

March 28, 2022

The Honorable Jim Wood
Assembly Health Committee, Chair
1020 N Street, Room 390
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: AB 1882 (Rivas) – Oppose, Unless Amended

Dear Assembly Member Wood:

The Alliance of Catholic Health Care, which represents California's Catholic-affiliated health systems and hospitals, must oppose AB 1882 (Rivas), unless it is amended. The Alliance represents California's Catholic-affiliated health systems and hospitals and together, our health systems operate 51 acute care hospitals, which represent nearly 15% of all hospitals and over 16% of the hospital beds in California.

The Alliance is deeply concerned that — despite the stated intentions of AB 1882 — the challenge of meeting 2030 seismic requirements without updating those standards will result in a loss of health care services throughout the state.

Prior to the pandemic, our hospitals faced millions in costs to meet the 2030 seismic requirements. This was going to be a challenge. Today, after two years of a pandemic that has pushed hospitals to the financial brink, meeting these requirements will be not challenging, but instead impossible.

Hospitals have worked hard and invested billions to meet 2020 seismic standards so that hospital buildings can withstand an earthquake and are now considered among the safest in the communities we serve.

Now, in the aftermath of the pandemic, the Legislature can choose to maintain decades-old 2030 requirements that would require all hospital buildings to have every service available at all times. Or, it can update the 2030 standards to maximize hospital emergency care so it is readily available following any disaster and to support investments in a health care system that delivers high-quality, equitable care for all.

We are pleased to stand in partnership with the California Hospital Association, which has proposed a change in the 2030 standards to require all hospitals to ensure their emergency services are fully functional after a major earthquake. Refocusing the 2030 standards on emergency services (and not, for example, on buildings that house dietary services) will preserve health care delivery that would be in jeopardy if the law is not modified. Unless solutions are offered to make it possible for hospitals to focus on emergency services, hospital services as a whole will be threatened in your backyard — as the only option for a hospital that fails to attain 2030 compliance, according to the law, is closure.



*Representing California's Catholic
Health Systems and Hospitals*

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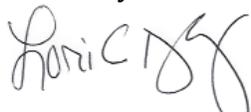
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AB 1882 (Rivas) won't advance solutions to this pressing policy challenge. As proposed, the bill would add disclosures in hospitals' waiting rooms that could confuse or unnecessarily alarm patients and visitors. Other disclosures might be helpful, if they can provide greater transparency for local communities to prepare for emergencies and maintain access to care. We ask that you consider the concerns provided by the California Hospital Association as this bill comes to committee.

It's important to note that hospitals are fully in compliance with the law today as set forth in the current seismic standards. We would urge the Legislature to update the decades-old standards to ensure critical investments can be made to advance the health care delivery system in advance of the 2030 seismic mandates.

For these reasons, we urge your no vote on AB 1882 (Rivas), unless it is substantially amended.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lori C Dangberg".

Lori Cappello Dangberg
Executive Vice President

cc: Assembly Member Robert Rivas
Members, Assembly Health
Lara Flynn, Consultant, Assembly Health
Gino Folchi, Consultant, Republican Caucus