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April 24, 2018

Howard Backer, MD, MPH, FACEP  
Director  
California Emergency Medical Services Authority  
10901 Gold Center Drive, Suite 400  
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

**Re: AB 1795 (Gipson) Emergency Medical Services: Behavioral Health Facilities and Sobering Centers (Support)**

Dear Dr. Backer:

The California Conference of Local Health Officers (CCLHO) voted at the CCLHO Board meeting on April 5, 2018 to take a Support recommendation on AB 1795 (Gipson). This bill would authorize a local emergency medical services agency to submit, as part of its emergency medical services plan, a plan to transport certain patients who meet triage criteria to a behavioral health facility or a sobering center. AB 1795 would also make conforming changes to the definition of advanced life support to include prehospital emergency care, and would authorize localities to designate, and contract with, a sobering center to receive patients.

AB 1795 would also require the Emergency Medical Services Authority to adopt guidelines for the triage criteria and assessment procedures by July 1, 2020, and would require an annual analysis of the administration of the local plans.

CCLHO supports the intent of AB 1795 to authorize local emergency medical services agencies to transport patients to a behavioral health facility or sobering center instead of the emergency room. This would allow trained prehospital personnel to transport patients to an appropriate level of care and can reduce unnecessary emergency department admissions thus better serving the needs of the community.

CCLHO also recommends that the program require the collection of data by race and geographic area (city or census tract level) and other demographic information to better determine at the annual analysis if the program is equitably meeting the community's needs. Moreover, CCLHO recommends that authorized local emergency medical services agencies that submit plans for such transports also develop communication plans with primary care physicians who play an important role in the continuity and coordination of care of transported patients.

CCLHO was established in statute in 1947 to advise the California Department of Health Services (now California Department of Public Health), other departments, boards, commissions, and officials of federal, state and local agencies, the Legislature and other organizations on all matters affecting health. CCLHO membership consists of all legally appointed physician health officers in California's 61 city and county jurisdictions.

Dr. Howard Backer  
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Should you have any questions, please contact me by email at [ken.cutler@co.nevada.ca.us](mailto:ken.cutler@co.nevada.ca.us) or by phone at 530-265-7154.

Sincerely and on behalf of the CCLHO membership,

*Original signed by Dr. Ken Cutler*

Ken Cutler, MD, MPH  
President, California Conference of Local Health Officers

cc: Karen L. Smith, MD, MPH, Director and State Public Health Officer, California  
Department of Public Health