



Officers

Muntu Davis, MD, MPH
President
Alameda County

March 6, 2017

Janet Berreman, MD, MPH
President-Elect
City of Berkeley

The Honorable Doctor Joaquin Arambula
State Capitol, Room 5164
Sacramento, CA 95814

Wilma J. Wooten, MD, MPH
Past President
San Diego County

RE: HOAC Proudly Sponsors AB 511 (Arambula)

Nichole Quick, MD, MPH
Treasurer
Yuba County

Dear Dr. Arambula,

Eric G. 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 jurisdictions, proudly sponsors AB 511 (Arambula), a bill that would protect workers and preserve valuable public health resources.

Directors at Large

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

AB 511 builds on previous legislative success to replace mandated tuberculosis (TB) testing with risk assessment screening and targeted testing. This change is recommended by numerous expert bodies, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), California Department of Public Health (CDPH), and the California Tuberculosis Controllers Association (CTCA). The best scientific guidance suggests we should not test low-risk populations, but should instead test only high-risk individuals. To implement this guidance, California should eliminate TB testing requirements, and instead require employees and other individuals to be screened for TB risk. Only those at high risk should be tested.

Bela T. Matyas, MD, MPH
Solano County

Kenneth Cutler, MD, MPH
Nevada County

Cameron Kaiser, MD, MPH
Riverside County

Claudia Jonah, MD
Kern County

Robert L. Oldham, MD, MSHA
Placer County

Individuals required to be tested under current law include certified nurse assistants and temporary licensed nursing staff at long-term care facilities, employees and volunteers at heritage schools, foster parents, employees of primary care clinics, volunteers in crisis nurseries in Community Care Facilities, home care aides, and parks employees. This bill would replace those testing requirements with a screening requirement, and require testing only if warranted. In addition, AB 511 eliminates mandatory testing for students at schools for the deaf and blind. These students are at no greater risk for TB than those at conventional K through 12 schools, who are not required to be tested. The local health officer can always order testing if necessary based on local conditions.

Karen I. Relucio, MD
Napa County

Sara Cody, MD
Santa Clara County

Robert Benjamin, MD, MPH
Alameda County (Retired)

Staff Members

Kat DeBurgh, MPH
Executive Director

Dalia Navarro
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Legislative Assistant

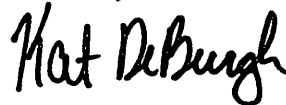
AB 511 will help combat the nation's reoccurring shortage of tuberculin, the TB testing antigen. Furthermore, this bill will protect employees and others from unnecessary treatment. Like any test, the TB test can result in a false positive result. Any person with a positive test result is treated for latent tuberculosis. A certain percentage of these (those with a false positive result) are treated unnecessarily, exposing them to avoidable x-rays and pharmaceutical regimens.

TB tests can be costly to employers and the medical system. In addition, TB skin tests require two visits to a health care provider – one for the test to be administered subcutaneously, and one for the test to be analyzed for a result. This places a burden on the health care system and those being tested.

Health care providers can effectively assess each person's risk for TB using a risk-assessment questionnaire developed by the CDPH and CTCA. The pre-testing questionnaire currently in use allows providers to personally and confidentially ask patients a series of three yes/no questions to assess their risk – a "yes" response to any of the three questions would indicate that the respondent should be tested for TB.

HOAC is dedicated to promoting practices that improve the health of California's residents and believes AB 511 would be a step forward for our state. We are proud to sponsor this bill, and we thank you for introducing it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kat DeBurgh". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kat DeBurgh, MPH
Executive Director