

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**



**ITEM: 2.3**  
(ID # 14960)

**MEETING DATE:**  
Tuesday, April 13, 2021

**FROM :** EXECUTIVE OFFICE:

**SUBJECT:** EXECUTIVE OFFICE: Receive and File: Letters of Support for AB 240 and State Budget Request to Support RUHS & Public Health Care Systems and Response to COVID-19. All Districts. [\$0]

**RECOMMENDED MOTION:** That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Receive and File the attached letters of support.

**ACTION: Consent**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Brian Nestande

4/7/2021

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jeff Van Wageningen, County Executive Officer

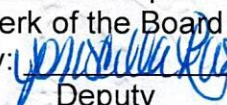
4/8/2021

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**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

On motion of Supervisor Jeffries, seconded by Supervisor Perez and duly carried by unanimous vote, IT WAS ORDERED that the above matter is received and filed as recommended.

Ayes: Jeffries, Spiegel, Washington, Perez, and Hewitt  
Nays: None  
Absent: None  
Date: April 13, 2021  
xc: EO

Kecia R. Harper  
Clerk of the Board  
By:   
Deputy

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE,  
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

<b>FINANCIAL DATA</b>	<b>Current Fiscal Year:</b>	<b>Next Fiscal Year:</b>	<b>Total Cost:</b>	<b>Ongoing Cost</b>
<b>COST</b>	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
<b>NET COUNTY COST</b>	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
<b>SOURCE OF FUNDS: N/A</b>			<b>Budget Adjustment: No</b>	
			<b>For Fiscal Year: 21/22</b>	

**C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION:** APPROVE

**BACKGROUND:**

**Summary**

The purpose of Riverside County's Legislative Coordination Policy Program is to support legislation which benefits the County and its residents, and to oppose/amend legislation which might adversely affect the County. The following specific procedures are instituted to facilitate active participation by Departments, allow the Executive Office to act as a centralized "clearinghouse" for legislative matters, and to ensure that all advocacy efforts are entirely consistent with Board-approved positions.

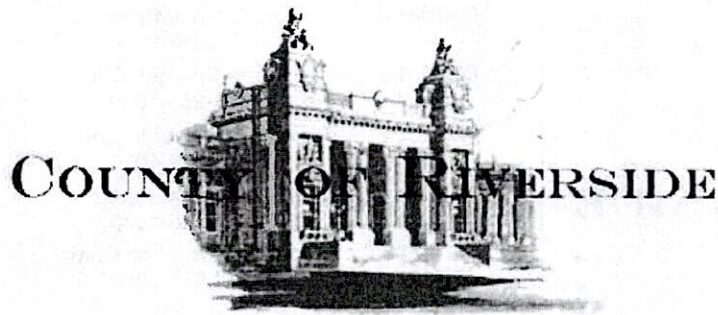
Consistent with Riverside County's legislative platform, this form 11 is to receive and file two letters: 1) in support of AB 240, a bill to direct the state legislature to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the healthcare infrastructure and workforce; 2) a letter in support of a one-time \$300 million state budget allocation to public health care systems for critical care during and beyond the pandemic.

**Assembly Bill 240 (AB 240)**

AB 240 would provide an opportunity for state and local governments in California to better understand the adequacy of local health department infrastructure, including needs related to local health department staffing, workforce, and resources. Findings and recommendations produced by this assessment will serve as a useful roadmap to better support the development and retention of a skilled and diverse public health workforce necessary to carry out the vital services provided by Riverside County.

**One-Time \$300M State Budget Allocation for Public Health Care Systems**

RUHS has played an integral role in the public health response effort. Working alongside emergency management personnel, RUHS has executed a swift, thorough, and effective response to the pandemic. Even as RUHS pursues all possible sources of support at the federal and state level, significant funding gaps for RUHS remain and could worsen during the upcoming fiscal year. To meet these needs, public health care systems, including RUHS, are seeking a direct one-time investment of \$300 million in State General Fund for public health care systems to offset unreimbursed costs associated with the increase in Medi-Cal Fee-For-Service (FFS) COVID-19 patients.



**Board of Supervisors**

- District 1      **Kevin Jeffries**  
951-955-1010
- District 2      **Karen Spiegel, Chair**  
951-955-1020
- District 3      **Chuck Washington**  
951-955-1030
- District 4      **V. Manuel Perez**  
951-955-1040
- District 5      **Jeff Hewitt, Vice Chair**  
951-955-1050

March 31, 2021

The Honorable Jim Wood  
Chair, Assembly Health Committee  
State Capitol, Room 6005  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 240 (Rodriguez): Local health department workforce assessment

Dear Assembly Member Wood:

The Riverside County Board of Supervisors respectfully urges your support of AB 240 by Assembly Member Freddie Rodriguez which would require the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) to contract with an appropriate entity to conduct an evaluation of the adequacy of local health department infrastructure, including an assessment of future staffing, workforce, and resource needs.

