

PRESS RELEASE

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Gipson Announces Statewide Coalition in Support of AB 1795

AB 1795 seeks to ensure patients have access to the right care at the right time and in the right place.

SACRAMENTO, Calif --- Assemblymember Mike A. Gipson (D-Carson) and Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn today jointly announced legislation, AB 1795, that is intended to create a more responsive system of emergency medical care that will provide patients in crisis with more immediate expert help. The bill gives specially-trained paramedics the ability to transport patients, under certain circumstances, to destinations that are better prepared to treat them than a hospital emergency room.

AB 1795 would allow individuals affected by mental health-related conditions to be transported to a behavioral health facility, and would allow those intoxicated by alcohol to be taken to a sobering center for treatment.

"AB 1795 will ensure that patients with behavioral health or alcohol intoxication needs have more direct access to appropriate care, while also ensuring hospital emergency departments continue to be utilized to provide life-saving care to patients suffering from serious illness or injury," said Assemblymember Gipson. "This measure will ensure people get the right care, at the right time, in the right place."

In 2016 alone, the California Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development reported that hospital emergency departments encountered more than 14.5 million visitors statewide, creating lengthy waiting times.

"It's clear to anyone who has been to an ER—they are significantly impacted and faced with overcrowding and strained medical staff," said Supervisor Hahn. "In some part, this is because local emergency medical professionals have no choice but to take every person directly to the hospital, regardless of whether there are better care and treatment options."

The problem is growing more critical as the volume of 911 calls is on the rise. In Los Angeles County alone, the fire department projects that it will field more than 400,000 calls for emergency medical services this year. And that demand for services continues to grow across California.

“California Fire Chiefs strongly support the concept of taking 9-1-1 callers to the most appropriate facility in order to meet the diverse needs of their respective constituents,” said California Fire Chiefs Association President Mark Hartwig.

The need for the patient-centered reforms in AB 1795 is underscored by a broad coalition of supporters from the fields of health care, public safety, and service providers up and down the state. That list includes the Los Angeles County Fire Department, the California Police Chiefs Association, San Francisco Department of Public Health, California Emergency Nurses Association, the County of Fresno and the Emergency Medical Directors Association of California.

AB 1795 will be heard in its first policy hearing in the Assembly Health Committee on April 17.

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