



March 10, 2022

The Honorable Reginald Byron Jones-Sawyer, Sr.  
Chair, Assembly Public Safety Committee  
1021 O St., Room 5210  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 2185 (Weber) — Oppose Unless Amended**

Dear Assembly Member Jones-Sawyer:

Domestic violence is a major public health problem that affects millions of people and often results in physical and emotional injuries and even death. California's hospitals are committed to caring for survivors of domestic violence, both in treating their injuries and in performing forensic exams to collect evidence for investigations and, hopefully, prosecution.

The health care professionals who perform these exams must be highly trained and skilled. It is important that they take sufficient time to perform each step of the examination extremely carefully, and they deserve to be paid appropriately for their services. Therefore, the California Hospital Association (CHA) requests an amendment to Assembly Bill 2185 to clarify that government reimbursement for these services must be adequate to cover the costs of providing them.

While hospitals appreciate the confidentiality of domestic violence forensic reports, the bill's requirement that the forensic report not be part of the person's general medical record is problematic. Most hospitals today maintain a patient's records in electronic form and what is or isn't part of or not part of a patient's record is difficult to ascertain when records are electronic. In addition, it is impossible for hospitals to check all previous records in storage (electronic or paper) to distinguish forensic exams from other records. Therefore, we request deletion of the language stating that a forensic report shall not be part of the patient's general medical record. Finally, because the forensic report may be subpoenaed for use in prosecution, limiting disclosure to use in an investigation is problematic.

For these reasons, CHA and its more than 400 hospital and health system members are opposed to this bill unless it is amended.

Our requested amendments are attached.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Maria Sperber".

Maria Sperber  
Legislative Advocate

cc: The Honorable Akilah Weber, MD  
Members of the Assembly Public Safety Committee  
Cheryl Anderson, Consultant, Assembly Public Safety Committee  
Gary Olson, Consultant, Assembly Republic Caucus