



May 11, 2020

The Honorable Jim Wood, Chair
California Committee on Health

Subject: AB 2830 (Wood) – Health Care Payments Data Program – Support

Dear Assemblymember Wood:

I am writing to you on behalf of the California Alliance for Retired Americans (CARA) to support AB 2830, a bill that would promote the establishment of a public system to collect information related to health care cost and quality in California. Collecting these data is essential for containing the prices of healthcare California and assuring that all Californians have access to healthcare.

As it stands, California's healthcare prices are exorbitant and harming healthcare access. California, as part of the U.S., has the highest healthcare prices in the world. Yet, we are getting poor value for our healthcare spending. Americans are sicker and die sooner, at any income level, than our counterparts in other industrialized countries.

We need a system to regulate these prices while protecting healthcare access & quality. Leaving fair prices to the free market is failing, as monopolization of the healthcare industry assures that prices and profits, unregulated, will be excessive. Some hospitals in our state, for example, abuse their monopoly status in many areas to charge substantially more for the same services as hospitals in other parts of our state where there is still competition.

A system to regulate these prices starts with timely and accurate information on the cost elements underlying them. This information is often impossible to obtain under current law, as the healthcare industry shrouds much of it in secrecy. We also need reliable and timely quality information as well to judge how much actually needs to be spent to support high-quality care. With the data that the system to collect health information related to health care cost and quality that AB 2830 could provide, California would take a major step toward assuring affordable healthcare and healthcare access for all.

For these reasons, CARA strongly supports AB 2830 and urges an **AYE** vote when it comes to the Assembly Committee on Health.

Sincerely,

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

Hene Kelly
Legislative Director
415-533-5244

c: Committee Members