



April 4, 2023

The Honorable Jim Wood  
Chairman, Assembly Health Committee  
1020 N Street, 390 LOB  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 85 (Weber) Social determinants of health: screening and outreach – Support**

Dear Chairman Wood,

On behalf of the California State Association of Psychiatrists (CSAP), I write to you in Support of AB 85, which would require health plans and insurers to include coverage for social determinants of health screenings and access to community health workers. The bill would also make these screenings a covered benefit for Medi-Cal beneficiaries since the referral to community health workers is already covered. In addition, it will ensure that healthcare teams have the resources to conduct social determinants of health screenings and the ability to refer patients to accredited centralized community providers with supportive resources closest to them.

Social determinants of health are the conditions under which people are born, grow, live, work, and age, and include housing, employment opportunities, environmental conditions, food, transportation, and personal safety. Studies have shown that food insecurity, unemployment, and inadequate housing are directly attributed to a higher risk of chronic diseases, infectious diseases, injuries, childhood development, and poor mental health. For example, food-insecure individuals are 20 percent more likely to report hypertension and 30 percent more likely to report hyperlipidemia than their food-secure counterparts.

In order to achieve health equity and optimal health outcomes, it is critical to identify and address social determinants of health (SDOH) for individuals and families. AB 85 would ensure that health teams have the resources to conduct social determinants of health screenings, referrals, and community navigation services.

For these reasons, CSAP is pleased to support AB 85.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Yoder', is placed below the word 'Sincerely,'.

Paul Yoder  
Legislative Advocate

CC: Members, Assembly Health Committee  
Assemblymember Akilah Weber, M.D.