



SAN
FRANCISCO
CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE

July 5, 2017

The Honorable Susan Eggman
The Honorable David Chiu
The Honorable Marc Levine
California State Assembly
State Capitol
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0013

RE: SB 349 (LARA) CHRONIC DIALYSIS CLINICS: OPPOSE

Dear Assemblymembers Eggman, Chiu and Levine,

The San Francisco Chamber of Commerce must respectfully oppose SB 349 (LARA) because it would substantially increase healthcare costs without offering significant improvements in health outcomes or patient access. In fact, it will reduce patient access to needed treatment for patients of dialysis by requiring more staff and restricting dialysis clinics from providing treatment to more patients each day.

The San Francisco Chamber of Commerce represents our 2,500-member business organizations and their 200,000 employees throughout the San Francisco Bay Area. There are currently 10 chronic care dialysis clinics in San Francisco. The dialysis clinic staffing ratios and longer transition times between treatments mandated by SB 349 would ultimately result in fewer appointments, more missed appointments and a dangerous backlog of needed care. SB 349 will reduce the availability of treatment slots thereby increasing hospitalizations and emergency room visits and create less flexibility for working patients as evening and nighttime treatments would be jeopardized.

According to a statewide survey conducted by the California Dialysis Council (CDC) 15,379 patients could lose their current access to dialysis care, 121 dialysis clinics are at risk of closing statewide, and nearly two-thirds (63%) of California's evening and overnight treatment shifts are at risk of elimination. SB 349 increases required inspections by nearly 400%. There are currently 376 individual regulations for dialysis clinics. SB 349 adds new regulations that will negatively impact delivery of dialysis to those who are already dealing with the difficulties of a chronic disease.

California's dialysis clinics currently rank among the highest in the nation for quality and patient satisfaction, per the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). There is no study that indicates that SB 349 will improve patient outcomes. In fact, the Senate Appropriations Committee analysis of SB 349 confirmed that the mandates in the bill will likely "substantially increase the costs of providing dialysis care" in California.

For these reasons, the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce urges a "NO" vote on SB 349.

Sincerely,

Jim Lazarus
Senior Vice President of Public Policy