



September 8, 2020

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
Governor, State of California  
State Capitol Building, 1st Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 890 (Wood) Nurse Practitioners – SUPPORT**

Dear Governor Newsom:

Health Center Partners strongly urges you to sign AB 890 (Wood), a bill that had overwhelming bipartisan support throughout the legislative process. AB 890 would give full practice authority to nurse practitioners (NPs), helping to close a growing and serious health care provider gap in California.

California's Community Health Centers (CHCs) provide health care services to California's most vulnerable populations, with 76 percent of CHC patients at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) and nearly 40% identifying a language other than English as their primary language. It is the mission of California's CHCs to treat everyone who walks through the door, regardless of health insurance coverage status or ability to pay.

As California's health care delivery system is pushed to its limits by COVID-19, we should be doing everything we can to ensure that every Californian has access to a high-quality health care provider. Yet, California is facing a severe provider shortage, especially in primary care. According to the [California Future Health Workforce Commission \(CFHWC\)](#), in just 10 years, California will face a shortage of 4,100 primary care clinicians and will have only two-thirds of the psychiatrists it needs.

More than 11 million people in California live in an area that has a shortage of primary care providers. These shortages disproportionately impact rural and historically underserved communities and are particularly severe in some of California's largest and fastest-growing regions, like the Inland Empire, Los Angeles, and the San Joaquin Valley.

California's highly trained population of NPs are poised to help fill this widening provider gap. Unfortunately, under current law, NPs are unable to practice without a physician present or on call. This requirement is exacerbating the provider gap and drastically reducing access to care for millions by preventing NPs from being able to care directly for patients. California is the only western state with this outdated requirement.

If AB 890 becomes law, NPs would provide the same care that they do today, simply without the supervisory requirement. Allowing NPs to utilize the full extent of their education and training by



granting full practice authority would increase access to high-quality care in high-need areas, since over 58% of California NPs practice primary care. Research shows that patients managed by an NP have lower rates of hospitalization and ER visits than those managed by physicians.

Addressing this provider gap is critical to achieving California's goals of increased access to health care for vulnerable and underserved populations. A 2017 survey found that nearly 70% of NPs were accepting new Medi-Cal patients and 54% of NPs were accepting uninsured patients, when compared to 55% of primary care physicians accepting Medi-Cal patients and 32% of primary care physicians accepting uninsured patients.

COVID-19 has amplified the urgency to close the provider gap and fully utilizing NPs is the right step toward providing health care for all Californians. This bill will significantly expand access to health care services and help relieve both the existing and projected physician shortages.

**For these reasons, Health Center Partners urges you to support and sign AB 890 into law.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Henry N. Tuttle".

Henry N. Tuttle  
President and CEO  
[htuttle@hcpsocal.org](mailto:htuttle@hcpsocal.org)

[Health Center Partners of Southern California](#), a family of companies, includes a 16-membership organization of federally qualified health centers, Indian Health Services Organizations, both urban and sovereign, and Planned Parenthood of the Pacific Southwest, collectively serving 850,000+ patients each year, for 3.6 million patient visits each year, at 160 practice sites across San Diego, Riverside, Imperial counties, with the seventh largest provider group in the region. Read our award winning [2018/2019 Impact Report](#).