



June 10, 2022

The Honorable Mark Stoner  
Chair, Assembly Judiciary Committee  
State Capitol, Room 5740  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Subject: SB 931 (Leyva) — Oppose Unless Amended**

Dear Assembly Member Stone:

California's hospitals recognize that their employees are vital to their mission of care and are committed to protecting employee well-being. However, Senate Bill (SB) 931 would create a new punitive authority at the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) and could expose public entities to significant new liabilities in an area of law where the interpretation and application remain uncertain and subjective. For that reason, on behalf of our more than 400 hospital and health system members, the California Hospital Association (CHA) must respectfully oppose SB 931 unless it is amended.

SB 931 would authorize an employee organization to file a claim with PERB alleging a violation of Government Code Section 3550. That section was added in 2018 and says a public employer shall not "deter or discourage" union membership but does not define these terms. A confirmed violation would lead to a penalty of \$1,000 for each affected employee, up to \$100,000. Given the still-new and subjective language in Section 3550, **CHA joins the University of California in respectfully requesting that the bill be amended to apply to violations of Government Code Section 3553** — which specifically requires public employers to meet and confer with unions on the content of any mass communications to employees, whether written, oral, or recorded. Through this process, unions have the ability to correct problematic language or require the employer to distribute, at the same time, a communication directly from the union.

The bill also proposes that the union be eligible to recover attorney's fees but not employers, even if the employer prevails. **CHA joins the University of California in requesting that the bill be amended to provide attorney's fees to either prevailing party, in order to avoid frivolous filings.**

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions on CHA's position on SB 931, please don't hesitate to contact me at [rberdugo@calhospital.org](mailto:rberdugo@calhospital.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R. Berdugo', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rony Berdugo  
Legislative Advocate

cc The Honorable Connie Leyva  
The Honorable Members of Assembly Judiciary Committee  
Manuela Boucher, Counsel, Assembly Judiciary Committee  
Daryl Thomas, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus