



COALITION TO PROTECT ACCESS TO CARE

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Protect Access to Healthcare Coalition Submits Voter Signatures to Qualify Initiative for the November Ballot

*Initiative will expand access to healthcare services and improve care for all
Californians*

Sacramento, CA - The Coalition to Protect Access to Care has submitted more than 800,000 signatures to county registrars throughout California to qualify the Protect Access to Healthcare Initiative for the November 2024 ballot.

The initiative leverages existing federal funding to expand access to care for patients across California. It will protect the historic investment made by a bipartisan group of state leaders to provide stability for patients and healthcare providers.

California's healthcare system is in crisis. In rural and urban communities alike, hospitals are closing, doctors offices are having to shut their doors, and community health centers and emergency departments are struggling to meet the needs of communities across our state. Without raising existing taxes, this measure – which has broad, bipartisan support – will ensure our healthcare system has the stable funding it needs to provide better healthcare for Californians.

“This critical measure will address the growing challenges facing healthcare clinics and hospitals in all corners of the state — from rural communities to our

largest cities,” **said State Senate Leader Mike McGuire (D- North Coast)**. “As hospitals scale back essential services like maternity care, and others shutter their doors entirely, this measure will inject a shot of stability in the arm of our healthcare systems, making it easier for millions of the most vulnerable Californians to access care and see a doctor. We know this initiative will reduce emergency room wait times across the state — without raising one dime of taxes on patients or consumers. This is a win for a healthier California.”

“California must follow through on its promise to patients, in particular those on Medi-Cal, to ensure their health coverage is meaningful,” **said Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas (D-Hollister)**. “This important measure protects Californians’ access to preventative, dental and reproductive care — when they need it — while sustaining our health workforce and reducing emergency visits.”

“Access to healthcare is something all Californians deserve,” **said Senate Pro Tem Emeritus Toni Atkins, D-San Diego**. “As hospitals are closing and emergency room wait times are growing, this measure provides much needed stability for our healthcare system and funds programs that our most vulnerable populations rely on. This is an important step to providing quality healthcare without any new taxes.”

“While other states are cutting or eliminating funding for reproductive healthcare, California is reaffirming its commitment to closing gaps in access so all Californians— particularly low-income individuals who rely on Medi-Cal—can access the care they need,” said **Jodi Hicks, President/CEO of Planned Parenthood Affiliates of California**.

“At a time when hospitals and the entire healthcare system is struggling to preserve access to vital healthcare services, this measure would be a monumental win for patients,” **said CHA President & CEO Carmela Coyle**. “This measure would deliver an ongoing, annual infusion of much-needed resources, especially for Medi-Cal patients.”

“Chronic underfunding of our safety-net healthcare system has led to a crisis in our communities,” **said Tanya W. Spirtos, President of the California Medical Association**. “With this initiative, we have the opportunity to fundamentally improve healthcare for all Californians, ensure access to essential services, keep

hospitals and doctors offices open and make prescription drugs more affordable.”

The measure also leverages federal funding to provide more funding to train the healthcare workers we need to meet our state’s workforce shortage throughout our healthcare system. “California’s healthcare workers are the backbone of our healthcare system,” **said Tia Orr, executive director of SEIU California.** “Providing money to train and hire more healthcare workers and increase healthcare workers’ wages will lead to better care for patients across California.”

“This measure will ensure we can protect the state’s investment in healthcare and ensure health quality and access to millions of Californians on Medi-Cal,” **said Francisco J. Silva, Esq., President and CEO of the California Primary Care Association.** “Community health centers serve one third of California’s Medi-Cal population, and one fifth of all Californians, placing us at the forefront in addressing the health needs of these patients, and it is imperative that the funding remain intact.”

“California’s emergency medical services have been under pressure for over a decade,” **said Jason Sorrick of Global Medical Response.** “This initiative will build sustainable 911 emergency ambulance systems by funding training, recruitment and improving retention of EMTs and paramedics serving our communities.”

“Medi-Cal currently provides medical and dental coverage to 15 million low-income Californians, making it the largest provider of medical and dental insurance in the state,” **said Carliza Marcos, DDS, president of the California Dental Association.** “ After decades of underfunding, this will finally provide some long-term, permanent funding solutions we need to provide better care to millions of Californians.”

“Sutter Health is proud to stand with such a formidable coalition fighting for expanded access to healthcare,” **said Warner Thomas, president and CEO of Sutter Health.** “This initiative will expand access to needed care and fund the health care workforce programs essential to training additional caregivers throughout California.”

“Increasing Medi-Cal provider rates supports the doctors who serve one-third of Californians who are among the most vulnerable,” said **John Baackes, CEO, L.A. Care Health Plan**. “Bringing healthcare stakeholders together will help to shore up our state’s healthcare system and help build healthy communities.”

The measure will increase reimbursement rates for Medi-Cal providers, some of which have not been increased in decades, and will expand California’s education and training to create a pipeline of healthcare providers including physicians, nurses, dentists, physician assistants, and medical assistants. This funding will help alleviate provider shortages in underserved areas of the state.

Specifically, the initiative will:

- Expand access to preventive healthcare for Medi-Cal patients, leading to fewer costly emergency room visits and shorter wait times for all Californians.
- Protect existing healthcare funds and require them to be spent to keep hospitals, clinics and doctors’ offices open, and expand access to healthcare.
- Help California to manufacture its own insulin and other prescription drugs for much lower prices than exist currently.

When qualified, the initiative will appear on the November 2024 ballot. For more information, visit [AccessToHealthcareCA.com](https://www.AccessToHealthcareCA.com)

About the Coalition to Protect Access to Care

The Coalition to Protect Access to Care is a group of doctors, hospitals, healthcare workers, community health centers, Planned Parenthood, dentists, health plans and emergency responders dedicated to increasing access to healthcare.

Ad paid for by Coalition to Protect Access to Healthcare, a coalition of doctors, non-profit community health centers, first responders, healthcare workers, hospitals, and community health plans

Ad Committee's Top Funders

Global Medical Response and its subsidiaries

California Medical Association

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Funding Details at www.fppc.ca.gov