



**LEGISLATION AND
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March 4, 2021

Honorable Josh Newman
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 4066
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 242 (Newman) as introduced January 21, 2021 – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Newman:

Disability Rights California (DRC), a non-profit advocacy organization that advances and protects the rights of Californians with disabilities, **supports SB 242.**

California's agricultural workers are an essential workforce responsible for sustaining California's \$50 billion agricultural industry and the production of America's fresh food supply. Since the beginning of the pandemic, farmworkers have faced higher risks to COVID-19 due to exposure in the fields, in the commute to work, and in extremely overcrowded housing that of their co-workers, families and communities. As the result of the pandemic, some California health care and dental professionals have been forced to stop providing medical practices while others continually confront higher operational costs associated with the increased use and need for a variety of supplies to address the dangers of COVID-19.

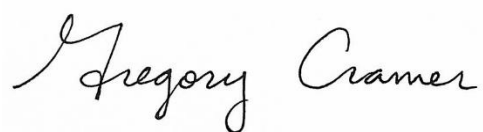
In order to continue safely providing care to patients, ensure health care worker safety, and prevent the spread of the virus, providers have been required to purchase significantly more PPE, greater amounts of supplies for infection control, and the components for multiple types of COVID infection testing kits. Payors are not required to reimburse health care providers for these costs and most do not reimburse.

Doctors and dentists have been left to bear the brunt of these medically-necessary costs with no assistance from payors, even as the requirements for and costs of PPE, testing supplies, and infection control materials have increased dramatically since the advent of the pandemic. Health care providers are struggling financially which impacts the farmworker and rural poor communities because access to health care would be limited. Health plans, insurers and the Department of Health Care Services should be required to provide reasonable reimbursement for mandated PPE and supplies.

DRC believes it is incumbent on California to ensure that high-risk populations including farmworkers continue to receive health care services during the pandemic when they need these services the most. Like Californians with disabilities, farmworkers do not have the adequate access to health services, and the state must ensure that small and medium practices remain open as these practices are the only means to obtain health care services. DRC stands in solidarity with farmworkers and other disenfranchised groups in California.

For these reasons, DRC supports SB 242. Please contact me if you have any questions about our position or if I can provide any further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gregory Cramer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gregory Cramer
Senior Legislative Advocate
Disability Rights California

