

Health Care Legislation Affecting Low-Income Consumers as of September 8, 2021

All bills must pass both houses by September 10 in order to be sent to the Governor for signing this year. The Governor has until October 10 to act on "enrolled" bills. Bills he signs or takes no action on are "chapters" and become law on January 1 unless stated otherwise in the bill. Bills that he vetoes are dead and will not move forward next year. Bills that did not pass out of appropriations (some by author's choice) are denoted as 2-year bills, and will not move forward this year but may resume in January. Similarly, bills that are not passed by both houses by September 10 may be picked up again in January. Following is a summary of bills in the Legislature that affect the health of low-income Californians.

Medi-Cal

Measure	Author	Topic	Location	Summary	WCLP Position
AB 4	Arambula	Medi-Cal: eligibility.	2-year bill	This bill would expand full-scope Medi-Cal to all income-eligible adults regardless of immigration status.	Support
AB 369	Kamlager	Medi-Cal services: persons experiencing homelessness.	ENROLLMENT	This bill seeks to increase health care access for individuals experiencing homelessness by allowing for care to be provided in nontraditional settings.	Support
AB 470	Carrillo	Medi-Cal: eligibility.	2-year bill	Code clean-up for when the Medi-Cal assets test is eliminated.	Co-Sponsor
AB 540	Petrie-Norris	Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly.	2-year bill	This bill would exempt PACE beneficiary from active or passive enrollment in Medi-Cal managed care and ensure PACE is presented as an enrollment option.	Support
SB 56	Durazo	Medi-Cal: eligibility.	2-year bill	This bill would expand full-scope Medi-Cal to all income-eligible elders age 65 and older regardless of immigration status.	Support
SB 226	Pan	Medi-Cal: County of Sacramento.	ENROLLMENT	This bill would establish a local health authority to designate plans to serve as Medi-Cal managed care plans in Sacramento County.	Support
SB 316	Eggman	Medi-Cal: federally qualified health centers and rural health clinics.	Assembly Floor	This bill would allow community health center to bill Medi-Cal for two visits if a patient is provided behavioral health services on the same day they receive other medical services.	Support

Disparities Reduction

Measure	Author	Topic	Location	Summary	WCLP Position
AB 1038	Gipson	California Health Equity Program.	2-year bill	This bill would establish the California Health Equity Program under the Department of Public Health, a competitive grant program to support local health departments, nonprofits, clinics and tribes to address health inequities.	Support
AB 1094	Arambula	Sexual orientation and gender identity data collection pilot project.	ENROLLMENT	This bill would require the Department of Public Health to establish a 3-year pilot program in up to 6 counties, for coroners and medical examiners, following training, to begin data collection of gender identity and sexual orientation in cases of violent death and to aggregate, deidentify, and annually report the data to the board of supervisors and the department.	Support

AB 1204	Wicks	Hospital equity reporting.	Senate Floor	This bill would require a hospital or medical group to prepare and annually submit an equity report to OSHPD.	Support
AB 1358	Muratsuchi	Demographics: ancestry and ethnic origin.	2-year bill	This bill would require key state agencies collect and release standardized and disaggregated data for communities of color.	Support
SB 17	Pan	Office of Racial Equity.	2-year bill	Establishes the Office of Racial Equity, an independent public entity to coordinate, analyze, develop, evaluate, and recommend strategies for advancing racial equity across state agencies, departments, and the office of the Governor. Requires the office to develop a statewide Racial Equity Framework providing guidelines for inclusive policies and practices that reduce racial inequities, promote racial equity, address individual and structural racism.	Support
SB 65	Skinner	Maternal care and services.	Assembly Floor	California Momnibus Bill - remaining pieces improve the maternal and infant mortality and morbidity investigation processes, simplify the CalWORKs welfare-to-work exemption for pregnant people, and add a program to fund midwife trainee placements.	Co-Sponsor
SB 682	Rubio	Childhood chronic health conditions: racial disparities.	Assembly Floor	This bill would require the Health and Human Services Agency to create a plan that intentionally and proactively responds to known racial disparities in children's chronic disease. Sponsor: Children Now	Support

Behavioral Health

Measure	Author	Topic	Location	Summary	WCLP Position
AB 226	Ramos	Children's crisis psychiatric residential treatment facilities.	Senate Floor	This bill would reclassify children's crisis residential programs as children's crisis psychiatric residential treatment facilities and transfer licensing responsibility to DHCS, upon budget appropriations, to maximize federal funding. Sponsor: California Alliance of Child and Family Services.	
AB 1051	Bennett	Medi-Cal: specialty mental health services: foster youth.	DEAD	The bill would prohibit the presumptive transfer of foster youth placed in a group home or a short-term residential therapeutic program (STRTP) unless an exception is invoked and make the county probation agency or the child welfare services agency responsible for determining whether invoking the exception is appropriate. Sponsor: CBHDA	
SB 221	Wiener	Health care coverage: timely access to care.	Assembly Floor	This bill would require health plans and insurers to provide patients with timely follow-up care for mental health issues and substance use disorders.	Support
SB 293	Limón	Medi-Cal specialty mental health services.	2-year bill	This bill would require DHCS with stakeholder consultation, to streamline and standardize forms for the intake of, assessment of, and the treatment planning of specialty mental health services for children on Medi-Cal.	Support

Health Coverage

Measure	Author	Topic	Location	Summary	WCLP Position
AB 342	Gipson	Health care coverage: colorectal cancer: screening and testing.	ENROLLMENT	Requires more screening for colorectal cancer and prohibits a health plan contract or a health insurance policy from imposing cost sharing on individuals between 50 and 75 years of age for colonoscopies conducted for specified purposes.	

