



MAYOR REX RICHARDSON

September 13, 2023

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

RE: Support for AB 1645 (Zbur)—Enhanced Consumer Protections for Preventive Care

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the City of Long Beach, I urge your signature on AB 1645. This bill would remove barriers to accessing preventative care services related to Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) and screenings. The City supports legislation and funding to promote, screen, and control communicable diseases, Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), and emerging vector borne diseases in California.

According to the [2020 STI Surveillance Annual Report](#), Black/African Americans in Long Beach have the highest rates of STIs, with the majority of STI diagnoses concentrated among people aged 15-34 years. Since 2016, gonorrhea rates in Long Beach increased by 13 percent and total early syphilis increased by 27 percent, while chlamydia rates decreased by 33 percent and the number of new HIV diagnoses declined by 22 percent. While the number of new diagnoses of HIV has declined, there are still areas of concern and inequities. Of those newly diagnosed with HIV, nearly 20 percent were diagnosed with HIV and AIDS simultaneously, the highest proportion since 2013. Black/African American women accounted for 34 percent of females living with HIV in the City, while only representing about 13 percent of the total female population in Long Beach, and Black/African Americans die at disproportionately higher rates of HIV compared to their counterparts. To help address these disparities, AB 1645 would provide greater access to preventative health care and improve access to STI screenings for marginalized populations.

The proposed legislation will strengthen the City's capacity to control STD and HIV rates in Long Beach and ensure that every Californian can access not only preventative care but also services and office visits that are necessary for delivering that care without out-of-pocket costs. For these reasons, the City requests your signature on AB 1645.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rex Richardson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mayor Rex Richardson
City of Long Beach

cc: The Honorable Lena Gonzalez, State Senate, 33rd District
The Honorable Mike Gipson, State Assembly, 65th District
The Honorable Josh Lowenthal, State Assembly, 69th District