



May 7, 2019

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The Honorable Lorena Gonzalez Fletcher
Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 2114
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Assembly Bill 890 (Wood) – Nurse Practitioners: Scope of Practice
As Amended on April 22, 2019 – SUPPORT**

Dear Assembly Member Gonzalez Fletcher:

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC) is pleased to have a support position on Assembly Bill (AB) 890 by Assembly Member Jim Wood. This bill would expand the scope of practice for board certified nurse practitioners, allowing for greater access to health and behavioral health care for patients, and aligning with the state's current goals to expand health care coverage.

Under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) California has seen an increased number of newly insured individuals entering their health and behavioral health care systems. California's goal is to continue to increase the number of insured individuals throughout the state. As counties partner with the state to provide high-quality care to all Californians, counties are challenged with an inadequate supply of primary care physicians. The Healthforce Center of UCSF reported that California will have a substantial primary clinician shortage in the range of approximately 4,700 by 2025. Of particular concern is how this inadequate supply in primary care physicians will impact rural counties. The Healthforce Center reported that while the numbers of physicians are increasing at a rate that does not meet the need of communities; the number of nurse practitioners in California is growing more rapidly.

Nurse practitioners are registered nurses who have completed advanced educational training to diagnosis and treat patients' physical and psychosocial health needs. Current law requires that nurse practitioners work under a supervising physician. AB 890 would loosen this requirement, but still provide adequate oversight and accountability for patient care. At this time, 22 states allow nurse practitioners to work independently at the top of their license to diagnose and treat patients, so California remains the only western state that requires nurse practitioners to practice under a supervising physician.

By allowing providers to expand the scope of services that are within their level of training, we can improve access to care and efficiencies within our delivery systems. As our state works to achieve universal coverage and ensure behavioral health care, it is critical that we employ and expand new models of care that can help achieve these goals. It is for these reasons that CSAC supports AB 890 and respectfully requests your "Aye" vote. Should you or your staff have additional questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 650-8110 or fmcting@counties.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Farrah M. Ting".

Farrah McDaid Ting
Legislative Representative

cc: The Honorable Jim Wood, Member, California State Assembly
Honorable Members, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Lisa Murawski, Consultant, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Alex Khan, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus