

SENATE THIRD READING

SB 144 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review)

As Amended September 9, 2025

Majority vote. Budget Bill Appropriations Takes Effect Immediately

SUMMARY

This budget trailer bill implements various health-related provisions of the Budget Act of 2025.

Major Provisions

This budget trailer bill implements various provisions of the Budget Act of 2025.

Specifically, this bill:

State Immunization Guidance:

- 1) Establishes the list of immunizations, items, and services recommended by the United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF), the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), in effect on January 1, 2025, as the baseline recommendations for California.
- 2) Provides that the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) may modify or supplement the baseline recommendations described above in consultation with medical and scientific organizations, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, and the American Academy of Family Physicians.
- 3) Authorizes CDPH to also incorporate subsequent recommendations issued by the USPSTF, ACIP, or HRSA, to the extent the department determines those recommendations are consistent with promoting public health.
- 4) Requires CDPH to publish the recommendations of immunizations, items, and services, and publish any updates, modifications, or supplements adopted, which become effective upon publication.
- 5) Updates related provisions for health care benefit coverage, professional and occupational licensing, and school immunization notification statutes to reflect the implementation of state immunization guidelines.
- 6) Provides liability protections for persons prescribing, dispensing, ordering, furnishing, or administering a vaccine required by state law or under specified circumstances, except in cases of willful misconduct or gross negligence.

California Department of Public Health:

- 1) Increases the original license, license renewal and temporary license fees for Genetic Counselors, as specified.
- 2) Increases application, registration, and license fees for clinical laboratories and various clinical laboratory personnel, as specified.

- 3) Allocates \$18 million for state operations out of the \$65 million appropriated to fund services, programs, or initiatives funded by the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) Rebate Fund for which federal funding has been reduced or eliminated as a result of federal policy actions. Additionally allocates \$1.6 million for state operations out of \$9 million appropriated to fund state and local disease intervention specialists.

Department of Health Care Services

- 1) Exempts foster youth and former foster youth with Unsatisfactory Immigration Status from various service limitations in the Medi-Cal program, including the enrollment freeze and monthly premium slated to take effect in future years.
- 2) Requires the Department to convene a working group to discuss the status of, and receive feedback regarding, the implementation of the Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative (CYBHI) school fee schedule. Requires a contracted administrator to automate the matching of student records with health plan enrollment information and to reimburse claims pursuant to claim payment deadlines for the CYBHI school fee schedule, as specified.
- 3) Eliminates various legislative reports deemed outdated or obsolete.
- 4) Extends the Medi-Cal medical interpretation study and pilot project for limited English proficient beneficiaries by one year, to July 1, 2026, and makes the original \$5 million appropriation available through June 30, 2026.
- 5) Makes various technical revisions and corrections.

Additional Key Provisions

- 1) Establishes the Abortion Access Fund to provide funding for abortion services and authorizes the Department of Health Care Access and Information to distribute funding through grants and contracts. Establishes the funding source as excess balances from segregated accounts maintained by health plans offering qualified health plans through Covered California.
- 2) Requires Covered California, beginning January 1, 2026, to provide payments to qualified health plan issuers to defray the costs of state-mandated gender-affirming care benefits, recently determined to by the federal government to exceed essential health benefits, subject to legislative appropriation. Authorizes use of the Health Care Affordability Reserve Fund, upon appropriation, for these payments.
- 3) Exempts health care practitioners licensed in another state, territory, or country from certain healing arts licensure, certification, or registration requirements, while providing professional services at Olympic and Paralympic activities, if the health care practitioner has been invited by the Los Angeles Organizing Committee for the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games to provide those services, as specified.
- 4) Exempts out-of-state licensed or certified Emergency Medical Services personnel from California licensure requirements when authorized to provide services at sanctioned sites for the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games, as specified.

COMMENTS

This bill is a budget trailer bill that implements provisions of the 2025-26 budget package affecting health-related provisions.

According to the Author**Arguments in Support**

None on file.

Arguments in Opposition

None on file.

FISCAL COMMENTS

This bill would make appropriations in the following ways: by expanding the allowable uses of the ADAP Rebate Fund; by authorizing additional deposits into the continuously appropriated Genetic Disease Testing Fund; by extending the availability of previously appropriated funds for the Medi-Cal medical interpretation study and pilot project; and by continuously appropriating the Abortion Access Fund to support grants and contracts for abortion services.

VOTES**SENATE FLOOR: 28-10-2**

YES: Allen, Archuleta, Arreguín, Ashby, Becker, Blakespear, Cabaldon, Caballero, Cervantes, Cortese, Durazo, Gonzalez, Grayson, Hurtado, Laird, Limón, McGuire, McNerney, Menjivar, Padilla, Pérez, Richardson, Rubio, Smallwood-Cuevas, Umberg, Wahab, Weber Pierson, Wiener

NO: Alvarado-Gil, Choi, Dahle, Grove, Jones, Niello, Ochoa Bogh, Seyarto, Strickland, Valladares

ABS, ABST OR NV: Reyes, Stern

UPDATED

VERSION: September 9, 2025

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