

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



Week of February 9, 2026

State Issues

Single Payer

This week, a bill authorizing a single payer health care system for California was introduced. AB 1900 is authored primarily by Assembly Member Kalra and has 7 Assembly coauthors and 12 Senate coauthors. It notes that it is the intent of the Legislature to “establish the California Guaranteed Health Care for All program to provide universal health care coverage for every California, funded by broad-based revenue.” The bill is supported by the California Nurses Association.

While we are still reviewing the 82-page bill, it appears to be very similar to Kalra’s attempts in the past. The measure defines what services are included in Cal Care, which are all medical services, long term care, behavioral health services, etc., and would prohibit a California health care provider from providing any of the covered services outside of the Cal Care umbrella.

The bill would require the creation of the Cal Care Board, which will oversee the state’s transition into a single payer health care system. The bill does define who will be in charge – the Board is made up of four gubernatorial appointees, two from the Assembly and two from the Senate and one determined by the Commission itself. Appointments must include a physician, nurse, either a behavioral health or a public health professional, an “institutional” provider background, a union representative, two from nonprofit patient advocacy organizations, and one member named by the Commission itself.

The bill does not include any way to pay for the health care system but does note that it would seek to obtain waivers from the federal government to secure all health care dollars – from Medi-Cal, Medicare, and any other federal health care programs funds, and subsidies to be deposited in the Cal Care Fund. The measure specifically states it is the intent of the bill to replace all of those federal health care programs with Cal Care. The bill does allow the Cal Care Board to provide funds to individuals “previously employed” in the health insurance field who may be affected and suffer economic dislocation as a result of Cal Care.

In years past, the Speaker has refused to set the bill for a policy committee hearing, unless and until a proper funding mechanism is identified. Given the enormous cost of such a program (up to \$500 billion annually), and the status of the state budget and reduction in federal health care funding, the Speaker will definitely be able to point to cost concerns if he does park the bill in Rules.

(more)

Health Trailer Bills Released	<p>The Department of Health Care Services is releasing some of the budget trailer bill proposals the Administration will be asking the Legislature to pass this year. You can track these and any new trailer bills over the course of the session at the Department of Finance's website, and also can be found on the DHCS website -- https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/Budget/Pages/Budget-Information.aspx. Some the measures have fact sheets already and are also linked below. Others should be released soon. These trailer bills will be heard in the Senate and Assembly Budget Subcommittee hearings that should be scheduled in the next few weeks. "</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Behavioral Health Services Act Revenue and Stability — Behavioral Health Services Act Revenue Stability Workgroup Report, May 2025 ▪ HR 1 - Conforming State to Federal Law ▪ Skilled Nursing Facility Financing Reauthorization — Fact Sheet ▪ Aligning Evidence Based Standards for Substance Use Disorder Treatment — Fact Sheet ▪ Breast Cancer Control Fund and Breast Cancer Research Account Technical Cleanup — Fact Sheet ▪ Community-Based Mobile Crisis Response Services NEW
OHCA Patient Forum Set	<p>The Office of Health Care Affordability has announced it will host a Patient and Consumer Forum on Health Care Affordability at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 10, 2026. The purpose of this forum is to engage directly with patients, consumers, and advocates on OHCA's work to promote more affordable health care while maintaining or improving access, equity, and quality.</p> <p>Not much information is available at this time, and it appears this is the only meeting that has been set to listen to patients. Patient groups have been expressing concerns that the OHCA Board is ignoring the impact of their actions on patients' access to health care, and we should expect to hear some of those concerns raised in this forum.</p> <p>If you recall, Assembly Member Ransom had a bill last year (AB 278) that would have required the board to establish a Patient Advocate Advisory Standing Committee that would meet at least 4 times annually and would have required specified data from the meetings to the board as part of its annual report. Unfortunately, this bill was stopped before it got any hearing, which would have secured some accountability for the Board in their engagement with patients on their work. Meeting materials and additional information will be posted on the meeting homepage, which can be accessed here.</p>

For more information, please contact Lori Dangberg at 1215 K Street, Suite 2040 ■ Sacramento, CA 95814
916.591.3991 or e-mail: ldangberg@thealliance.net