



April 17, 2024

The Honorable Richard Roth
Chair, Senate Health Committee
1021 O St., Room 1200
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: SB 1236 (Blakespear) – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Roth:

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) codified an essential principle — that people should not be denied health care coverage based on pre-existing conditions. Unfortunately, this is not the reality for individuals seeking help with their Medicare bills through supplemental Medicare coverage, known as Medigap. As a result, people who need care the most often face higher deductibles and copays than others, causing them to skip medically necessary preventive care and placing their health at risk.

This is why, on behalf of more than 400 hospitals and health systems, the California Hospital Association (CHA) supports Senate Bill (SB) 1236 (Blakespear, D-Encinitas), which would prohibit using an individual’s medical history to make a coverage determination for those enrolled in Medigap. This practice has not been allowed in other health coverage markets since the passage of the ACA. In addition, the bill would create an annual open enrollment period at the beginning of each year for Medicare beneficiaries to enroll in Medigap, ensuring Medicare beneficiaries have a reasonable opportunity to access this supplemental coverage. Ultimately, SB 1236 would make Medicare more helpful, prevent inequitable cost sharing burdens, and improve the health of California’s seniors.

For these reasons, CHA requests your “AYE” vote on SB 1236.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Farouk", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mark Farouk,
Vice President, State Advocacy

cc: The Honorable Catherine Blakespear
The Honorable Members of the Senate Health Committee
Teri Boughton, Principal Consultant Senate Health Committee
Joe Parra, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus