

**BOARD OF
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July 29, 2020

The Honorable Jim Wood
Chair, Assembly Health Committee
State Capitol, Room 6005
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 217 (Portantino): Recreational and organizational camps – Oppose Unless Amended

Dear Assembly Member Wood:

The Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors regrettably have an OPPOSE UNLESS AMENDED position on SB 217 (Portantino), which would substantially expand the oversight for children's camps in California. The County commends the author's goal to create a licensing structure for day camps that ensures the safety and well-being of children. However, SB 217 as currently written, places the sole oversight of recreational day camps on local health departments, including disciplines that are beyond their scope, such as child supervision and safety. Instead, the County requests that the bill be amended to require a taskforce of relevant stakeholders to convene and provide a recommendation to the legislature on a regulatory structure that affords greater safety to children and families who depend on this type of care.

Day camps in Santa Barbara County serve as a vital childcare and enrichment option during school breaks for our working families. The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) licenses childcare facilities and some facilities, such as YMCA programs, are currently licensed by CDSS as a childcare facility, yet have sought licensure as a recreational camp (day camp) during school breaks. One area that the taskforce should explore is the current CDSS infrastructure, which includes regional offices that inspect and license childcare and other facilities under their community care licensing division and a process to investigate complaints, safety concerns and violations, and misconduct.

Further, many sectors that serve the public are subject to multiple enforcement agencies to ensure safety. For example, in the County of Santa Barbara, a restaurant may hold a business license, a state alcohol and beverage license, and a local food permit. The taskforce could explore a multi-faceted structure for the oversight of recreational camps as well. For example, should CDSS provide licensure addressing child supervision and safety a local health department could permit and enforce the health and sanitation aspects of the program, and remaining issues could be the responsibility of appropriate entities such as the

fire marshal, code enforcement, and/or entities certifying activities offered on the grounds of a facility. Attempting to limit this complicated yet necessary oversight to just our local health department as the sole licensing entity risks ignoring the very expertise needed to assure the safety of the children attending day camp programs.

Another area the taskforce should explore is how to define a recreational camp. For example, should a sports camp that operates in a local park for two hours a day require licensure? Should an art camp held at a museum, a weekly municipal summer camp, or camps hosted by local churches require licensure? There are also traveling camps that meet to board a bus in one jurisdiction, then travel to spend the day at another jurisdiction for camp. Is that camp also subject to licensure, and, if so, in which jurisdiction? Lastly, many day camps that exist today do not have brick and mortar buildings where these large programs are facilitated. How should these instances be monitored and regulated?

Another critical area for the taskforce to address to ensure appropriate oversight of recreation camps is the cost of licensure and permitting. SB 217 limits the cost of local licensing and enforcement efforts to an annual fee of \$1,250 yet imposes detailed requirements around inspections and reporting that increases the cost of oversight. Today, the County regulates sleep-away camps but only issues permits for specific functions and operations, such as permits for swimming pools, water systems, and food facilities, which are already statutorily required for all facilities and not just camps. Each of these permits has its own related fee structure. Environmental health regulatory activities are entirely fee-based in California. A cap on fees would likely not cover the cost of regulatory responsibilities for existing organized camps and certainly won't provide the resources necessary to expand oversight to hundreds, if not thousands, of additional recreational camps statewide. We believe that each entity tasked with oversight should be able to recover related costs to assure thorough safety and oversight.

The County of Santa Barbara strongly encourages oversight of recreational day camps by enforcement agencies that can provide the appropriate expertise to assure the safety of children attending such programs. Our local environmental health department is not trained nor equipped to oversee child safety and wellbeing, but instead could be one piece of a comprehensive safety framework for children's day camps. It is for these reasons that we have taken an oppose unless amended position SB 217 and respectfully request that the bill be amended to instead require a broad taskforce to focus on child safety and explore the most appropriate regulatory structure to achieve that goal. The County looks forward to further engaging with the author and Legislature on this issue.

The County of Santa Barbara is specifically concerned about the areas that are not in the County Public Health Department's area of expertise, such as childcare, and the capped amount on what the CPHD can bill leading to an unfunded mandate.

The Board of Supervisors adopted a 2020 Legislative Platform that includes the Fiscal Stability Principle, which specifically states that the County will oppose the loss of, or redirecting of, existing revenue and/or the creation of additional unfunded mandates to the County; as well as the Inter-Agency Collaboration Principle that supports the advocacy efforts of such organizations as the: California State Association of Counties (CSAC) and other local and regional agencies.

For these reasons, the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors must take an opposed unless amended position on SB 217. If you have questions about the Board's position, please contact the County's Legislative Coordinator, Nancy Anderson at 805-568-3403 or NAnderson@countyofsb.org.

Sincerely,



Cliff Berg

Governmental Advocates, Inc.

cc: The Honorable Anthony Portantino, Member, California State Senate
Honorable Members, Assembly Health Committee
Marjorie Swartz, Policy Consultant, Office of Senate pro Tem Atkins
Agnes Lee, Policy Consultant, Office of Speaker Rendon
Rosielyn Pulmano, Chief Consultant, Assembly Health Committee
Joseph Shinstock, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus
Tam Ma, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of Governor Newsom
Alice Chen, Deputy Secretary for Policy, Planning, California Health and Human Services Agency
Michelle Gibbons, Executive Director, County Health Executives Association of California
The Honorable Senator Hannah-Beth Jackson, 19th Senate District
The Honorable Assemblymember Monique Limon, 37th Assembly District
The Honorable Assemblymember Jordan Cunningham, 35th Assembly District
Members, County of Santa Barbara Board of Supervisors
Mona Miyasato, County Executive Officer
Nancy Anderson, Legislative Coordinator, County of Santa Barbara Board of Supervisors