

CHA News Release

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Hospitals Support Increased Protections for Patients

*Proposal to Prohibit Balance Billing for Emergency Services Offers a Promising Path
to Shield Patients from Financial Burdens*

SACRAMENTO (February 25, 2019) — California’s hospitals support the intent of recently introduced legislation that further protects patients from unexpected bills.

AB 1611, introduced by Assemblymember David Chiu (D-San Francisco) and co-authored by Senator Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco), would ban hospitals from “balance billing” patients for emergency services. Balance billing occurs when a health insurance company only partially pays a hospital for care.

While California is a leader in protecting patients from unexpected bills, this proposal enhances current safeguards, and hospitals look forward to working with the authors and sponsor in the weeks ahead.

“Hospitals are the places people turn to in times of greatest need — the birth of their children, treatment for devastating diseases, critical care after an accident,” said Carmela Coyle, President & CEO of the California Hospital Association. “It is during these times that patients should be focused on what matters most, not on how much they will be billed for their care. That’s why hospitals stand firm in supporting solutions that shield patients.”

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