



September 18, 2023

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: AB 1063 (Gabriel) — Request for Veto

Dear Governor Newsom:

California is in the midst of a health care workforce crisis. In addition to a deficit of registered nurses, hospital emergency departments are experiencing unprecedented patient volumes — a 42% increase in the last seven years. Still, hospitals are doing everything in their power to ensure staffing ratios are being met, including hiring travel nurses when there are not enough “rank and file” nurses to meet demand.

For these reasons, on behalf of our more than 400 hospital and health system members, the California Hospital Association (CHA) must respectfully request your veto on Assembly Bill (AB) 1063.

AB 1063 would require the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) to conduct an annual review of its enforcement of nurse staffing ratios, hold public hearings, and submit a report to the Legislature. CDPH enforcement actions on facility compliance and quality are already publicly available. Moreover, this new report and related activities would require additional staff and resources for CDPH and may potentially result in increased licensing fees for hospitals at a time when many of them are already facing significant financial challenges. Given these challenges, this is not the time to require additional reporting requirements that would not improve the quality of care in our communities and are largely duplicative of current state law.

Additionally, throughout the pandemic, CDPH’s Center for Health Care Quality continued to investigate all complaints despite its own workforce challenges. Now that the COVID-19 emergency response has come to an end, CDPH is finally resuming one of the main functions it deferred during the pandemic: the relicensing of health facilities every three years. It is crucial that CDPH is given the time to return to its normal operations and focus on improving the quality of care in all health care facilities.

For these reasons, CHA respectfully requests your veto on AB 1063. If you have any questions, please contact me at vgonzalez@calhospital.org.

Sincerely,

Vanessa Gonzalez

Vanessa Gonzalez
Vice President, State Advocacy

cc: The Honorable Jesse Gabriel
Christy Bouma, Legislative Affairs Secretary, Office of the Governor
Angela Pontes, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of the Governor
Samantha Lui, Deputy Secretary, Legislative Affairs, California Health and Human Services Agency