



April 16, 2024

The Honorable Mike Fong  
Chair, Assembly Higher Education Committee  
1020 N Street, Room 173  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**SUBJECT: AB 2104 (Soria) – SUPPORT**

Dear Assemblymember Fong:

California is currently facing a health care workforce crisis. Even prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the state had a significant shortage of trained health care employees. In the aftermath of the pandemic, this workforce shortage has only grown worse. According to a study by U.C. San Francisco, California had a deficit of 40,000 registered nurses in 2021, and this number is likely to have increased since then. This critical issue underscores the importance of innovative solutions to address the health care workforce shortage.

**This is why the California Hospital Association (CHA), on behalf of its more than 400 hospitals and health system members, is proud to support AB 2104 (Soria) which would require the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges to develop a Baccalaureate Degree in Nursing Pilot Program at 15 community college districts.**

Community colleges play a vital role in providing accessible and quality postsecondary education, particularly for students facing financial and logistical challenges. By expanding baccalaureate degrees in nursing to community colleges, AB 2104 can empower more students to pursue higher education in nursing which will help meet the demand for highly qualified nurses in health care settings. Additionally, because many hospitals now prefer nurses to hold baccalaureate degrees in order to meet accreditation and quality standards, AB 2104 will provide graduates with more job opportunities and avenues for career advancement.

For these reasons, CHA requests your “AYE” vote on AB 2104.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vanessa Gonzalez". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Vanessa Gonzalez  
Vice President, State Advocacy

cc: The Honorable Esmeralda Soria  
The Honorable Members of the Assembly Higher Education Committee  
Kevin Powers, Consultant, Assembly Higher Education Committee  
Lyndsay Mitchell, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus