

April 15, 2022

The Honorable Chris Holden, Chair  
Assembly Appropriations Committee  
Capitol Office, 1021 O Street, Suite 5650  
Sacramento, CA 94249



**Re: Support: AB 2426 – SUPPORT**

Dear Chair Holden,

L.A. Care Health Plan – the nation’s largest public plan with nearly 2.5 million Medi-Cal, Cal MediConnect (Dual Eligibles), PASC- SEIU Homecare Workers, and Covered California enrollees — writes in support of AB 2426- which will ensure Martin Luther King Jr. Community Hospital (MLKCH) will have the resources to properly care for those who are most vulnerable by adding outpatient services to the existing supplemental payment program.

South LA desperately needed health services when MLKCH opened in 2015 and has remained a vital part of the safety net in the community. Nothing made this more clear than COVID-19 -underlying health conditions contributed to extreme health disparities, causing Black and Latino community members to suffer at rates three to four times that of other communities. Many emergency patients have gone too long without medical care; their chronic conditions have progressed to serious complications.

The hospital was designed to serve 40,000 in its emergency department, yet they care for over 100,000 annually. Chronic conditions are the true epidemic—a diabetes rate 3x the state average, a life expectancy 10 years less. As a frontline hospital serving the most vulnerable, MLK Community Hospital loses millions on emergency department visits, because 87 of the hospital’s emergency department patients are Medi-Cal or uninsured. MLKCH has the worst payer mix of any general acute care hospital in California.

However, with equity funding included in AB 2426, to make up for the losses—87% of MLKCH’s emergency room visits are from Medi-Cal or uninsured patients—MLKCH can invest resources in preventive care, eventually improving the health of the community and reducing emergency department usage. The bill would ensure MLKCH will have more money to recruit doctors in South Los Angeles and focus on preventative care and outpatient services. The funding will help make the hospital financially secure, filling the gap so they can invest in the community and expand community-based care.

For these reasons, we support AB 2426 and respectfully request your “aye” vote to support Martin Luther King Jr. Community Hospital which provides high quality, lifesaving care to one of the most underserved communities in California.

Sincerely,

Joanne Campbell

Health Care Policy Analyst  
L.A. Care Health Plan



**L.A. Care**  
HEALTH PLAN®

**For All of L.A.**