



July 29, 2021

The Honorable Anthony Portantino  
Chairman, Senate Appropriations Committee  
State Capitol, Room 5050  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 1038 (Gipson) California Health Equity Program—SUPPORT**

Dear Chairman Portantino,

On behalf of the California State Association of Psychiatrists, I write in support of AB 1038 (Gipson), which would, on July 1, 2022, establish the California Health Equity Program, a competitive grant program administered by the Office of Health Equity to community-based nonprofit organizations, community clinics, local health departments, and tribal organizations to take actions related to health equity.

According to the author, communities of color and low-income residents have experienced some of the most dire health and social impacts from COVID-19 in the State of California. Many of these deaths resulted from largely preventable pre-existing health conditions such as heart disease and diabetes. Much of the suffering due to housing and food insecurity, economic instability, and inadequate education could have been prevented with adequate investment in creating equitable conditions for all residents in California before the pandemic struck.

With a budget surplus in California and with the devastating impacts of underinvestment in communities of color and low-income communities uncovered for all to see, now is the time to step in to stop the compounding risks for poor health and premature death among our most vulnerable residents.

Investing in a California Health Equity Fund will do more than help mitigate the human costs of COVID-19. Preventing Californians from needing health care and social services in the first place can also help contain healthcare costs for California families and for the State. AB 1038 will create an avenue for dedicated funding for nonprofit organizations, clinics, tribal organizations, and LHDs to address the devastating impacts of COVID-19.

For all these reasons, the California State Association of Psychiatrists is pleased to support AB 1038 and would like to urge your aye vote on this measure.

1415 L Street, Suite 1000  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
(916) 446-4656

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Yoder', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Paul J. Yoder  
Legislative Advocate

CC: Members, Senate Appropriations Committee  
Assemblymember Mike Gipson