

Key Messages

Hospitals Urge Lawmakers to Support Disaster Modernization Plan

1. California hospitals are already some of the safest buildings in the state.

- Today, more than 96% of all patient care buildings have met the state's rigorous construction standards, meaning they will remain standing during a major earthquake.
- The remaining handful of buildings will meet this standard by no later than 2025.
- As a result of the decades of work and billions of dollars already spent to safeguard all hospital buildings in California, ***patients and workers will be protected when the next earthquake strikes.***

2. State legislators must pass the Hospital Disaster Modernization Plan.

- This plan will modernize existing state law by prioritizing critical health care resources most needed after an earthquake or any other type of disaster.
- The plan will continue to ensure all hospital buildings are structurally safe and able to withstand a major earthquake.
- It will require all hospital buildings that house emergency services to continue to operate after an earthquake — including ensuring the availability of the services and supplies associated with emergency care, pre- and post-surgery, diagnostic imaging, clinical lab, pharmaceuticals, food, water, and more.
- Hospitals also will be required to invest in strengthening facilities that provide non-emergency services.
- The plan will provide hospitals with the additional time needed to meet these requirements.

3. An outdated state law from the 1990s requires every hospital building in which patient care services are provided to be ***fully operational*** after an earthquake by Jan. 1, 2030.

- This law applies to every patient care building — including those that house the full hospital kitchen, the entire pharmacy, exam and procedure rooms that will be empty post-seismic event, inpatient rehabilitation services, and more. Hospital buildings that can't meet this deadline will be forced to close.
- According to RAND, the ***fully operational requirement could cost hospitals well more than \$100 billion***, without financing. When financing costs are included, the price tag could soar to more than \$200 billion.

- This comes at a time when hospitals are still reeling from the financial devastation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. ***California hospitals lost more than \$8 billion in 2020 and are expected to lose up to an additional \$2 billion this year*** due to the pandemic.
- Instead of using 1990s strategies based on old data and science, California lawmakers must modernize this law to reflect how health care is delivered in the 21st century.