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April 10, 2025

Assemblymember Mia Bonta, Chair
Assembly Health Committee
1020 N Street, Room 390
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 1288 (Addis) REHS – Support

Dear Assemblymember Bonta,

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 today to express our support for AB 1288. This bill allows for more flexibility in the training and certification of Registered Environmental Health Specialists (REHS), technical experts that are employed by local health departments to protect public health.

This bill will safeguard an important workforce pipeline for local health departments by allowing REHS trainees to be employed for up to five years while they work toward certification. These personnel are a vital part of making sure our food is safe to eat and that our built environment is clean and disease-free. REHS areas of responsibility include food and consumer protection, hazardous materials and hazardous waste, sewage disposal, and public swimming pools. Every Californian, no matter where they live, deserves to live in a safe environment with access to wholesome food.

HOAC respectfully requests your aye vote for this important legislation that will keep local health departments staffed and able to protect the public.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can answer any questions.

Sincerely,

Kat DeBurgh, MPH
Executive Director
Health Officers Association of California