



January 29, 2019

Senator Maria Elena Durazo  
Member, Senate Health Committee  
State Capitol Room 506  
Sacramento, California 95814

**Re: SB 29 (Lara) Medi-Cal: eligibility – SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Durazo:

I am writing to you on behalf of the California Alliance for Retired Americans (CARA) to support SB 29. CARA is California's largest grassroots senior advocacy organization, representing over 1,000,000 seniors and their families through our 275 affiliated organizations. Healthcare for all Californians is one of our highest priorities.

Undocumented Californians are facing a health care crisis. Over the last two years, the federal government has carried out harmful attacks on immigrant communities by separating families, increasing deportations, and undermining our health care system and safety net. This has resulted in serious trauma that is affecting the physical and mental well-being of many Californians. It is critical that our state take action now to protect the health of all Californians, regardless of where they were born. Undocumented adults have contributed to our economy and social fabric for decades. They are 10% of our workforce and are raising children who will be the future leaders of our state and powering the economy. Yet every day they are hurting because they lack access to health care.

The UC Berkeley Labor Center projects that 1.4 million Californians will be barred from health care due to their immigration status, making undocumented Californians the largest single group of uninsured individuals in the state<sup>1</sup>. The California Alliance for Retired Americans (CARA) is a senior advocacy organization, but we understand how the health of our communities impacts us all.

While the federal government attempts to increase health disparities based on race and immigration status, California can fight to ensure no California goes without life-saving health coverage by removing immigration status as an eligibility barrier to Medi-Cal. Health care is a human right and our state is stronger when everyone is included.

CARA thanks you for authoring SB 29 and looks forward to working with you on its passage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Hene Kelly".

Hene Kelly  
Legislative Director  
415-533-5244

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<sup>1</sup> <http://laborcenter.berkeley.edu/pdf/2018/CA-Coverage-Gains-To-Erode-Without-Further-State-Action.pdf>