



April 17, 2023

The Honorable Susan Eggman  
Chair, Senate Health Committee  
1021 O St., Room 3310  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**SUBJECT: SB 759 (Grove) – SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Eggman:

While California's hospitals have already spent billions to strengthen their buildings so they will be able to **withstand powerful earthquakes**, they must still meet a 2030 deadline that requires them to spend tens of billions more to be **fully operational** after an earthquake. This deadline will force many hospitals to close if they are unable to comply. Senate Bill (SB) 759 would provide a critical deadline extension for California's hospitals to meet these requirements, preserving access to care for communities throughout the state. **For these reasons, the California Hospital Association, on behalf of more than 400 hospitals and health systems, supports Senate Bill (SB) 759.**

Nearly all California hospitals have spent the last decade retrofitting their buildings to prevent collapse after a major earthquake. This means that following a seismic event, hospitals will stay standing. By contrast, the need for relief from the 2030 **fully operational** mandate is widespread and critical. More than three out of five (63%) California hospitals (more than 260) have not met the 2030 seismic requirements. Given the financial losses spurred by the pandemic (more than \$20 billion through 2022 alone), unprecedented inflation in the cost of delivering health care, and the long-term workforce shortage, many hospitals will not make it to 2030 or beyond unless the law changes. **Hospitals that do not meet this deadline will have to close.**

This bill would maintain access to care in the many communities whose hospitals are simply unable to meet the 2030 deadline. As the state saw with the closure of Madera County's only hospital in January, patients suffer when a hospital closes. People who are in car accidents, have heart attacks and strokes, and need to give birth must travel great distances to receive care when a local hospital closes. Help is needed to ensure that hospitals remain open in their communities.

While extending the deadline is an important first step, it will be critical for the Legislature to also consider in future legislation what type of care is most needed post-earthquake. Otherwise, we will only delay the inevitable for many communities: patients will unnecessarily lose their hospitals. It is imperative that the Legislature reform the seismic standard to focus on what patients most need after an earthquake: emergency department services.

For these reasons, CHA respectfully requests your “AYE” vote on SB 759.

Sincerely,



Kathryn Austin Scott  
Senior Vice President, State Relations and Advocacy

cc: The Honorable Shannon Grove  
The Honorable Members of the Senate Health Committee  
Vince Marchand, Consultant, Senate Health Committee  
Tim Conaghan, Policy Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus  
Angela Pontes, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Governor’s Office  
Dr. Mark Ghaly, Secretary, Health and Human Services Agency  
Elizabeth Landsberg, Director, Department of Health Care Access and Information