



MAYOR ROBERT GARCIA
CITY OF LONG BEACH

August 30, 2022

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for AB 240 (Rodriguez)—Local Health Department Workforce Assessment

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the City of Long Beach, I write to request your signature on AB 240. This bill would direct the California Department of Public Health to evaluate workforce needs and make recommendations to adequately fund local public health. As one of only three municipal health departments in California, the City appreciates that SB 240 recognizes the need to continuously improve local public health operations.

When the statewide and local COVID-19 pandemic emergency orders were declared over two years ago, the City's Department of Health and Human Services (Health Department) had only five surveillance and five public health emergency management staff for a City of nearly half-million people. To meet the demands of the pandemic, the Health Department mobilized its 300 employees, reassigned over 100 staff from other City departments, and coordinated assistance from the United States National Guard for comprehensive response efforts. The Health Department has led the establishment of a COVID-19 hotline and basic needs line, and proactively planned and conducted its own COVID-19 testing and vaccination sites.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shed light on the tremendous capacity of local health departments, and AB 240 will help sustain the local public health workforce and services well beyond the pandemic. The City supports legislation to improve and innovate public health functions through ongoing evaluation, research, and quality improvement. AB 240 would use proven practices to prepare local public health departments for future workforce and resource needs. Given these reasons, the City urges your signature on AB 240.

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
The Honorable Patrick O'Donnell, State Assembly, 70th District