

AB 805 Public Disclosure of PPE Distribution

Assemblymember Brian Maienschein

SUMMARY

AB 805 aims to create transparency around personal protective equipment (PPE) procurement and distribution at the local level by ensuring the Medical Health Operational Area Coordinator (MHOAC) reports PPE distribution information regularly to the California Office of Emergency Services (OES).

BACKGROUND

Medical Health Operational Area Coordinators are usually also their local county health officer. They manage PPE distribution at the county level and do most of the coordination with their local hospitals and with the state. Every county government in the state of California has a public MHOAC, but they are not subject to the Ralph M. Brown Act or the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act. MHOACs are subject to the California Public Records Act, (PRA) however the length of time and bureaucracy involved in a PRA request does not make sense when lawmakers and stakeholders need timely and up to date information on PPE availability.

PPE is one of the most important tools we have in the fight against Covid-19. Adequate PPE for our front-line health care workers is an important part of infection control policy and not only protects workers and patients, but the general public from greater spread of the virus.

Government entities should be accountable and transparent to the public, however during the pandemic it has been difficult for policymakers and stakeholders to receive timely information on PPE procurement. Relying on the protracted PRA process to obtain this information during a pandemic — where time is of the essence — is not sustainable. Like any other arm of local or state government, MHOACs should be subject to basic public disclosure. AB 805 creates those standards for this pandemic and for future emergencies.

THIS BILL

AB 805 is an important measure for public health and worker safety. It would require the Medical Health Operational Area Coordinators report specified information on PPE distribution to the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, and requires OES to publicly post this information. Information required to be reported includes »

- » Which facilities PPE has been distributed to;
- » The type of PPE distributed;
- » The quantities and allocations of each type of PPE.

During a declared health-related state of emergency, this reporting would be required on a weekly basis. Absent a health-related state of emergency, this reporting would be required monthly.

For purposes of this bill, PPE is defined as: N95 facepiece respirators, powered and/or elastomeric air-purifying respirators, surgical masks, isolation gowns, eye protection, shoe coverings, and gloves.

SUPPORT

California Nurses Association (Sponsor)

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