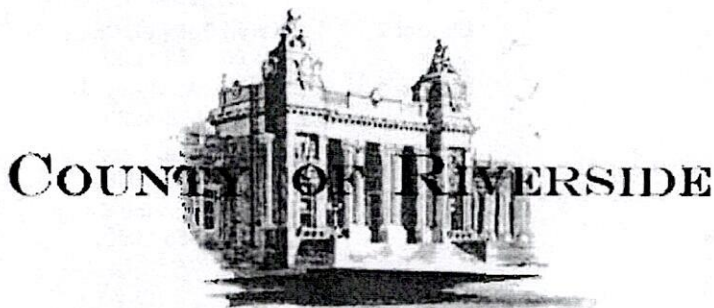
Local health departments such as ours play a critical role in protecting and promoting the health and well-being of the residents in our jurisdiction. The role and importance of local public health has been most prominently displayed amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, as well as during other disasters and emergencies faced by our jurisdiction. In carrying out this important work, we rely on a workforce of highly trained and specialized public health professionals, including epidemiologists, health educators, communicable disease investigators, laboratorians, public health nurses and others.

Unfortunately, local health departments throughout the state, including ours in Riverside County, face significant challenges in recruiting and retaining these well-qualified employees due to competition with the private sector, instability of grant funded positions, and competition with coastal southern California counties. The local health department infrastructure and workforce challenges may hamper critical public health protection and promotion activities in our communities and can limit our ability to adequately prepare for and respond to public health emergencies and pandemics.

AB 240 would provide an opportunity for state and local governments in California to better understand the adequacy of local health department infrastructure, including needs related to local health department staffing, workforce, and resources. Findings and recommendations produced by this assessment will serve as a useful roadmap to better support the development and retention of a skilled and diverse public health workforce necessary to carry out the vital services we provide to our jurisdiction.

As evidenced by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the role and function of local health departments in

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951-955-1050

California are critical in ensuring the health and safety of California's nearly 40 million residents. Riverside County is committed to developing and retaining a skilled and diverse public health workforce, and it is for these reasons we respectfully urge your support of AB 240.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Kim Saruwatari, Director of Public Health for Riverside County, at (951) 358-7036 or via email at [ksaruwatari@ruhealth.org](mailto:ksaruwatari@ruhealth.org) or Deputy County Executive Officer Brian Nestande at (951) 955-1110 or [bnestande@rivco.org](mailto:bnestande@rivco.org).

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

*Karen S. Spiegel*

Karen Spiegel  
Chair, Riverside County Board of Supervisors

*Jeff Hewitt*

Jeff Hewitt  
Vice Chair, Riverside County Board of Supervisors

- cc:    The Honorable Freddie Rodriguez, Member, California State Assembly  
       Honorable Members, Assembly Health Committee  
       Rosielyn Pulmano, Chief Consultant, Assembly Health Committee  
       Gino Folchi, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus  
       Michelle Gibbons, Executive Director, County Health Executives Association of California

**ASSEMBLY BILL**

**No. 240**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Rodriguez**

January 13, 2021

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An act to add and repeal Section 100190 of the Health and Safety Code, relating to public health.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 240, as introduced, Rodriguez. Local health department workforce assessment.

Existing law establishes the State Department of Public Health to implement various programs throughout the state relating to public health, including licensing and regulating health facilities, control of infectious diseases, and implementing programs relating to chronic health issues. Existing law authorizes the department to implement the required programs through, or with the assistance of, local health departments. Existing law requires the department, after consultation with and approval by the California Conference of Local Health Officers, to establish standards of education and experience for professional and technical personnel employed in local health departments and for the organization and operation of the local health departments.

