



Legislative Update ■ January 28, 2020

State Commission Exploring Health Care Coverage Options Convenes for Inaugural Meeting

The Healthy California for All Commission met for the first time on January 27. The Commission, created by SB 104 (2019), is charged with developing “options for advancing progress toward achieving a health care delivery system in California that provides coverage and access through a unified financing system.” As it undertakes its work, the Commission is required to submit two reports to the Governor and Legislature. The first – due July 1, 2020 – will analyze California’s existing health care system, options for steps to transition to a unified financing system, including, but not limited to, single payer, and options for coverage expansions. The second report – due February 1, 2021 – will include options for designing a unified financing system, again, including, but not limited to, a single-payer approach. The Commission also is required to report to the Legislature every six months on its progress in developing the required reports.

Monday’s meeting was largely organizational and provided both a context and policy framework for the Commission. (The agenda and materials can be viewed [here](#).) The Commission will serve in an advisory role in the development of the two reports and will be asked to take advisory votes as the work progresses. The Administration told Commission members that they have retained consultants to assist in developing the reports, including the following experts: 1) Andrew Bindman, University of California San Francisco; 2) Rick Kronick, University of California San Diego; 3) Marian Mulkey, Mulkey Consulting; 4) Eric Douglas and Karin Bloomer, LRI; 5) Ken Jacobs, Gerry Kominski, and Laurel Lucia, California Simulation of Insurance Markets (CalSIM) model; 6) Bobbie Wunsch, Pacific Health Consulting Group; and 7) Robert Cosway, Milliman.

Given the short timeframe before the first report deadline, some Commission members expressed concern about how to incorporate public input and whether there is consensus about the meaning of the statutory language creating the Commission – and whether it is too narrow a construct of health. For example, should the Commission discuss social determinants of health?

After presentations on the history of health reform and the current state of health care in California, the Commission members had a robust conversation about data needs. Issues noted during that discussion include an inventory of what data exists and where the data gaps are; urban/rural data, instead of statewide data that masks rural issues; data on the most vulnerable Californians; more information about capitated health plans, which are a unique building block of the California health care system; a broader discussion of other tax options (outside of a payroll

tax); forecasting health care costs over the next five to ten years; data about underinsured Californians; and more information about a public option.

The Commission wrapped up with a presentation and conversation on policy options, focused on three questions regarding 1) prioritizing areas and decision points for more in-depth analysis, 2) a public option, and 3) how to manage a transition, including whether some groups transition more quickly and other more slowly.

Hot Bill Update: SB 50's Fate Hangs in Balance

We will soon know more about the future of [SB 50](#), a controversial measure by Senator Scott Wiener that would create incentives for local governments to building housing near jobs and transit. Last week, Senate President pro Tem Toni Atkins decided to pull the bill from the Senate Appropriations Committee and placed it in the Senate Rules Committee, a move widely viewed to preempt the bill's likely demise in the Senate Appropriations Committee given the lack of support from the chair, Senator Anthony Portantino. (*Los Angeles Times'* George Skelton penned an [illuminating article](#) on the somewhat rare use of this maneuver by the pro Tem.) It remains unclear whether SB 50 will pass from the Senate to the Assembly for debate in the second house. Liam Dillon, who also writes for the *LA Times*, [reported](#) that despite the pro Tem's efforts to facilitate consideration of SB 50 by the full Senate, Senator Holly Mitchell and a number of influential advocacy groups have notified Senator Wiener of their official opposition to the bill even as recently amended. Given this Friday's two-year bill deadline – which dictates that any bill introduced in 2019 pass out of its house of origin by January 31 in order to stay alive – at least a short-term outcome for SB 50 will become apparent before week's end.

CalMatters Analyzes Ten Options for Addressing Homelessness Crisis

In a very interesting exercise, *CalMatters* recently [presented](#) ten options available to policy makers for addressing homelessness. The piece recognizes that each option's reach and efficacy range from "limited to imperfect" and also underscores just how difficult and complex the homelessness problem is. From massive investment in permanent supportive housing to doing nothing (and eight other alternatives in between), *CalMatters* assesses each option for its cost, how quickly it can be implemented, and its relative political popularity.