

May 10, 2019

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

Re: AB 890 (Wood) Nurse practitioners: scope of practice: unsupervised practice - SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Gonzalez,

I write today on behalf of CaliforniaHealth+ Advocates, the advocacy affiliate of the California Primary Care Association, who advocates on behalf of California's over 1,300 community health centers (CHCs) that provide high-quality, comprehensive care to 6.9 million people in California each year. We are proud to support AB 890 (Wood) as amended on April 22, 2019.

Community health centers provide healthcare services to California's most vulnerable populations, with 76 percent of CHC patients at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) and nearly 40% identifying a language other than English as their primary language. It is the mission of California's health centers to treat everyone who walks through their door, regardless of their ability to pay.

According to the California Future Health Workforce Commission report published in February 2019, California is expected to face a massive workforce shortage in the next decade, with the state needing 4,100 more providers by 2030. Exacerbating this problem is the existing shortage of healthcare professionals which make it difficult to recruit and retain providers, especially in rural and underserved areas. Nurse practitioners play a key role in providing primary care services, especially in rural and underserved areas, but experience practice and prescribing restrictions without physician oversight. However, a report by the Healthforce Center at UCSF (2017) suggests that nearly 75% of primary care services could be provided by nurse practitioners, if allowed to work at the top of their scope. Passage of AB 890 (Wood) will increase the number of trained and experienced nurse practitioners who can care for communities through the establishment of Advanced Practice Registered Nursing Board. This board would authorize a nurse practitioner who practices in certain settings, and meets other specified requirements, to perform specified functions without supervision by a physician and surgeon, including ordering and interpreting diagnostic procedures, certifying disability, and prescribing, administering, dispensing, and administering controlled substances.

This bill will significantly expand access to health care services and help relieve both the existing and projected physician shortages and for those reason, **CaliforniaHealth+ Advocates is pleased to support AB 890 (Wood) and urge your aye vote when this bill comes before you in committee.**

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Christy Bouma at (916) 227-2666 or Beth Malinowski at (916) 503-9112.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carmela Castellano Garcia". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Carmela Castellano-Garcia
President and CEO

cc: Members of the Assembly Appropriations Committee
Assemblymember Jim Wood