

# AB 890 Talking Points

## If you have 60 seconds:

The COVID crisis has underscored just how important it is for California to take action this year to pass AB 890 and to begin to address our systemic health care provider shortage. Removing unnecessary barriers to health care will improve health disparities in our state and help us achieve our health coverage expansion goals.

AB 890 would help close California's provider gap by removing restrictions in current law that prevent nurse practitioners from practicing without a physician present or on-call. Independent experts have identified removing this restriction as an important strategy to ensure that California patients have access to care. AB 890 enables NPs to provide the same high-quality care they do today while caring more directly for patients. The bill passed the Assembly with nearly unanimous, bi-partisan support and is supported by a broad coalition.

We shouldn't wait for another pandemic to address the shortcomings in our health system. The Legislature should pass AB 890 to make our health system stronger today and in times of crisis.

## If you have more time:

- **The COVID crisis has underscored just how important it is for California to take action this year to pass AB 890 and to begin to address our systemic health provider shortage.**
  - The shortage of health providers became abundantly clear during the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis in California. The Governor took action to temporarily relieve some practice barriers for NPs, but, in order to fully utilize the extent of their education and training every day and in times of crisis, NPs need permanent full practice authority.
- **California's health care provider gap reduces access to care for millions and threatens our state's health coverage expansion goals.**
  - Even before the COVID crisis, seven million Californians were already experiencing shortfalls of primary care, dental care, or behavioral health care providers. California's provider gap is a critical issue that needs to be addressed.
  - These shortages are impacting Latinos, African Americans, and Native Americans the most, in some of our fastest growing and most vulnerable regions such as Los Angeles, the Inland Empire, San Joaquin Valley, and in most rural areas.
- **AB 890 will help close this gap by removing restrictions in current law that prevent nurse practitioners from practicing without a physician present or on-call.**
  - Currently in California, NPs are unable to practice without a physician present or on-call. Yet, independent experts (California Future Health Workforce Commission) have identified removing this restriction as an important strategy to ensure that California patients have access to care.

- AB 890 would remove the supervisory requirement in existing law and allow nurse practitioners to practice to the full extent of their education and training to provide the same high-quality care that they do today. It does not expand their scope of practice.
- **NPs are critical as we continue to deal with the COVID-crisis and its fallout, and as we address health disparities for underserved and rural communities over the long term.**
  - Once shelter in place orders are loosened, there will likely be an increase in people seeking primary care services who weren't able to get appointments when the state was shut down. NPs are more likely to practice primary care than physicians, particularly in rural and underserved areas.
  - Additionally, COVID-19 has placed a strain on California's budget, putting health funding for our most underserved populations at risk. NPs are more likely to see and take on new Medi-Cal and uninsured patients, which will be critical to ensuring that all Californians have access to high-quality health care post-COVID-19.
- **AB 890 passed out of the Assembly with an overwhelming majority and bipartisan support. It is supported by a broad coalition of health providers, businesses and labor.**
- **Without AB 890, the provider gap will continue to increase.**
  - There are simply not enough primary care MDs completing residency programs to replace retiring physicians. Because NPs cannot practice without physician oversight, fewer physicians leaves fewer NPs to treat patients.
- **We shouldn't wait for another pandemic to address the shortcomings in our health system. The Legislature should pass AB 890 to make our health system stronger today and in times of crisis.**