



3480 Torrance Blvd., Suite 305, Torrance CA 90503 | (310) 540-5858 | www.TorranceChamber.com

February 19th, 2021

The Honorable Dave Cortese
Chair, Senate Labor, Public Employment and Retirement Committee
State Capitol, Room 3070
Sacramento, CA 95814
SUBJECT: SB 213 (Cortese) — OPPOSE

Dear Senator Cortese:

I am writing on behalf of the Torrance Area Chamber of Commerce to oppose Senate Bill (SB) 213. This bill would establish a presumption in the workers' compensation program for a broad range of illnesses and injuries and relieve these employees from having to demonstrate that certain infectious diseases, musculoskeletal injuries, and respiratory diseases arose out of their work environment.

As you know, employee safety is a top priority for our member hospitals and health systems. Yet, work-related injuries can occur. In those cases, every one of their employees has access to California's no-fault workers' compensation system, which is designed to support employees. However, when a disagreement arises, there is great value in the current resolution process, a fair and robust procedure administered by the Division of Workers' Compensation.

Our shared concerns center on the following key reasons:

- There is a complete absence of evidence that the current process is not working for the illnesses and injuries encompassed in SB 213. In fact, research shows that health care employers are a leader in the industry when it comes to approving the vast majority of workers' compensation claims.
- A presumption in workers' compensation can result in hundreds of thousands of dollars in temporary and permanent disability payments and medical costs for a single case, with little to no evidence the injury occurred at work.
- Any increase in workers' compensation costs will have a direct and immediate impact on the financial ability of a hospital to protect access to high-quality care, a position already in jeopardy due to the severe economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The cost of this new mandate, while difficult to quantify, would likely be astronomical. One musculoskeletal claim, which could be filed as many as five years after employment ends, could reach hundreds of thousands of dollars for a hospital or health system that is self-insured.

For these reasons, Torrance Area Chamber of Commerce respectfully asks for your "NO" vote on SB 213.

Sincerely,

Donna Duperron
President & CEO

