



Officers

Muntu Davis, MD, MPH
President
Alameda County

April 11, 2018

Ken Cutler, MD, MPH
President-Elect
Nevada County

The Honorable Rob Bonta
State Capitol, Room 2148
Sacramento, CA 95814

Wilma Wooten, MD, MPH
Past President
San Diego County

RE: HOAC Supports Assembly Bill 1871

Nicole Quick, MD, MPH
Treasurer
Yuba County

Dear Assemblymember Bonta:

Eric Handler, MD, MPH
Secretary
Orange County

The Health Officers Association of California (HOAC), which represents the physician health officers of California's sixty-one city and county health jurisdictions, supports your AB 1871. This bill would ensure more than 340,000 low-income students in public charter schools have daily access to at least one nutritious free or reduced-price school meal.

Directors at Large

Joseph Iser, MD, DrPH, MSc
Yolo County (retired)

Child hunger and the effects of poverty impede health and educational outcomes. The ability of a child to access food should not depend on the economic status of their household. School meal programs are essential to supporting the academic achievement and wellbeing of all children, particularly those who might not otherwise have access to a nutritious meal. However, charter schools are the state's only public schools exempt from offering free or reduced-price meals to low-income students. This means the number of low-income public school students denied equitable access to free or reduced-priced meals will increase as students enroll in charter schools. Exempting charter schools from free and reduced-price meal requirements creates health disparities and exacerbates achievement gaps for low-income students. AB 1871 would optimize access to school meals for children attending charter schools, giving vulnerable children a better opportunity to succeed.

Bela T. Matyas, MD, MPH
Solano County

Cameron Kaiser, MD
Riverside County

Robert Oldham, MD, MSHA
Placer County

Claudia Jonah, MD
Kern County

Karen I. Relucio, MD
Napa County

The health officers are proud to support AB 1871 and respectfully asks you to consider amendments for schools to collect data showing how meal programs are being utilized. HOAC is dedicated to promoting practices that improve the health of California's residents and believes AB 1871 would be a step forward for our state. Should you have any questions regarding our position on this matter, I invite you to contact me at your earliest convenience.

Sara Cody, MD
Santa Clara County

Robert Benjamin, MD, MPH
City of Berkley

Karen Milman, MD, MPH
Sonoma County

Sincerely,

Kat DeBurgh, MPH
Executive Director

Staff

Kat DeBurgh, MPH
Executive Director

Dalia Navarro
Office Manager

Brandon Roberts
Legislative Assistant