

May 10, 2022

The Honorable Chris R. Holden, Chair
Assembly Health Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8220
Sacramento, CA 95814
Delivered by email to: aprops.committee@assembly.ca.gov

Re: SUPPORT AB 1930 (Arambula)-- Medi-Cal Comprehensive Perinatal Services Program

Dear Assemblymember Holden:

Our organizations write in strong support of AB 1930, which will improve access to critical social and other services for low-income mothers and infants during the new 12-month postpartum eligibility period for Medi-Cal that went into effect April 1, 2022. The bill requires the Department of Health Care Services to: (1) continue Medi-Cal's Comprehensive Perinatal Services Program (CPSP) benefit beyond the initial 60-day postpartum period; and (2) adopt the federal option to allow Comprehensive Perinatal Health Workers (CPHWs) to provide supportive services in the home or community, not just at a clinic or doctor's office.

CPSP is the clearest way to bill for breastfeeding support, a need that continues in many cases well beyond the initial 60-day postpartum period. Extensive research shows that breastfeeding significantly protects the health of both mothers and infants, which also reduces health care costs.¹ According to the California Breastfeeding Coalition, CPSP beyond the 60-day minimum is a much needed avenue for critical lactation support services that many families cannot otherwise access today through Medi-Cal.

Social determinants of health (SDOH), such as housing quality, food insecurity, air quality, and interpersonal violence, play an important role in a person's health. According to the Committee on Health Care for Underserved Women for the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), SDOH can impact preterm birth, cancers, and maternal mortality, among other conditions.² CPSP's case coordination benefit and CPHW services make support for such needs feasible.

AB 1930 would provide CPSP's supports at a time of great need-- the 12-month postpartum period. Over half of maternal deaths occur between the first day up through the 365th day postpartum.³ A recent study found that suicide attempts during pregnancy and after childbirth are increasing, nearly tripling over the past decade.⁴ Suicide is among the leading causes of deaths among new mothers. Education about mental health, making an appointment, and lining up transportation and childcare are all key supports for accessing mental health care. Without CSPP's case coordination benefit and CPHW education and connecting, "warm handoff" services, mothers are far less likely to get access to

¹ <https://letsgethealthy.ca.gov/increasing-breastfeeding-duration/#:~:text=Breast%20milk%20provides%20infant's%20protection,and%20asthma%20later%20in%20life>

² <https://www.healthify.us/healthify-insights/the-social-drivers-of-maternal-health>.

³ DHCS: Approved CHIP SPA # 21-032 (HSI 12-mo. postpartum eligibility), pp. 14-15:

<https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/formsandpubs/laws/Documents/CHIP-SPA-21-0032-Approval.pdf> at p. 9.

⁴ Admon LK, Dalton VK, Kolenic GE, Ettner SL, et al. Trends in Suicidality 1 Year Before and After Birth Among Commercially Insured Childbearing Individuals in the United States, 2006-2017. *JAMA Psychiatry*. 2020:e203550.

the mental health care and other care they need.

AB 1930 would also contribute to addressing racial disparities. In California, Black mothers are now dying at a rate of almost six times the rate for white mothers, a rate much worse than the national average.⁵ While 6% of all California births are to Black families, 55% of Black deliveries were insured by Medi-Cal. Without the extended CPSP benefit, birth experiences and necessary follow-up for conditions uncovered during pregnancy are far less likely to receive proper attention. CPSP provides the necessary billing infrastructure for follow up regarding both medical as well as social needs and is already part of Medi-Cal's State Plan with federal matching funds. Recent federal guidance on implementing 12-month post-pregnancy coverage encourages states to provide the kinds of supportive services that CPSP does.⁶

We urge your aye vote for AB 1930 to provide families with crucial supports during a particularly important time, the first year after a baby is born.

Sincerely,

[LIST OF GROUPS SIGNING ON WILL BE ADDED HERE]

cc: Assembly Appropriations Committee, Members and Staff
Assemblymember Dr. Joaquin Arambula, Author

⁵ <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CFH/DMCAH/surveillance/CDPH%20Document%20Library/CA-PMSS/CA-PMSS-Surveillance-Report-2008-2016.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.medicaid.gov/federal-policy-guidance/downloads/sho21007.pdf>, pp. 9-10.