



March 31, 2023

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

**SUBJECT: AB 482 (Wilson) — SUPPORT**

Dear Assembly Member Wood:

Emergency air medical transportation is an invaluable service to California hospitals, particularly those serving rural communities. It provides a method of transport from remote locations that cannot be accessed by vehicles and/or a faster means of transport to a hospital in an emergency situation. For patients who need specialty and trauma care — and could potentially die if they aren't treated quickly — air ambulances allow them to reach hospitals much faster. Put simply, air ambulance services save lives.

**That's why the California Hospital Association (CHA) — representing more than 400 hospitals and health systems — supports Assembly Bill (AB) 482 (Wilson), which would require the Department of Transportation to transfer \$8 million annually from the Aeronautics Account in the State Transportation Fund to the Emergency Medical Air Transportation and Children's Coverage Fund. This funding would allow the Department of Health Care Services to continue to augment Medi-Cal reimbursement for emergency medical air transportation services.**

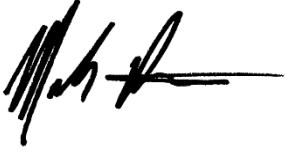
Medi-Cal base rates for emergency air transportation, similar to Medi-Cal hospital reimbursement rates, are woefully inadequate and cannot sustain the cost of these services. The fee that provides the revenue used to augment emergency air ambulance rates expired in December 2022. Without this revenue source, supplemental payments for Medi-Cal emergency air ambulance services would revert back to inadequate base rates. AB 482 would resolve this loss by providing the \$8 million that is necessary for supplemental payments to continue.

If the supplemental reimbursement of Medi-Cal emergency air ambulance services is not extended, this will create access challenges or force hospitals to subsidize the state's dismal rates in order to continue to provide these services. While hospitals continue to struggle financially to keep their doors open, this is an additional cost they simply cannot afford.

**Without air ambulance services, the lives and health of Californians, particularly Medi-Cal patients and those in rural communities, will be put at risk.**

For these reasons, CHA supports AB 482, which would maintain the resources necessary to continue funding supplemental payments for Medi-Cal emergency air ambulance services.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Farouk', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Mark Farouk  
Vice President, State Advocacy

cc: The Honorable Lori Wilson  
The Honorable Members of the Assembly Health Committee  
Lara Flynn, Principal Consultant, Assembly Health Committee  
Gino Folchi, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus