



DATE: June 17, 2026

TO: Members, Assembly Labor and Employment Committee

SUBJECT: **SB 1284 (SMALLWOOD-CUEVAS) MEDICAL BENEFITS: EMPLOYER REPORTS
OPPOSE - AS AMENDED MAY 14, 2026**

The California Chamber of Commerce and the undersigned organizations respectfully **OPPOSE SB 1284**. **SB 1284** would require the State Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to report employer-specific data on employees enrolled in Medi-Cal to and then make that information available, identified by employer name. While **SB 1284** does not expressly state that the names of employers will be disclosed publicly, it can be inferred that when DHCS submits the report to the legislature no later than July 1, 2027, there will likely be a hearing on the findings. In that hearing, that would be open to the public, there is a high likelihood that individual employers' names are divulged or at minimum posted on the agency website. By placing individual employer names alongside the number of their workers receiving state-funded health care, **SB 1284** would effectively create a government operated public shaming registry. One built on incomplete, decontextualized data that says nothing definitive about how an employer treats its workforce.

SB 1284 Uses a Government Database to Publicly Stigmatize Employers Without Due Process

The central mechanism of **SB 1284** is to collect employer-level Medi-Cal enrollment data and as described above, the public, including journalists, advocacy groups, union organizers, plaintiff's attorneys, and competitors, could know how many of a given employer's workers are enrolled in Medi-Cal.

The bill's purpose is to ensure that "*public programs function as a true safety net rather than a subsidy for employers.*" This implicit premise in **SB 1284's** purpose is deeply concerning, and that premise is that any employer with workers on Medi-Cal is offloading its obligations onto taxpayers. This premise, however, is demonstrably false, and using a state database to broadcast it will cause serious, undeserved harm to countless California employers, including small businesses.

Medi-Cal enrollment is driven by a complex set of factors that have nothing to do with employer malfeasance, including but not limited to:

- Workers who voluntarily choose Medi-Cal over employer sponsored coverage because it is more affordable or comprehensive for their family situation;
- Part-time or seasonal workers who are not eligible for employer-sponsored benefits under existing law;
- Workers whose income qualifies them for Medi-Cal regardless of whether their employer offers coverage;
- New hires still in waiting periods before employer benefits take effect;
- Workers in households with other enrolled family members who are on Medi-Cal for independent reasons;

SB 1284 does nothing to account for any of these factors. Sharing an employer's name alongside a Medi-Cal enrollment count, without context or explanation, implies that the employer is wholly responsible, when the reality is far more complicated and nuanced.

SB 1284 treats employers as the **sole architects** of a problem built by market forces, state and federal policy, and individual worker decisions that no employer has the power nor the legal authority to override.

For these, and other reasons, we **OPPOSE AB 1284 (Smallwood-Cuevas)**.

Sincerely,



Andrea Lynch
Policy Advocate, Labor, Employment and Workers' Compensation

cc: Sana Jaffery, Office of Senator Lola Smallwood-Cuevas
Luke Reidenbach, Chief Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of Governor Newsom
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Corona Chamber of Commerce, Tim Gramling, President & CEO
Family Business Association of California, Robert Rivinius, President
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Greater High Desert Chamber, Mark Creffield, President & CEO
Greater Riverside Chamber of Commerce, Quirina Ramirez, Vice President of Advocacy & Programs
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Imperial Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce, Sher Cowie, Interim CEO
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