



Officers

May 13, 2026

Gail Newel, MD, MPH  
President  
(emeritus)

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

Ori Tzvieli, MD  
President-Elect  
Contra Costa County

Nancy Williams, MD, MPH  
Past-President/Treasurer  
(emeritus)

**RE: AB 2160 (Rodriguez, Celeste) Medi-Cal Lactation Services – Support**

Aimee Sisson, MD, MPH  
Secretary  
Yolo County

Dear Chair Wicks,

Directors at Large

The Health Officers Association of California (HOAC), which represents the physician health officers in California’s sixty-one city and county jurisdictions, writes in support of AB 2160, which would require the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to issue updated guidance clarifying Medi-Cal coverage of lactation services by July 1, 2027.

Joseph Iser, MD, DrPH, MSc  
(emeritus)

This bill would improve timely access to breastfeeding support for California families and help ensure consistent access. Lactation services provide significant short- and long-term health benefits for both mothers and infants. However, despite having Medi-Cal coverage, many families continue to face barriers accessing these services due to unclear guidance and inconsistent implementation across managed care plans. In 2023, DHCS reported that families experienced challenges accessing lactation supports, with disparities particularly affecting Black, Indigenous, and rural communities. Because lactation support is most effective when provided promptly during the postpartum period, delays or uncertainty can result in families losing access to existing support during a formative time. AB 2160 addresses this gap by clarifying existing obligations and covered benefits.

Cameron Kaiser, MD  
Solano County

Lactation support is a proven public health strategy associated with lower risks of asthma, obesity, and gastrointestinal infections in infants, while also reducing risks of certain cancers, diabetes, and heart disease in mothers. Clear statewide guidance will promote more equitable access to services, improve compliance across Medi-Cal plans, and support stronger maternal and infant health outcomes.

Dave Canton, MD, JD  
Butte County

We appreciate the author’s leadership in advancing policies that strengthen maternal and infant health, while improving equitable access to preventive care for Medi-Cal families. AB 2160 represents an important step toward ensuring timely, consistent, and accessible lactation services for Medi-Cal beneficiaries. By clarifying coverage requirements and supporting stronger implementation across managed care plans, this bill will help improve health outcomes for both new mothers and their infants.

Rob Oldham, MD, MSHA  
Placer County

Karen Relucio, MD  
(emeritus)

For these reasons, HOAC respectfully urges your support of AB 2160.

Anissa Davis, MD, MPH,  
(emeritus)

Sincerely,

Eric Sergienko, MD, MPH  
(emeritus)

Penny Borenstein, MD, MPH  
San Luis Obispo County

Isabella Argueta  
Director of Legislation  
Health Officers Association of California

Timothy Peters, MD  
Tehama County

Maggie Park, MD  
San Joaquin County

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