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April 11, 2025

Assemblymember Chris Ward  
California State Capitol  
P.O. Box 942849  
Sacramento, CA 94249-0078

**Re: AB 322 (Ward) Health & Mental Health Services for Students – Support**

Dear Assemblymember Ward,

On behalf of the Health Officers Association of California (HOAC), which represents the physician health officers of California's sixty-one city and county jurisdictions, we write in support of AB 322. This bill will increase access to health care by school aged children and adolescents eligible for Medi-Cal.

Children from low income and minority populations are less likely to have a conventional source of medical care, and more likely to develop chronic disease, than affluent children. They are more often chronically stressed, tired, and hungry, and more likely to have impaired vision and hearing—obstacles to lifetime educational achievement and predictors of adult morbidity and premature mortality. More school-based medical services can improve health equity for California youth and safeguard their health and well-being for a healthy future.

HOAC supports this legislation, which charges the Department of Education to partner with the Department of Health Care Services to promote and facilitate the participation of schools in programs that provide health care services.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kat DeBurgh".

Kat DeBurgh, MPH  
Executive Director  
Health Officers Association of California