This bill would require the department to contract with an appropriate and qualified entity to conduct an evaluation of the adequacy of the local health department infrastructure and to make recommendations for future staffing, workforce needs, and resources, in order to accurately and adequately fund local public health. The bill would exempt the department from specific provisions relating to public contracting with regard to this requirement. The bill would require the department to

report the findings and recommendations of the evaluation to the appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature on or before July 1, 2024. The bill would also require the department to convene an advisory group, composed of representatives from public, private, and tribal entities, as specified, to provide input on the selection of the entity that would conduct the evaluation. The bill would further require the advisory group to provide technical assistance and subject matter expertise to the selected entity. The bill would make its provisions contingent on sufficient funding and repeal its provisions on January 1, 2026.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.  
State-mandated local program: no.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

- 1 SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the  
2 following:
- 3 (a) Local health departments are the first line of defense against  
4 public health threats, including novel pandemics like COVID-19.  
5 These organizations rely on trained public health professionals,  
6 including epidemiologists, communicable disease investigators,  
7 public health nurses, laboratorians, and health educators.
- 8 (b) Year after year of federal, state, and local public agencies  
9 being underfunded has left the United States ill-prepared for the  
10 COVID-19 pandemic. The Trust for America's Health estimated  
11 in April 2019 that public health efforts nationally were underfunded  
12 by \$4.5 billion and that nationally 55,000 positions were eliminated  
13 from public health between 2008 and 2017.
- 14 (c) According to the California Future Health Workforce  
15 Commission's February 2019 report, the public health workforce  
16 in California is chronically underfunded and most local public  
17 health agencies lack personnel with expertise in key areas,  
18 including epidemiology and the essential skills to design,  
19 implement, and evaluate comprehensive approaches to community  
20 health improvement.
- 21 (d) In California, both state and local public health agencies  
22 face increasing competition with the private sector, which provides  
23 higher pay and amenities such as updated technology. Additionally,  
24 many public health leaders are nearing retirement.

1 (e) There are no federal or state guidelines for public health  
2 staffing, nor does any state or national organization provide  
3 information or data on the composition and training levels of the  
4 governmental public health workforce.

5 (f) Many local health departments in California report challenges  
6 in recruiting and retaining well qualified workers, citing a lack of  
7 tools for recruiting, limited options for advancement, and instability  
8 of funded positions.

9 (g) Based on urgent workforce shortages and demographic  
10 trends, the California Future Health Workforce Commission's  
11 February 2019 report identified the following priority professions  
12 in the field of prevention and public health:

13 (1) State and local health department staff, including, but not  
14 limited to, epidemiologists, public health nutritionists, infectious  
15 disease experts, and disaster preparedness specialists.

16 (2) Public health nurses.

17 (3) Data analysts.

18 (4) Health administrators.

19 (5) Community health workers and promoters.

20 (6) Community health educators.

21 (h) It is the intent of the Legislature to prepare for the workforce  
22 challenges facing public health, and for the next emergency or  
23 pandemic, by creating a comprehensive plan to address urgent  
24 workforce and infrastructure needs of local health departments.

25 SEC. 2. Section 100190 is added to the Health and Safety Code,  
26 to read:

27 100190. (a) The State Department of Public Health shall  
28 contract with an appropriate and qualified entity to conduct an  
29 evaluation of the adequacy of the local health department  
30 infrastructure, and to make recommendations for future staffing,  
31 workforce needs, and resources, in order to accurately and  
32 adequately fund local public health. This evaluation shall, at a  
33 minimum, accomplish all of the following:

34 (1) Evaluate the public health workforce, including identification  
35 of barriers and recommendations for adequate staffing of local  
36 health departments, appropriate credentialing, access to training  
37 and workforce development, recruitment and retention supports,  
38 and incentivizing a pipeline of professionals to work in public  
39 health.

- 1 (2) Assess the efficacy of health information tools utilized by  
2 local health departments.
- 3 (3) Evaluate the state's public health laboratory capacity and  
4 make recommendations for laboratories to better meet the needs  
5 of local health departments.
- 6 (4) Evaluate recent trends with federal and state funding streams  
7 provided to local health departments and the resources needed to  
8 sustain the work of local health departments.
- 9 (b) The evaluation and recommendations shall consider all of  
10 the following:
- 11 (1) The current state and federal statutory and regulatory  
12 environment for public health.
- 13 (2) The capacity needed on an ongoing basis to meet the  
14 demands in a public health emergency.
- 15 (3) Additional factors adding to the work of public health,  
16 including social determinants of health, health inequities, climate  
17 change, natural disasters, and unique local conditions.
- 18 (c) The department shall provide oversight of the entity selected  
19 for the evaluation and shall convene an advisory group that shall  
20 include representatives of the Emergency Medical Services  
21 Authority, County Health Executives Association of California,  
22 California Conference of Local Health Officers, public health  
23 laboratory directors, public health nurses, communicable disease  
24 controllers, tribes, the exclusive representatives of public health  
25 workers, local emergency medical services administrators, schools  
26 of public health, and organizations aimed at addressing health  
27 disparities in California. The advisory group shall do both of the  
28 following:
- 29 (1) Provide input on the selection of an entity to conduct an  
30 evaluation under subdivision (a).
- 31 (2) Provide technical assistance and subject matter expertise to  
32 the entity selected to conduct the evaluation under subdivision (a).
- 33 (d) (1) The department shall report the findings and  
34 recommendations of the evaluation to the appropriate policy and  
35 fiscal committees of the Legislature on or before July 1, 2024.
- 36 (2) The report shall be submitted in compliance with Section  
37 9795 of the Government Code.
- 38 (e) For purposes of administering this section, the department  
39 is exempt from Part 2 (commencing with Section 10100) of  
40 Division 2 of the Public Contract Code and is exempt from



1 approval by the Department of General Services prior to the  
2 contract's execution.

