



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

OCT 13 2019

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

Consistent with our imperative to address rising health care costs, I am signing Assembly Bill 290. This bill removes financial incentives for providers to steer patients into specific health care coverage by providing that certain health providers, including dialysis clinics and substance use disorder treatment centers, be reimbursed at Medicare rates for services rendered to patients who receive premium assistance. In addition, AB 290 requires health plans to accept premium payments from charities and other payers on behalf of patients. Lastly, this bill ensures patients are informed of their rights.

AB 290 makes significant efforts to protect patients who receive premium assistance. It provides time for transition and exempts assistance to current patients from the provisions of the bill. Notwithstanding these efforts, opponents of the bill have threatened to promptly end patient assistance programs in California. I urge both opponents and supporters to put patients first. Charities that purport to impartially provide patient assistance, and the providers that substantially fund these charities, should act in good faith and continue providing assistance to patients. Health plans and insurers should step up to ensure this measure is implemented in a way that protects patients and supports continuity of care.

Sincerely,

Gavin Newsom

