



June 16, 2017

Senator Mike McGuire, Chair
Senate Governance and Finance Committee
State Capitol, Room 408
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 1250 (Jones-Sawyer) – Counties and cities: Contracts for personal services OPPOSE

Dear Senator McGuire:

On May 31, 2017, the Chair of the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors provided the author a letter of opposition to AB 1250. I am the Director of Contra Costa Health Services (CCHS) and the Health Officer for Contra Costa County, and on behalf of the County am writing this letter to elaborate on the impacts to the County in the provision of health services through the county hospital, clinics and County Operated Health Plan.

Contra Costa County, like many other counties, operates a public hospital, clinics and health care facilities. Given the nature of how health care services are made available and the fact that most health care providers are independent of the county health care system, contracts with independent health professionals, including physicians, are fundamental to the ability to provide care. Some services are carried out by county professional employees, but contracts with health professionals and providers are undeniably necessary to provide care delivered by the county health care system. The simple truth is that no health care system can employ enough health care professionals to staff and manage a complex health care system.

AB 1250 would fundamentally disrupt the County's ability to provide the full range of health care services because in many instances the County would be required to go through the intentionally ponderous process set forth in the bill in order to enter into the contracts necessary to have a fully functioning health care system. Because the county employs some physicians, largely in the family practice area, in order to contract with medical groups and independent specialists to both meet the needs of the hospital, county clinics, and the county owned Medi-Cal health plan, it will need to go through the "1250 process." We are virtually certain that that process will be so difficult that contracts with providers will be nearly impossible to complete.



Additionally, there are some professionals, as in the psychiatric and behavioral health areas, who simply are not available as full-time county employees. In this area, the County must contract for psychiatric emergencies, inpatient psychiatric staffing, psychiatric care in detention facilities, and outpatient care. The same is true for laboratory, respiratory therapy, and radiology technicians. The contracting process required by AB 1250 will derail those vital arrangements as well. Similarly, the County Emergency Medical Services system could not function if it was unable to contract the personnel necessary for emergency response in critical situations.

We need not remind you of the tremendous challenges that County health care delivery systems face and the even greater threat coming from Washington DC. Adding the horrific constraints required by AB 1250 is both nonsensical and incredibly dangerous.

For these reasons, among many others, we ask that you oppose AB 1250.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "W. B. Walker, M.D.", written in a cursive style.

William B. Walker, M.D.
Director & Health Officer

cc: Members, Senate Governance Finance Committee
Assembly Member Reginald B. Jones-Sawyer, Sr.
Contra Costa County Legislative Delegation
David Twa, County Administrator
Lara Delaney, Director of Reentry and Justice
Cathy Christian, Nielsen Merksamer