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June 3, 2026

The Honorable Akilah Weber Pierson
Chair, Senate Health Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 3310
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Jesse Arreguín
Chair, Senate Public Safety Committee
1020 N Street, Room 545
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1607 (Gonzalez), Maddy EMS Funding - SUPPORT

Dear Senator Pierson and Senator Arreguín,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong support for AB 1607 (Gonzalez) which would extend the sunset on the “Maddy” Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Funds to January 1st, 2037, ensuring access to critical, life-saving emergency health care.

The Maddy Fund is a county-by-county opt-in program, funded through a \$2 fee for every \$10 of a fine on all crimes, penalties, or forfeitures imposed by the courts. The Maddy EMS Fund is used to reimburse physicians and hospitals who treat uninsured patients in the emergency departments (EDs), as well as provide funds for EMS purposes. In addition, 15% of the funds collected are allocated to the “Richie’s Fund,” which supports pediatric trauma centers.

Under state and federal law, EDs care for patients regardless of their health care coverage status and patients are still responsible for paying for their care. In 2024, 5.9% of Californians were uninsured, but the proportion of uninsured patients who seek care is much higher. Reports estimate that 18% of the population served in CA EDs are uninsured.

If an uninsured patient is unable to pay for their care, a hospital or physician may submit for reimbursement to their respective county's “Maddy” fund. While this funding is not equal to the overall cost of care, it allows EDs to continue to remain open and offer services.

The demand on EDs is already high and will continue to increase as millions of vulnerable Californians lose access to health insurance due to H.R. 1, which is estimated at roughly 50,000 residents with satisfactory immigration status here in Kern. This massive loss in coverage would raise the proportion of uninsured ED visits to 18% statewide, with a volume of up to 32% uninsured at the most impacted facilities. With the Maddy Fund sunseting in 2027, this will lead to a reduction in emergency physicians' staffing. Fewer emergency physicians per shift are a significant contributor

to longer waiting times, worse outcomes, and poorer access to care for all patients with emergencies.

AB 1607 will help alleviate some of these fiscal concerns by extending the existing sunset on the Maddy Fund, ensuring financial assistance is available for our essential health care providers. For these reasons, we strongly support this measure and respectfully ask each of your committees to vote **YES on AB 1607**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Phillip Peters", with a stylized, flowing script.

Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Health Committee
 Honorable Members, Senate Public Safety Committee
 Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
 California State Association of Counties
 Kern County Public Health Department
 Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange