



May 09, 2024

The Honorable Buffy Wicks  
Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee  
1020 O St., Suite 8220  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**SUBJECT: AB 2960 (Lee) – OPPOSE UNLESS AMENDED**

Dear Assembly Member Wicks:

Maintaining quality of care and safety for patients and staff is a guiding principle for all California hospitals. This commitment requires hospitals to work in partnership with other providers and organizations to ensure the most appropriate care for Californians, in the right place, at the right time, and by the right provider.

**The California Hospital Association (CHA), on behalf of more than 400 hospital and health system members, opposes Assembly Bill (AB) 2960 (Lee, D-Milpitas), unless it is amended to remove emergency departments (EDs) from the requirement to annually offer a syphilis test to all patients who are sexually active and at least 15 years of age.**

AB 2960 would require primary care clinics and hospital EDs to, at least once a year, offer a syphilis test to every patient who is sexually active and at least 15 years of age. AB 2960 stems from the commendable desire to control and prevent the spread of syphilis. Hospitals support that goal but disagree on where the testing should be provided.

An ED's primary role is to provide **emergency care**. Timely triage and treatment for those most in need must be the priority of the ED if it is to save lives and prevent unforeseen complications.

The additional time required to provide non-emergent care would worsen the already overcrowded conditions that occur due to the extraordinary demands placed on EDs. It would outpace EDs' capacity and compromise their ability to provide essential emergency care. Such a disruption within the ED would also increase ambulance offload delay pressures in the pre-hospital emergency services sector, hindering their ability to save lives.

Further, in order to test such a broad sector of the population, AB 2960 would result in significant costs to the Medi-Cal program.

For these reasons, CHA respectfully requests your “NO” vote on AB 2960 unless it is amended.

Sincerely,

*Vanessa Gonzalez*

Vanessa Gonzalez  
Vice President, State Advocacy

cc: The Honorable Alex Lee  
The Honorable Members of the Assembly Appropriations Committee  
Allegra Kim, Consultant Assembly Appropriations Committee  
Joe Shinstock, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus