

## FACT SHEET

SB 1067 (Smallwood-Cuevas)  
Supporting a Strong Healthcare Workforce

### SUMMARY

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SB 1067 will establish a process for healing arts boards to expedite license applications for those health care providers who are going to practice in a medically underserved area or provide care to a medically underserved population.

### BACKGROUND

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Workforce has historically been a major issue in medically underserved areas of the state, and in health facilities primarily serving the populations who access safety net services like Community Health Centers (CHCs). CHCs encompass California's federally qualified health centers (FQHCs), community clinics, Native American Health Centers, free clinics, migrant health centers and rural health centers (RHCs). Over 1,270 CHCs in California provide high-quality comprehensive care to 7.7 million people, more than 1 in 5 Californians. They serve everyone who walks through their doors, regardless of their ability to pay, their immigration status, or their individual circumstances.

The issue of workforce has become even more acute since the COVID-19 pandemic when workforce burnout contributed to a mass resignation from healthcare jobs. In a recent survey CHCs reported high vacancy rates and prolonged periods of time to fill staff vacancies for key positions such as physicians, dentists, and nurse practitioners. Data shows they need an average of 26.6 weeks to fill a physician vacancy and 18 weeks to fill a dentist and nurse practitioner vacancy. This has left CHCs in an untenable and challenging position when it comes to recruiting workers to provide healthcare to some of the state's most vulnerable populations.

### PROBLEM

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Many if not all the healing arts boards who license dentists, nurses, and other healthcare providers in California have lengthy backlogs for processing applications for licensure. Often, getting a provider licensed takes much too long and prevents a provider from joining the healthcare workforce in a timely manner. Licensing delays undermine quality patient care, timely access to care, and further exacerbates the major healthcare workforce shortage in California.

### SOLUTION

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The Medical Board of California (MBC) has established a process to expedite license applications for those who can demonstrate they intend to practice in a medically underserved area or serve a medically underserved population. This legislative proposal would use the model established under the MBC, to create an expedited licensure application process at all other healing arts boards for future providers who can demonstrate they intend to practice in a medically underserved area or serve a medically underserved population. This bill does not require new or duplicative efforts of healing arts boards, only the prioritization of certain applications they'd already be processing.

### STAFF CONTACT

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### SUPPORT

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California Primary Care Association Advocates  
(Sponsor)