

April 24, 2023

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

SUBJECT: AB 85 (Weber), SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Wood:

The Alliance of Catholic Health Care, which represents California's Catholic-affiliated health systems and hospitals, is writing to support AB 85 (Weber). Together, our health systems operate 50 acute care hospitals, which represent nearly 15% of all hospitals and over 16% of the hospital beds in California.

This measure will require health plans to cover and provide reimbursement to health care providers for the screening of the social determinants of health (SDOH), regardless of the screening method utilized.

Catholic health care providers are located in some of California's most vulnerable and under resourced communities. As providers committed to the safety net and our patients, we know that their overall health is not solely determined in our hospitals and clinics. Their socioeconomic status, education, neighborhood, physical environment, employment, and social support networks have just as large an impact on their wellbeing as their access to health care.

Identifying these SDOH is a critical step in ensuring health equity and optimal health outcomes for all people in California. Research shows that our physicians are often concerned at not being able to address their patient's SDOH needs. This bill will help physicians begin to address patients' needs by referring patients to supportive resources closest to them.

We also support a role for the Department of Health Care Affordability and Information in this bill. Determining the gaps in research to inform policy improvements, in order to continue to address SDOH for all in California, is critical to ensuring that we continue to pursue effective means of supporting overall health and wellbeing.

For these reasons, the Alliance of Catholic Health Care is proud to support AB 85 (Weber) and appreciate the author's leadership in these critical matters.

Sincerely,



Lori Cappello Dangberg
Executive Vice President



*Representing California's Catholic
Health Systems and Hospitals*