3 (f) The implementation of this bill is contingent upon sufficient  
4 funding from state, federal, or private funding for the department  
5 to support the advisory group and the evaluation contract.

6 (g) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2026,  
7 and as of that date is repealed.

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# COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

## Board of Supervisors

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District 5	Jeff Hewitt, Vice Chair 951-955-1050

March 29, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Skinner  
Chair, Senate Budget & Fiscal Review Committee  
State Capitol, Room 5094  
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Phil Ting  
Chair, Assembly Budget Committee  
State Capitol, Room 6026  
Sacramento, CA 94814

**Subject: Support for Public Health Care Systems' State Budget Request to Support COVID-19 Response**

Dear Senator Skinner and Assembly Member Ting:

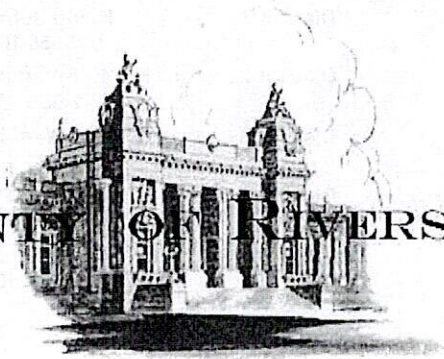
On behalf of the Riverside County Board of Supervisors, we urge your support to allocate \$300 million in one-time funding for public health care systems in the 2021-22 State Budget to support critical care delivery needs during and beyond the pandemic. The County of Riverside appreciates the ongoing leadership provided by the state legislature with responding to the COVID-19 crisis, working closely with hospitals, counties, and other partners, as we overcame the dramatic surge of case rates and hospitalizations. As we continue our pandemic response efforts, we urge the prioritization of additional funding for the Riverside University Health System (RUHS) and other public health care systems, which we believe are critical to ensure we can effectively meet COVID-19 related demands and preserve vital infrastructure beyond the pandemic.

RUHS serves as Riverside County's integrated Public Health System through its 439 bed Medical Center, 13 Community Health Centers/Federally Qualified Health Care Centers (FQHC's), Public Health Department and Behavioral Health Department serves over 500,000 patients annually across one of the largest geographic and most populous counties in the entire United States. RUHS is a safety net system serving some of the County's most vulnerable patient populations many of which have complex medical needs. Nearly 25% of the patients that we see are uninsured, and greater than 70% are Medi-Cal beneficiaries. Even as we pursue all possible sources of support at the federal and state level, significant funding gaps for RUHS remain and could worsen during the upcoming fiscal year.

Since the start of the pandemic, RUHS has played an integral role in the public health response effort. Working alongside our County leaders and emergency management personnel, RUHS has executed a swift, thorough, and effective response to the pandemic. RUHS is playing a vital role in vaccine planning and distribution by expanding vaccination capacity across the County with a particular focus on addressing equity in providing access to medically underserved communities and high-risk patient populations.

To meet these needs, we are seeking a direct one-time investment of \$300 million in State General Fund for public health care systems to offset unreimbursed costs associated with the increase in Medi-Cal Fee-For-Service (FFS) COVID-19 patients. RUHS remains committed, more than ever, to continue providing high quality health care services in order to serve our region's most vulnerable patients and our entire community. We urge your support to provide critical resources that are so vitally needed at this time and appreciate your commitment to maintaining the public health care safety net during COVID-19 and beyond.

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Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Deputy County Executive Officer Brian Nestande at (951) 955-1110 or [bnestande@rivco.org](mailto:bnestande@rivco.org).

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Karen Spiegel  
Chair, Riverside County Board of Supervisors

Jeff Hewitt  
Vice Chair, Riverside County Board of Supervisors

cc: Riverside County legislative delegation  
Members, Senate Budget & Fiscal Review Committee  
Members, Assembly Budget Committee  
Scott Ogus, Consultant, Senate Budget & Fiscal Review Committee  
Anthony Archie, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus  
Andrea Margolis, Consultant, Assembly Budget Committee  
Eric Dietz, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus