



End of Session Legislative Update

October 2009

After a week of wrangling between the Governor and key members of the legislature over a comprehensive water package, sufficient progress was made this weekend to warrant gubernatorial action on the 700 plus bills languishing on the Governor's desk. While we are disappointed that our bill has been vetoed, we can view this as a vast improvement over the fate of last year's version which died in appropriations. Advancing the bill to the Governor's desk is an achievement that we plan to build upon in the coming session..

Alternatively, several bills that we supported this session were signed into law:

AB 1079 (V.M. Pérez): Requires the California Environmental Protection Agency, the State Water Resources Control Board, and the Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board to take all necessary action to provide support to the City of Calexico and County of Imperial to implement the New River Public Health Improvement Project to clean up the New River, the most polluted river of its size in America.

AB 1422 (Bass): Provides funding for Healthy Families by imposing a gross premium taxes Medi-Cal managed care plans and by raising the premiums on families whose children are covered under this program.

Supported Measures Signed by the Governor:

ACR 29 (Jones): This measure requests that the California Health and Human Services Agency provide leadership to ensure that, within existing resources and programs, departments within the agency implement programs, activities, and strategies that place a priority focus on preventing, reducing, and eliminating health disparities among racial and ethnic population subgroups.

ACR 75 (V.M. Pérez): This measure recognizes the pioneering work of promotores and community health workers in delivering vital and cost-effective health care services in communities throughout California and declares October 2009 as California Promotores Month.

AJR 17 (Swanson): This measure urges the President of the United States, the United States Congress, and the United States Secretary of Health and Human Services to take specified actions in regards to health disparities, particularly as they relate to HIV/AIDS funding.

Other Bills of Note:

AB 108 (Hayashi): Establishes a 24 month timeline for insurers to complete their underwriting process, after which the insurance coverage cannot be rescinded for any reason.

AB 119 (Jones): This bill eliminates the exception that allows differentials based on specified statistical and actuarial data to be used in lieu of those based on sex and which result in higher premiums being paid by women.

AB 171 (Jones): Dentists are prohibited from extending or offering credit to patients while they are under the influence of painkillers. Establishes requirements governing the arrangement of open-end credit for dental services and prohibits a dentist from charging a third-party line of credit for services that have not been rendered, or costs that have not been incurred, unless the patient provides written consent. The written notice must be provided in the language spoken by the patient

AB 1383 (Jones): Imposes a quality assurance fee, on hospitals, except for designated public hospitals, for a period that would end on December 31, 2010 and requires revenue from the fee to be used only to make specified increased Medi-Cal payments to hospitals, administrative costs of DHCS and to pay for health care coverage for children.

AB 1571 (Committee on Veterans Affairs): Requires the local stakeholder planning group to include veterans and representatives from veterans organizations and requires the department, as part of its review of the county plan, to inform the Department of Veterans Affairs of county plans that have outreach programs specifically for veterans or that provide services specifically for veterans.

SB 606 (Ducheneay): Makes osteopathic physicians and surgeons eligible for the loan repayment program and would require the Osteopathic Medical Board of California to assess an additional \$25 licensure fee for that purpose.