


CALIFORNIA ADVOCATES, INC.



July 16, 2012

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TO: Members, Senate Appropriations Committee

FROM: Julianne Broyles 
On Behalf of California Association of Health Underwriters

SUBJECT: **AB 1731 (BLOCK)--NEW UNFUNDED MANDATE – OPPOSE**
SCHEDULED FOR HEARING: AUGUST 6, 2012

Robert G. Walters
of Counsel

The California Association of Health Underwriters (CAHU) must **OPPOSE AB 1731 (Block)**, as amended July 6, 2012, which has the potential to increase cost of health insurance coverage by establishing a new unfunded mandate for tests on newborns.

The California Association of Health Underwriters is the state's largest association of health insurance agents, brokers and other health insurance industry professionals. Our members help millions of individual Californians and businesses evaluate, select, purchase and use their health care coverage plans, resulting in greater health and financial security. CAHU agents and brokers also act as advocates for policyholders and their families when coverage disputes arise. CAHU agents and brokers perform many functions for small employers with respect to managing their employee benefits program - at no additional cost to the small employer.

As written, **AB 1731** provides for a new, unfunded mandate regarding the phased-in screening of newborns for congenital heart defects beginning July 1, 2013. For the record, CAHU supports good health for all Californians. However, CAHU is concerned that this legislation will force yet another unfunded mandate upon health care providers, therefore adding even more of a cost burden within the health care system. We know that you and **AB 1731** sponsors have the best of intentions, but CAHU must oppose the bill due to the ultimate costs that will be passed on to health care consumers in California.

For these reasons, CAHU urges a “**NO**” vote on **AB 1731 (Block)** when it comes before you for consideration.

cc: Office of Governor Brown
The Honorable Marty Block
Brendan McCarthy, Senate Appropriations Committee
Kirk Feely, Senate Republican Fiscal Office