



CALIFORNIA  
STATE  
ASSOCIATION OF  
COUNTIES



URBAN COUNTIES  
CAUCUS



CWDA

COUNTY WELFARE  
DIRECTORS  
ASSOCIATION



COUNTY HEALTH  
EXECUTIVES  
ASSOCIATION OF  
CALIFORNIA



CALIFORNIA  
MENTAL HEALTH  
DIRECTORS  
ASSOCIATION

April 28, 2011

The Honorable William Monning  
Chair, Assembly Health Committee  
State Capitol, Room 6005  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 1296 (Bonilla) – Health Care Eligibility, Enrollment, and Retention Act**  
**As Amended on 4/25/11 – SUPPORT IN CONCEPT**  
**Set for hearing May 3, 2011 – Assembly Health Committee**

Dear Assembly Member Monning:

The California State Association of Counties, Urban Counties Caucus, County Welfare Directors Association, County Health Executives Association of California and California Mental Health Directors Association have taken a support in concept position on AB 1296, by Assembly Member Susan Bonilla.

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) requires a new approach for determining eligibility for and enrolling consumers in health care coverage, including Medi-Cal, Healthy Families, the Exchange and county health programs. Assembly Bill 1296 would ensure that California's health care enrollment system is well-positioned to implement the ACA requirements, while also ensuring that the system works for individuals and families across the spectrum of income and needs. Today, counties are the entities that provide Medi-Cal eligibility and enrollment determinations.

Counties support numerous provisions of the bill, including:

- Creation of a “no wrong door” system.
- Streamlining eligibility rules among Medi-cal, premium subsidies in the Exchange, Healthy Families and county programs.
- Coordinating and simplifying citizenship and identity verification at application and renewal.
- Requiring the creation of a single statewide application – paper and electronic – for all systems and entities accepting and processing applications and eligibly.
- Maximizing coordination and enrollment in other public programs, such as CalWORKs and CalFresh.

AB 1296 is an excellent start to creating a comprehensive enrollment system in California. Counties know there will be numerous technical issues to work

through as California contemplates an integrated approach to enroll health care consumers. For example, the federal government will be issuing guidance that will impact how to incorporate county-based programs in the enrollment provisions. Until such guidance is issued, it will be difficult for California to fully design its enrollment system. Additionally, AB 1296 lacks specificity about how the enrollment system will interact with other public benefit programs. Counties want to assist in further developing these provisions of the measure.

Counties are supportive of the intent of AB 1296, and look forward to working with you to achieve the goal of developing the Health Care Eligibility, Enrollment, and Retention Act. It is imperative that counties be included in the planning and implementation process for transforming the enrollment system in California. Please do not hesitate to contact our organizations if you have additional questions about our support in concept position. Thank you.

Sincerely,



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cc: The Honorable Susan Bonilla, Member, California State Assembly  
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