



April 12, 2019

The Honorable Asm. Evan Low

Chair, Assembly Business & Professions Committee

State Capitol, Room 4126

Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 890 (Wood) Nurse practitioner - Support

Dear Chairman Low:

On behalf of the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners –Los Angeles (NAPNAP-LA), we are writing to request your support for Assembly Bill 890 (Wood). NAPNAP-LA's mission is to promote optimal health, prevention of illness, and access to the highest quality care for all children through the efforts of the nurse practitioner.

AB 890 will allow nurse practitioners to practice to the full extent of their education and training in order to ensure direct access to the health care delivery system for millions of Californians who have access to coverage, but often struggle with finding healthcare providers. NPs practicing under this model of care would be required to hold national certification, a requirement which exceeds California's current licensing requirements, and maintain liability insurance.

The great importance of AB 890 has been highlighted in the California Health Workforce Commission's final report, which recommended that California reform scope of practice regulations to give NPs full practice authority. The Commission spent the past year looking at ways to improve California's workforce to meet the healthcare needs of Californians. The commission consisted of over 20 representatives from hospitals, schools, businesses and labor, and was chaired by the University of California President Janet Napolitano and Dignity Health President and CEO Lloyd Dean. The Commission has placed this recommendation as a priority and thus recognizes that nurse practitioners are key members of the California healthcare workforce.

A significant body of literature demonstrates that the quality of NP care is comparable to that of the physician care, and that there is no difference in the quality of care when there are no physician oversight requirements. As reported by the California Healthcare Foundation (CHCF), California is 1 of 28 states that restricts nurse practitioners by requiring that they practice and prescribe with physician oversight. Additionally, California is the only western state with this requirement. A large body of evidence has linked restrictions with poorer access to care for state residents, lower utilization of primary care services, and greater rates of hospitalizations and emergency department visits.

There are currently 22 states and the District of Columbia that allow NPs to diagnose, treat patients, and prescribe medications without a physician's supervision. NPs, including pediatric nurse practitioners, practice in a variety of

settings, including hospitals, nursing facilities, clinics, and private practices. State law determines the extent to which NPs are allowed to work independent of a physician.

Almost 80 percent of NPs in the U.S. - 204,000 out of 262,000 practice in primary care, compared to 33 percent of physicians (Health Affairs-online September, 2018). In 2016, the US Department of Veterans Affairs announced new regulations permitting full practice authority for the nearly 6,000 advanced practice nurses in its workforce. The VA made this policy change due to the acute provider shortage within their system, resulting in delays in care.

NPs are registered nurses who have a master's or doctorate degree in nursing, have advanced practice education and training, and have met the requirements for licensure, as established by the Board of Registered Nurses (BRN). Although a majority of NPs practice in the primary care settings, many NPs have also received additional training/certification in specialty areas including, but not limited to pediatrics, family practice, and geriatrics. According to BRN statistics, there are approximately 20,337 NPs in California.

AB 890 would provide the opportunity for NPs to provide services consistent with their training and education, without the involvement of a physician. The services encompassed in the bill are already part of the wide range of services that Californian's receive from NPs. Services include diagnosing patients, performing therapeutic procedures, prescribing medications and devices, and making independent decisions in the treatment of health conditions. Removal of the requirement for physician supervision will allow patients direct access to these services- thereby extending the ability of NPs to deliver services for greater numbers of Californians throughout the state.

AB 890 provides a measured response to the need for more accessible primary care in California. It builds upon a solid record of competent NP care and aligns NP scope of practice with NP education and professional training. Passage of the bill is essential to ensure that NPs are fully utilized in the collective effort to prepare California for expanded health care coverage and bringing primary care to underserved areas/individuals including children, adolescents, and young adults.

For the reasons provided above, we ask for your vote in support of AB 890.

Sincerely,



Sarah Green, CPNP-AC
Legislative Co-Chair



Siem La, CPNP
Co-President



Andrea Tizano, CPNP
Co-President



Mallory Fossa, CPNP
Legislative Co-Chair

cc: Members, Assembly Business and Professions Committee
Office of Governor Gavin Newsom
Assembly Member Jim Wood