



COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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February 25, 2011

The Honorable Kevin de Leon California State Senate State Capitol Building Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 366 (de Leon) - As Introduced February 15, 2011 – OPPOSE

Dear Senator de Leon:

The County of San Bernardino has reviewed SB 336, and regrets that it must oppose the bill. This legislation 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.

Additionally, the bill would require by January 1, 2013, 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 an identical bill last session, 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 last session’s bill, the committee noted the substantial costs 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 SB 336 would impose an unnecessary and unfunded state mandate.

For these reasons, the County of San Bernardino opposes SB 366. 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 County thanks you for your attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

JOSIE GONZALES Chair, Board of Supervisors

The mission of the government of the County of San Bernardino is to satisfy its customers by providing service that promotes the health, safety, well being, and quality of life of its residents according to the County Charter, general laws, and the will of the people it serves.