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March 12, 2018

The Honorable John Moorlach
State Capitol Building, Room 2048
Sacramento, CA 95814

Regarding SB 1325: Oppose

Dear Senator Moorlach,

Our organization must respectfully oppose your SB 1325. This "Peaceful and Natural Dignity Act" is an unnecessary erosion of public health authority. SB 1325 would allow California's residents to ignore quarantine orders by exercising "the right of self-quarantine."

Isolation and quarantine are public health tools that are rarely used, but are absolutely essential when the time arises. Isolation and quarantine orders are issued by state and local health departments only in cases of dire need, and they are subject to due process. Isolation refers to limiting the contacts of ill individuals in order to limit the spread of a disease. Quarantine is limiting the contacts of individuals who have been exposed to an illness, in order to see if they develop the illness, and in order to limit the potential spread of the disease.

Your personal physician will not be able to tell you if you need to be quarantined. This is the role of a communicable disease investigator, such as those employed by local health departments. These investigators and epidemiologists receive reports of communicable disease, then determine who else may have been exposed to the disease. Health departments reach out to exposed individuals and take appropriate measures to limit the spread of disease.

Most quarantines already take place in the home. When quarantined, individuals are asked not to report to work, school, or public gatherings in order to minimize the spread of infectious disease. SB 1325 creates a new level of bureaucracy to accomplish something that is already being done. We must oppose this bill.

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