AB 347	Arambula	Health care coverage: step therapy.	Senate Floor	This bill would require health plans to grant a step therapy exception if specified criteria are met. Excludes Medi-Cal managed care plans.	
AB 570	Santiago	Dependent parent health care coverage.	ENROLLMENT	This bill would enable persons to enroll their dependent parent(s) in their health insurance coverage.	Support
SB 245	Gonzalez	Health care coverage: abortion services: cost sharing.	2-year bill	Prohibits a health plan from imposing a deductible, coinsurance, copayment, or any other cost-sharing requirement on coverage for all abortion services.	Support
SB 306	Pan	Sexually transmitted disease: testing.	Assembly Floor	Aims to increase access to STD treatment by adding STD services to Family PACT, allowing prescriptions sexual partners when diagnosing an STD, and increasing access to home test kits, among other provisions.	Support
Health Insurance Market					
Measure	Author	Topic	Location	Summary	WCLP Position
SB 255	Portantino	Health care coverage: employer associations.	Assembly Floor	Allows for employer to group to form Association Health Plans under the ERISA rules rather than Knox Keene.	
SB 326	Pan	Health care coverage: federal health care reforms.	Assembly Floor	Allows many Affordable Care Act consumer protections to remain in state statute even if the corresponding federal provision is no longer in effect, such as guaranteed issuance, the ban on pre-existing condition exclusions, the individual mandate, rates based solely on age and region, and the requirement to provide all essential health benefits.	Support
SB 368	Limón	Health care coverage: deductibles and out-of-pocket expenses.	Assembly Floor	Requires health plans to track deductibles and out-of-pocket maximums for enrollees.	Support
Medical Debt					
Measure	Author	Topic	Location	Summary	WCLP Position
AB 532	Wood	Health care: fair billing policies.	Senate Floor	Requires notice of financial assistance when patients are discharged from the hospital and requires information about the Health Consumer Alliance.	Support
AB 1020	Friedman	Health care debt and fair billing.	ENROLLMENT	Enhances the enforcement of the Hospital Fair Pricing Act by imposing penalties for violations and adding requirements when filing a collections suit for hospital debt to show that the person has been screened for financial assistance. Also increases minimum eligibility for assistance from 350% to 400% FPL.	Co-Sponsor
SB 531	Wieckowski	Consumer debt.	ENROLLMENT	Requires specified information about a consumer debt when a debt collector first attempts to collect a debt.	Support

Telehealth					
Measure	Author	Topic	Location	Summary	WCLP Position
AB 14	Aguiar-Curry	Communications: California Advanced Services Fund: deaf and disabled telecommunications program: surcharges.	Senate Floor	This bill would prioritize the deployment of broadband infrastructure in California's underserved communities by extending the ongoing collection of funds deposited into the California Advanced Services Fund to provide communities with grants.	Support
SB 4	Gonzalez	Communications: California Advanced Services Fund.	Assembly Floor	This bill would prioritize the deployment of broadband infrastructure in California's underserved communities by extending the ongoing collection of funds deposited into the California Advanced Services Fund to provide communities with grants.	Support
Other					
Measure	Author	Topic	Location	Summary	WCLP Position
AB 100	Holden	Drinking water: endpoint devices: lead content.	ENROLLMENT	This bill seeks to reduce Californians' daily exposure to lead by prohibiting the sale of any drinking water faucet, fixture, water fountain or other end use device that, after three weeks of testing, leaches more than one microgram of lead into one liter of drinking water.	Support
AB 326	Rivas, Luz	Health care service plans: Consumer Participation Program.	Senate Floor	This bill would permanently establish the Consumer Participation Program, which awards fees to individual or organization that has made a substantial contribution in representing consumers in regulation or decision adoption, within the Department of Managed Health Care. Co-sponsored CPeHN and Health Access.	Co-Sponsor
AB 814	Levine	Personal information: contact tracing.	2-year bill	This bill would prohibit law enforcement officials from engaging in contact tracing and limit contact tracing data to be used only for contact tracing purposes.	Support
AB 1046	Rubio, Blanca	Nurse-Family Partnership program.	DEAD	This bill would require Health and Human Services Agency convene a working group to assess and provide uniform recommendations on how to use Medi-Cal reimbursement for evidence-based home visiting.	Support
AB 1130	Wood	California Health Care Quality and Affordability Act.	2-year bill	Establishes the Office of Health Care Affordability within OSHPD to analyze the health care market for cost trends, develop data-informed policies for lowering health care costs, set and enforce cost targets, and create a state strategy for controlling the cost of health care for consumers and purchasers.	Support
SB 40	Hurtado	Health care workforce development: California Medicine Scholars Program.	2-year bill	5-year pilot to create a medical school pipeline for Black & Latinx community college students in an effort to increase the number of primary care physicians of color.	Support
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