

Why Minority Groups Oppose the Dangerous & Costly Dialysis Proposition

Measure Jeopardizes the Lives of Low-Income Dialysis Patients, Reduces Access to Doctors & Increases Health Care Costs for All

Even though voters overwhelmingly rejected their flawed ballot measure last election (Prop 8), one special interest is promoting yet another dangerous and costly proposition that would reduce access to care for low-income and minority Californians who need regular dialysis treatment to stay alive. The proposition, aimed for the November 2020 ballot, would also hurt all Californians by making us wait longer to see our doctors and increasing health care costs by hundreds of millions of dollars annually. Here's why patients, doctors, dialysis providers, community and minority groups all oppose this dangerous and costly dialysis proposition:

Disproportionately Impacts Minority Patients Who Have Higher Rates of Kidney Failure

- ▶ According to the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Disease, African Americans are **3.5 times more likely and Latinos are 1.5 times more likely to develop kidney failure** and need dialysis treatment to stay alive.¹
- ▶ According to the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services, at the end of 2017, California had the highest number of dialysis patients in the nation.² African Americans and Hispanics made up 57% of patients on dialysis.³
- ▶ This flawed proposition **hurts the poorest and most vulnerable individuals in our communities** by reducing access to the care they need to stay alive.

Puts Dialysis Patients' Lives at Risk

- ▶ Dialysis does the job of an individual's failed kidneys, removing toxins from the body. Dialysis is not optional. **Missing even a single treatment increases a patient's risk of death by 30%.**
- ▶ A study by the Berkeley Research Group found that the measure's requirement of a "*physician on-site at all times*" would increase dialysis treatment costs **by \$320 million annually** and that **nearly half of the clinics in the state would become financially unsustainable.**
- ▶ According to the independent, non-partisan Legislative Analyst: "*Given the higher costs due to the measure, some governing entities **may decide to close some clinics.***"
- ▶ This proposition could force hundreds of dialysis clinics to **cut back services or shut down** completely – making it more difficult for dialysis patients to access their life-saving treatments and putting their lives at risk.
- ▶ Low-income communities and dialysis clinics with higher populations of patients with government health coverage are disproportionately impacted by clinic closures.

Makes our Physician Shortage Worse

- ▶ Currently, each dialysis patient is already under the care of their own doctor who is a kidney specialist. **Dialysis treatments are administered by registered nurses and licensed dialysis technicians specifically trained in kidney dialysis care.** And every dialysis clinic is required by law to have a physician medical director who monitors a clinic's care.
- ▶ It makes no sense to require a full-time physician be on-site at all times at dialysis clinics, when they won't even be involved in patient care.
- ▶ There are 600 dialysis clinics in California. This proposition **will take thousands of practicing doctors away from their current patients** and push them into bureaucratic, non-care roles at dialysis clinics – **making it harder for all of us to get appointments with our doctors and treatment at our hospitals.**
- ▶ **Disadvantaged and low-income communities will be hit hardest by a lack of available physicians.**

Increases Health Care Costs for Struggling Californians

- ▶ Analysis done by the Berkeley Research Group found this measure would **increase dialysis treatment costs by \$320 million every year.**
- ▶ That will increase costs for all of us in the form of **higher insurance premiums** and **higher taxes** for government-sponsored health care.
- ▶ This measure is an irresponsible attack on low-income Californians who are already struggling to make ends meet.

Another Abuse by a Special Interest that Puts Patients at Risk

- ▶ This measure is being sponsored by the United Healthcare Workers West (UHW) union which bankrolled another dialysis proposition (Prop 8) in 2018. Voters overwhelmingly rejected Prop 8 by 20 points.
- ▶ This same union has spent more than \$52 million of its rank-and-file member's dues bankrolling 29 harmful ballot measures over the past 8 years.
- ▶ While unions have the right to try to unionize workers, it's not right to abuse the initiative system and use vulnerable patients as political pawns.



Puts patients at risk



Makes doctor shortage worse



Increases health care costs



Abuse by a special interest

STOP 
DANGEROUS & COSTLY
Dialysis Proposition

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1. National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Disease: <https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/health-statistics/kidney-disease>
2. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) which regulates dialysis clinics nationwide. Data covers patients, regardless of insurer as of 12/31/17. <https://data.cms.gov/>
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