

AB 2576: Declared Emergency Talking Points

March 28, 2018



COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER BACKGROUND

- Today, more than 1,300 community health centers serve the state of California, and provide comprehensive, high quality care to 6.5 million people – or 1 in 6 Californians.
- Community health centers provide the full spectrum of care, from primary care to dental to behavioral health care and a variety of enabling and wraparound services.
- In many rural communities throughout California, community health centers serve as the only source of medical and wellness care for middle- and working-class families in the region.

2017 FIRE EXPERIENCE AND IMPACT

- The 2017 fire season was one of the worst in history and took a devastating toll on impacted communities, including community health centers.
- Over a three month period in late 2017, nearly two dozen health center corporations, serving a 10 county region, were impacted by fires. **[Insert your health center's fire season story.]**
- In addition to fire fighters, police officers, and government officials who have worked together to coordinate relief efforts for fire-affected areas, community health centers have been on the front line, treating non-emergency patients, providing resources to victims of the fires, and serving communities as they rebuild.
- In the immediate aftermath, health centers extended hours to treat their established patients as well as fire evacuees. Even those health centers directly impacted by the fires continued to go above and beyond to assist their community. **[Insert how your health center aims to serve your community when disaster strikes.]**
- The California Departments of Health Care Services and California Department of Public Health provided invaluable flexibility in getting health centers the assurances they need to resume and continue seeing patients throughout the affected area.

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- We must learn from the lessons of 2017 to make sure California's 1,300 community health centers are better prepared to continue delivering care during and after a declared emergency.
- The coordination between local health centers and the California Departments of Health Care Services and California Department of Public Health is critical during disasters.
- AB 2576 would guarantee that future leaders know exactly what to do to mitigate the unique care challenges a disaster may present.
- AB 2576 is critical to ensure that communities continue to receive timely access to care when disaster strikes, by allowing providers to have telephonic appointments, provide care for patients in-home and at shelters, as well as allow health centers to create temporary pharmacy sites.