



#### Officers

Muntu Davis, MD, MPH  
President  
Alameda County

August 31, 2017

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

The Honorable Scott Wiener  
State Capitol, Room 4066  
Sacramento, CA 95814

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

#### **SB 239: SUPPORT**

Nichole Quick, MD, MPH  
Treasurer  
Yuba County

Dear Senator Wiener:

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, supports SB 239. We would like to thank you, your staff, and the bill's sponsors for working with us from the very beginning to address our concerns. The amendments of August 28, 2017 make the bill one we can support.

#### Directors at Large

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

Under current law, willful transmission of HIV is a felony, while willful transmission of other diseases, no matter how severe, is a misdemeanor. HIV is the only sexually transmitted disease - indeed the only disease at all - for which willful transmission is a felony. This furthers the unique stigma around HIV. The health officers support your effort to make the law fair and equitable.

Bela T. Matyas, MD, MPH  
Solano County

Kenneth Cutler, MD, MPH  
Nevada County

Cameron Kaiser, MD, MPH  
Riverside County

Claudia Jonah, MD  
Kern County

SB 239 removes outdated, stigmatizing penalties that were written into the California code at a time of great fear and mystery surrounding HIV. Today, these laws do not serve to protect the public, but instead disproportionately target women and people of color. It is time to update these laws, which is why HOAC supports SB 239.

Robert L. Oldham, MD, MSHA  
Placer County

Karen I. Relucio, MD  
Napa County

Sara Cody, MD  
Santa Clara County

Robert Benjamin, MD, MPH  
Alameda County (Retired)

The August 28 amendments address the concerns we shared with you. As you know, California's local health officers stand on the front lines against the spread of communicable disease in this state. Diseases of concern include not only HIV, but also aerosol-transmissible diseases such as tuberculosis, Ebola, and emerging infections that have yet to appear on our shores. In order to protect the public, health officers need to preserve their authority to stop behaviors that could spread disease. Thank you for amending Health and Safety Code 120290 to ensure that

#### Staff Members

Kat DeBurgh, MPH  
Executive Director

Dalia Navarro  
Office Manager

Brandon Roberts  
Legislative Assistant

health officers can issue a verbal order to address a potentially dangerous emergency situation.

Our aim is to create a California in which all people can be healthy and live to their fullest potential. Ending legal HIV stigma is a step toward this goal. Thank you for introducing this bill, and for working with us to preserve the public health authority we need.

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