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April 14, 2025

The Honorable Buffy Wicks
Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8220
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: HOAC Cosponsors AB 309

Dear Chair Wicks,

The Health Officers Association of California (HOAC), which represents the physician health officers in California's sixty-one city and county jurisdictions, is proud to cosponsor AB 309, which seeks to make permanent the provisions allowing pharmacists to furnish sterile syringes to adults without a prescription. This measure is a critical component of California's comprehensive public health strategy to prevent the spread of HIV, hepatitis, and other diseases of public health concern.

AB 309 will not result in new state costs. The bill maintains current practice and infrastructure, simply removing the sunset on a proven strategy already in effect. At the same time, it will generate long-term savings for the state by preventing the spread of HIV, hepatitis B, and hepatitis C—serious infections that can result in costly medical treatment, including liver transplants and lifelong care.

Sterile syringe access is an evidence-based public health intervention that reduces disease transmission without increasing drug use or crime. Maintaining access through pharmacies ensures that Californians continue to benefit from this safe, cost-effective public health tool.

We urge your "aye" vote on this critical measure.

Sincerely,

Kat DeBurgh, MPH
Executive Director
Health Officers Association of California