

How to Write an Effective Lobbying Letter

Address lobbying correspondence to the author of the bill with copies to members of the committee hearing the bill and to your local legislator.

Indicate immediately which bill you're addressing by its bill number (AB__ if it originates in the Assembly, SB__ if it originates in the Senate), by an identifying phrase and whether you support or oppose the bill. This will help legislative staff in routing your letter.

Be sure to make clear for whom you're speaking.

Be sure to be clear about what action you want the legislator to take.

If you have a personal relationship with the legislator, take a moment to write a quick, handwritten note to draw his or her attention to your letter.

Be sure to send a copy of your letter to the Governor. Also please send a copy to the CalChamber staff members assigned to the bill so they can include information on your support or opposition in their committee testimony.

Use your business letterhead when communicating your position on a bill.



June 20, 2017

The Honorable Ricardo Lara
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 5050
Sacramento, CA 95814

"UPDATED"

**SUBJECT: SB 349 (LARA) CHRONIC DIALYSIS CLINICS: STAFFING REQUIREMENTS
OPPOSE – AS AMENDED MAY 26, 2017
HEARING SCHEDULED – JUNE 27, 2017**

Dear Senator Lara:

We must respectfully oppose your **SB 349 (Lara)** because it would substantially increase health care costs, without offering significant improvements in health outcomes or patient access. In fact, on the contrary, it will reduce patient access to needed treatment for patients on dialysis by requiring more staff and restricting dialysis clinics from providing treatment to more patients each day.

CREATES STRICTER REGULATIONS THAN ANY OTHER STATE

SB 349 would set staffing ratios for California dialysis facilities at a ratio stricter than any in the entire country. The Registered Nurse ratio would be reduced 1 RN for every 8 patients under this bill as compared to 1:16 currently. Patient Care Technician ratios would be 1 technician for every 3 patients as compared to 1:8 currently. Additionally, the bill mandates a 45-minute transition time between dialysis patients. No other state mandates a specific transition time. Doubling the number of staff at dialysis clinics significantly increases health care costs and since 90% of dialysis patients are covered under Medicare or Medi-Cal, which is already significantly underfunded, the likely result of increasing dialysis costs will be the loss of some dialysis clinics, the jobs that those clinics provide and most importantly, the lifesaving treatment that patients receive at those clinics. Additionally, the 45-minute transition time between patients will likely result in the loss of an entire shift of patients treated. Currently, dialysis facilities usually have 4 treatment shifts in one day because the facility must shut down to allow for regeneration of the water treatment system which is used for treatment for the following day. By adding a transition time, those patients who are treated during the 4th shift will be displaced. More facilities will be needed to do the job that current facilities can handle.

SUBSTANTIAL INCREASED COSTS WITHOUT CLEAR EVIDENCE OF CLINICAL BENEFIT TO PATIENTS

The Senate Appropriations Committee analysis of **SB 349** confirms that the mandates in the bill will likely "substantially increase the costs of providing dialysis care" in California. The analysis cites to a study performed by researchers at UC Davis which found that "expanding state-specific regulation of chronic dialysis clinics beyond federal requirements would be of uncertain marginal value." The Senate Appropriations analysis concludes that "it is not clear what potential clinical benefit to patients would be from the increase in staff to patient ratios in the bill." **SB 349** will significantly increase health care costs, reduce the availability of dialysis clinics and patient shifts at clinics and result in job losses with no clear evidence of a clinical benefit to patients.

For these reasons, we **OPPOSE** your **SB 349** (Lara).

Sincerely

Karen Sarkissian
Policy Advocate

cc: Donna Campbell, Office of the Governor
District Office, The Honorable Ricardo Lara

1215 K Street, Suite 1400
Sacramento, CA 95814
916 444 6670
www.calchamber.com

Keep your letter short. A succinct, one-page letter will have more impact than a longer one. If you have documentation of the bill's impact on your business, enclose it, but keep the letter short.

In many committees, staff members file correspondence according to the date of the bill's next hearing. If you know the date, be sure to include it. Including such information will help ensure your letter is read in time to have an impact.

Get to the point of your letter quickly: your support for or opposition to the bill.

Provide concrete, credible information on the impact of proposed legislation on your business.

Elected officials prefer to hear from persons in authority rather than just from staff members. A letter will have more impact if the business owner or person in a management position signs the letter.

Use boldface type, underlining or italics sparingly to emphasize important points.

Act promptly. Too many good lobbying letters arrive after a vote already has been taken.

Later...If the legislator does what you ask, be sure to send a thank you letter.

CalChamberVotes.com
Easy-to-edit sample letters and links to more information about bills and legislators are available on the CalChamber grassroots website, www.calchambervotes.com.

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