
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Anna Caballero, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 870 (Hadwick) - California Children's Services Program: county designation

Version: September 4, 2025

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: September 11, 2025

Policy Vote: HEALTH 9 - 0

Mandate: No

Consultant: Agnes Lee

Bill Summary: AB 870 would allow counties with a total population under 2,000 persons to designate another county to administer the California Children's Services (CCS) program, as specified.

Fiscal Impact: The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) estimates costs for staffing resources of approximately \$164,000 (\$82,000 General Fund and \$82,000 federal funds) in 2026-27, and \$155,000 (\$78,000 General Fund and \$77,000 federal funds) in 2027-28 and annually thereafter. The DHCS indicates that while the bill would require the department to set standards for a county to designate another county as the administrator of their CCS program, the DHCS does not currently have standards in place to support this type of program transition.

Background: The CCS program provides diagnostic and treatment services, medical case management, and physical and occupational therapy health care services to children under 21 years of age with CCS-eligible conditions (e.g. severe genetic diseases, chronic medical conditions, infectious diseases producing major sequelae, and traumatic injuries) from families unable to afford catastrophic health care costs.

Current law requires counties with over 200,000 residents to administer their own CCS program, and allows counties with under 200,000 residents to either independently administer their CCS program or jointly with the DHCS. The director of the DHCS must establish standards relating to the local administration and minimum services to be offered by counties in the CCS program.

Children who are eligible for both Medi-Cal and the CCS program are enrolled in a Medi-Cal plan and receive CCS-covered services through the CCS program on a fee-for-service basis. Current law authorizes the DHCS to establish a "Whole Child Model" in specified counties, in which both Medi-Cal and most CCS services would be covered and paid for by the Medi-Cal plan.

Proposed Law: Specific provisions of the bill would:

- Allow counties with a total population under 2,000 persons to designate another county to administer the CCS program, if all of the following conditions are met:
 - The other county agrees to the designation.
 - The other county otherwise meets CCS program standards, as specified.
 - Neither county is a Whole Child Model county.

- Require the DHCS to adopt regulations necessary for implementation; and authorize the DHCS, if it deems appropriate, to implement the bill's provisions by means of provider bulletins, written guidelines, or similar instructions from the department until regulations are adopted.

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