

Date of Hearing: April 23, 2025

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

AB 1500 (Schiavo) – As Amended March 28, 2025

Policy Committee: Health

Vote: 12 - 1

Urgency: No

State Mandated Local Program: No

Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill requires the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) to partner with a California-based nonprofit organization with specified expertise to update and maintain its existing website, abortion.ca.gov, to ensure people have access to evidence-based, medically accurate, comprehensive sexual and reproductive health information, data, research, services and resources, including when accessing abortion services in California.

The bill also:

- 1) Requires the abortion.ca.gov website be updated and maintained to include the full range of sexual and reproductive health care services and information, including minors' rights; abortion and other sexual and reproductive health services as needed and appropriate based on input from the stakeholder workgroup and community workgroup; sexual and reproductive health information historically relied on and made available on federal internet websites, including evidence-based clinical practice guidelines, data, and research around sexual and reproductive health; educational materials and public health resources on sexual and reproductive health topics.
- 2) Requires the partner organization listed above to form and consult with a stakeholder workgroup and community workgroup to determine and update the information and resources posted on the website.
- 3) Requires the community workgroup to include youth and other representatives of other specified communities.
- 4) Requires CDPH to ensure public awareness of the internet website through a broad range of strategies, including governmental newsletters and notifications to be disseminated from relevant departments and public universities, and partnering with one or more community-based organizations with relevant experience to develop public education and outreach activities, campaigns, and materials to disseminate.
- 5) Requires CDPH to prepare and submit a report to the Legislature annually that includes information about the website's reach and impact, including total unique visits, total visits to the site, and other information determined in consultation with the stakeholder workgroup and community workgroup.

- 6) Requires the information reported be provided in aggregate numbers only and to not disclose any personally identifiable information.

FISCAL EFFECT:

General Fund costs of an unknown amount, likely low millions of dollars annually, potentially decreasing after the initial year, to CDPH to implement his bill. This estimate is based on an allocation in the Budget Act of 2022 of \$1 million one-time to CDPH to develop and maintain a website providing accurate and updated information on the right to abortion care under state law, options for reproductive services coverage, and how to find providers, among other things, and an additional \$1 million for CDPH to research and measure unmet needs for access to reproductive health care services.

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Purpose.** According to the author:

Access to abortion and reproductive healthcare is rapidly changing across the US. The federal administration is currently taking down or altering federal websites containing clinical practice guidelines and public health data and research. These changes will harm public health by creating a vacuum of scientific, evidence-based, and medically-accurate sexual and reproductive health information. The altering of public health data will delay access to time-sensitive care and erode public confidence and awareness of reliable reproductive healthcare information. Our state has an essential role to play as a reliable source of information, not just for Californians, but also women and healthcare providers across the nation. This bill will build upon the creation of Abortion.ca.gov to require the site to serve as a central repository for unbiased and evidence-based guidelines and resources for providers and the general public.

- 2) **Related Legislation.** AB 40 (Bonta) clarifies that “emergency services and care” includes abortion and other reproductive health services, as necessary to relieve or eliminate an emergency medical condition. AB 40 is pending on the Assembly floor.

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