



MAYOR ROBERT GARCIA
CITY OF LONG BEACH

June 4, 2020

The Honorable Buffy Wicks
California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 5160
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Rob Bonta
California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 2148
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Patrick O'Donnell
California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 4001
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for AB 2037 (Wicks): Health Facilities: Obligations Before Changes in Service

Dear Assemblymembers Wicks, Bonta, and O'Donnell:

On behalf of the City of Long Beach (City), I write in support of Assembly Bill 2037 (Wicks). This legislation amends the Health and Safety Code to require emergency medical health facilities to provide 180-day public notice in advance of closing emergency medical services and prohibits reductions during any health-related state of emergency. The City has recently endured a hospital closure and understands the importance of AB 2037.

In July 2018, Long Beach Community Hospital (Community Hospital) closed due to the need for seismic retrofitting. Long Beach residents were vocal about the need to reopen the hospital. The City was attentive to the community and prioritized identifying a viable solution. On December 9, 2019, the City signed a long-term lease and operating agreement between the City and the Molina, Wu, Network, LLC healthcare group to pave the way for the reopening of Community Hospital. In addition to reopening the publicly-accessible emergency department that once received 27,000 visits per year, the agreement helps the City to address challenges associated with public safety and people experiencing homelessness. While increased notice cannot guarantee a seamless transition for the emergency medical services facility, it can help address community concerns. With more time to strategize, the City could have worked to provide interim health services during remodeling.

The City supports legislation that enhances public health services. Particularly during times of uncertainty, it is imperative that Long Beach residents have access to emergency medical services. Extending public notice for facilities with emergency medical services prior to reducing services and prohibiting reductions in service capacity amidst a health crisis, as AB 2037 (Wicks) proposes, would improve strategies to maintain access to health services for residents of Long Beach.

Given these reasons, the City of Long Beach supports AB 2037 (Wicks).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Garcia".

Mayor Robert Garcia
City of Long Beach

cc: The Honorable Speaker Anthony Rendon, State Assembly
The Honorable Lena Gonzalez, State Senate, 33rd District
The Honorable Tom Umberg, State Senate, 34th District
The Honorable Steven Bradford, State Senate, 35th District
The Honorable Mike Gipson, State Assembly, 64th District