



June 23, 2023

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

**SUBJECT: AB 869 (Wood) — SUPPORT IF AMENDED**

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. Assembly Bill (AB) 869 would provide much-needed relief for some of the rural and district hospitals most challenged in meeting these seismic requirements. However, it is also critical that the Legislature protects the same access to care for every community whose hospitals are unable to meet the 2030 deadline. **For these reasons, the California Hospital Association, on behalf of more than 400 hospitals and health systems, supports, if amended, AB 869.**

Nearly all California hospitals have spent the last decade retrofitting their buildings to prevent collapse after a major earthquake. The need for relief from the 2030 *fully operational* mandate is widespread and critical. More than 3 out of 5 (63%) California hospitals (over 260) have not met the 2030 seismic requirements. Of these, over half (51%) report that they will not be able to meet the 2030 deadline on time or at all. Given the financial losses spurred by the pandemic (\$12 billion through 2021 alone), unprecedented inflation in the cost of delivering health care, and the long-term workforce shortage, many hospitals will be forced to close, unless the law changes.

We applaud this bill for granting extensions to hospitals in some of California’s most vulnerable communities. As the state saw with the closure of Madera County’s only hospital in January, the health of any community is at grave risk when its hospitals are at risk. 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. While AB 869 would safeguard those lifesaving services for some communities, a solution is still needed for the many communities whose hospitals are not accounted for in this bill.

**For these reasons, CHA respectfully requests your “AYE” vote on AB 869 if it is amended.**

Sincerely,



Kathryn Austin Scott  
Senior Vice President, State Relations and Advocacy

cc: The Honorable Jim Wood, DDS  
The Honorable Members of the Senate Health Committee  
Melanie Moreno, Consultant, Senate Health Committee  
Joe Parra, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus