



March 23, 2023

The Honorable Thomas Umberg
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 6530
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 487 (Atkins) Abortion: provider protections – Support as amended March 20, 2023

Dear Chairman Umberg,

On behalf of the California State Association of Psychiatrists (CSAP), I write to you in support of SB 487. This bill would protect California healthcare providers from automatic suspension from the Medi-Cal program and discrimination from health insurers if they are suspended from a Medicaid program or sanctioned in another state as a result of providing healthcare services that are medically appropriate and legal in California.

California providers are increasingly providing abortion care to out-of-state residents with the support of the 13 pieces of legislation that were enacted in California in the 2022 Legislative session. Since last session, abortion and contraceptive provider organizations and reproductive rights advocates have identified the need for additional protections to shield California providers in the event another state attempts to enforce its laws against California-licensed healthcare providers. In addition, states such as Utah, Alabama, and Arizona have enacted bills that bar or restrict healthcare professionals from providing gender-affirming care.

As psychiatrists, we stand with our patients and our colleagues in protecting access to safe abortion. There is a large and growing body of research that demonstrates that access to safe abortion care is critical for the mental health and wellbeing of women and their families. Furthermore, we are acutely aware of the way that laws restricting appropriate medical care contribute to the already high rates of physician burnout.

SB 487 will help those who need it by prohibiting health care payers such as health insurers, healthcare service plans, and the state's Medicaid program (Medi-Cal) from discriminating or taking adverse actions against providers who are subjected to civil, criminal, or professional license actions for providing reproductive healthcare services, such as abortion services and contraception as well as gender affirming care in another state that has prohibitions or restrictions.

For these reasons, CSAP is pleased to support SB 487.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'ETW', is positioned below the word 'Sincerely,'.

Emily T. Wood, MD, PhD
Chairwoman, CSAP Government Affairs Committee

CC: Members, Senate Judiciary Committee
Senator Toni Atkins