

# CANHR *Long Term Care Justice and Advocacy*

CALIFORNIA ADVOCATES FOR NURSING HOME REFORM

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March 18, 2021

The Honorable Jim Wood  
Chairman, Assembly Committee on Health  
California State Assembly  
State Capitol, Room 6005  
Sacramento, CA 95814

## **RE: Support for AB 6 (Levine) – Pandemic Planning at Long Term Care Facilities**

Dear Chair Wood:

On behalf of California Advocates for Nursing Home Reform (CANHR), I am writing to express our strong support of AB 6 (Levine). CANHR is a not-for-profit advocacy organization that works to combat elder abuse and improve the care, choices, and quality of life for older adults and persons with disabilities in long term care.

According to the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), as of March 17, 2021, there have been more than 3.6 million cases and more than 57,000 deaths in California resulting from COVID-19. One of the populations most at risk of illness and death from the coronavirus are those living in skilled nursing facilities, intermediate care facilities, and congregate living health facilities. Of the 57,000+ COVID-19 related deaths in California, over 9,000 of these deaths have occurred in nursing homes and thousands more in California's congregate care health facilities.

The facilities with the worst COVID-19 outbreaks are by and large those with long histories of deficient infection prevention and control, and chronic understaffing. While no facility may have anticipated a pandemic of this magnitude, those that were particularly ill-equipped have fared the worst during this pandemic.

AB 6 (Levine) would require Department of Public Health (CDPH) and the Department of Social Services (DSS) to mandate health and safety guidelines for use by skilled nursing facilities, intermediate care facilities and congregate living health facilities that are providing post-acute care during a pandemic, public health crisis or other emergency. These guidelines would address, at a minimum, the provision of care when there is a surge in the number of patients requiring care resulting from the emergency.

Thank you for your continued leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,



Patricia L. McGinnis  
Executive Director  
CANHR

cc: Assemblymember Marc Levine, Assembly District 10