HOSPITAL NAME. Yet, work-related injuries can occur. In those cases, every one of our employees has access to California’s no-fault workers’ compensation system, which is designed to support employees. However, when a disagreement arises, there is great value in the current resolution process, a fair and robust procedure administered by the Division of Workers’ Compensation.

Our concerns center on the following key reasons:

* There is a complete absence of evidence that the current process is not working for the illnesses and injuries encompassed in SB 213. In fact, research shows that health care employers are a leader in the industry when it comes to approving the vast majority of workers’ compensation claims.
* A presumption in workers’ compensation can result in hundreds of thousands of dollars in temporary and permanent disability payments and medical costs for a single case, with little to no evidence the injury occurred at work.
* Any increase in workers’ compensation costs will have a direct and immediate impact on our financial ability to protect access to high-quality care, a position already in jeopardy due to the severe economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The cost of this new mandate, while difficult to quantify, would likely be astronomical. One musculoskeletal claim, which could be filed as many as five years after employment ends, could reach hundreds of thousands of dollars. [OPTIONAL FOR THOSE HOSPITALS THAT ARE SELF-INSURED: As a self-insured entity, this could have long-range financial impacts that are difficult to quantify.]

For these reasons, HOSPITAL NAME must oppose SB 213.

Sincerely,

Name

Title