



COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

385 North Arrowhead Avenue
San Bernardino, CA 92415-0110
(909) 387-4821
FAX: (909) 387-9090

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Brad Mitzelfelt ..... First District
Paul Biane ..... Second District
Neil Derry..... Third District
Gary C. Ovitt, Chair ..... Fourth District
Josie Gonzales, Vice-Chair ..... Fifth District

GREGORY C. DEVEREAUX
County Administrative Officer

LANCE M. LARSON
Director of Legislative Affairs

February 25, 2010

The Honorable Members
California State Assembly Health Committee
State Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 2153 (Lieu) - As Introduced February 18, 2010 - OPPOSE

Dear Committee Members,

The San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors has reviewed AB 2153, and respectfully requests your "no" vote when the legislation comes before your committee.

As you know, AB 2153 would require every licensed general acute care hospital with an emergency department to determine the range of crowding scores that constitute each category of the crowding scale for its emergency department. The bill would require every licensed general acute care hospital with an emergency department to calculate and record a crowding score every four hours to assess the crowding condition of its emergency department. The bill would require, by January 1, 2012, every licensed general acute care hospital with an emergency department to develop and implement a full-capacity protocol for each of the categories of the crowding scale.

As the California State Department of Public Health (DPH) noted during the debate on a similar bill, there is no evidence that using a scoring tool is effective and would work for California. DPH further states that a scoring tool will not necessarily help or prevent emergency room overcrowding. DPH notes that overcrowding assessments in emergency rooms are already conducted and that there is insufficient evidence to show that using a scoring tool would have any impact on improving emergency room overcrowding.

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee's analysis of an identical bill last year, the committee noted the substantial costs to county-operated medical centers face to comply with a mandated overcrowding tool. Arrowhead Regional Medical Center, San Bernardino County's public hospital, already employs an effective system to avoid emergency department overcrowding, and feels the mandated tool in AB 2153 would impose an unnecessary and unfunded state mandate.

For these reasons, the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors opposes AB 2153. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Lance Larson, the County's Director of Legislative Affairs at (909) 387-4821. The Board thanks you for your attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

[Handwritten signature of Gary C. Ovitt]

GARY C. OVITT
Chairman, Board of Supervisors