



DISTRICT HOSPITAL LEADERSHIP FORUM



June 15, 2022

The Honorable Jim Wood, DDS
Chair, Assembly Health Committee
1020 N St., Suite 390
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: SB 958 (Limón and Portantino) – SUPPORT

Dear Chair Wood:

Californians deserve to be able to count on the safe and timely delivery of life-saving medications when they need them. As a broad coalition of health care providers, consumer advocates, and quality improvement professionals, we are concerned that a new practice in medication delivery — known as “white bagging” — jeopardizes patient health, safety, and well-being by placing health plans and their third-party vendors between patients and providers.

White bagging policies require specialty medications to be shipped to providers on a patient-by-patient basis in place of using medications that providers have available on-site. The practice frequently results in delays in care, waste from mishandled medication, and new costs for providers who must manage duplicative processes for receiving and administering medications. A nationwide effort to address this pressing issue includes Louisiana banning the practice outright, two other states passing legislation to strengthen oversight, and eight states actively considering legislation to limit its inappropriate use. In California, one health plan was issued an injunction to stop it from using white bagging with one of its network hospitals due to the clear and documented harm to patients created by the plan’s policy.

Senate Bill (SB) 958 (Limón and Portantino) would provide a framework for situations in which white bagging is and is not appropriate, with the chief objective of ensuring patient safety and medication integrity. Rather than prohibiting white bagging outright, SB 958 would prevent health plans from **mandating** the use of this policy, except in cases where the practice is consistent with proper patient care.

SB 958 would protect California's patients by preventing delayed or suboptimal care, patient distress, and unnecessary hospital admissions by ensuring that patients have timely access to safe medications. For these reasons, our organizations strongly request your support of SB 958.

Sincerely,

California Hospital Association
California Society of Health-System Pharmacists
American Academy of Pediatrics California America's
Physician Groups
Association of California Healthcare Districts
California Children's Hospital Association
California Council for the Advancement of Pharmacy
California Life Sciences
Cedars Sinai
Children Now
Children's Specialty Care Coalition
District Hospital Leadership Forum
Healthcare Distribution Alliance
Hospital Quality Institute
United Hospital Association

cc: The Honorable Monique Limón
Members of the Assembly Health Committee
Kristene Mapile, Consultant, Assembly Health Committee
Gino Folchi, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus