



July 14, 2025

RE: AB-1312 - SUPPORT

California State Senate Health Committee
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Sacramento, CA 95814

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(HEAL) Group
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National ADAP Working Group (NAWG)

Dear Honorable Chair Minjivar, Vice Chair Martinez Valladares, Members of the California State Senate Health Committee, and your respected staff,

We write to express SUPPORT for AB-1312, which strengthens patient protections by streamlining access to hospital charity care and discount payment programs in California including people living with HIV/AIDS and Viral Hepatitis.

ABOUT CANN: The Community Access National Network (CANN) is a 501(c)(3) national nonprofit organization (formerly incorporated under the "Ryan White CARE Act Title II Community AIDS National Network") focusing on public policy issues relating to HIV/AIDS and viral hepatitis. CANN's mission is to define, promote, and improve access to healthcare services and supports for people living with HIV/AIDS and/or viral hepatitis through advocacy, education, and networking. CANN's coalition-based work is done on behalf of the patient advocacy groups, pharmaceutical partners, and government agencies.

Patients, often the uninsured or underinsured, individuals who experience poverty, homelessness, immigration status challenges, or other marginalized populations are often at a disadvantage when it comes to understanding the complex medical system and [often find themselves with an added burden of medical debt and at the hands of predatory medical collection practices.](#)

Under current law, hospitals are required to inform patients about their charity care and discount payment policies and to report relevant procedures to the Department of Health Care Access and Information. However, many eligible patients still face unnecessary barriers to accessing these financial assistance programs—often due to confusing application processes or administrative delays. **AB 1312** addresses this by requiring hospitals to presumptively determine eligibility for charity care and discount payment programs if a patient meets specific criteria, such as enrollment in CalFresh or CalWORKs.

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Crucially, the bill prohibits hospitals from delaying eligibility screening or financial assistance while requiring patients to apply for Medi-Cal or Medicare—ensuring that patients are not saddled with unaffordable charges or unjustly pushed into collections. By requiring charges to be adjusted *before* billing statements are issued and by mandating clear written notices to patients, **AB 1312** promotes transparency, fairness, and dignity in the hospital billing process.

This bill is a vital step toward reducing medical debt and financial hardship for low-income and uninsured Californians. It ensures that our state’s existing charity care framework functions as intended—offering real relief to patients in need, not just paperwork and red tape.

We respectfully urge the Legislature to pass **AB 1312** and thank you for your leadership in supporting equitable and compassionate healthcare for all Californians.

We invite you to meet with us to discuss this matter further, we can be reached by email or phone at kalvin@tiican.org , 913-954-8816, or jen@tiicann.org, 313-333-8534.

Respectfully submitted,



Kalvin Pugh
Director of State Policy, 340B
Community Access National Network (CANN)

On behalf of
Jen Laws
President & CEO
Community Access National Network