

March 29, 2010

The Honorable Nancy Skinner
California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 4126
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Assembly Bill 1994 (Skinner): Oppose

Dear Assemblymember Skinner,

ALPHA Fund respectfully opposes your Assembly Bill 1994 which would create a presumption for specified hospital employees with methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA), H1N1 influenza virus, and neck and back injuries.

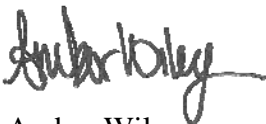
ALPHA Fund is a self-insurance pool that provides Workers' Compensation coverage to Health Care Districts, public and non-profit hospitals, clinics and nursing facilities throughout California. The 49 Participants in the Fund range from major urban medical centers to rural facilities and cover approximately 20,000 employees.

ALPHA Fund Participants have paid out more than five million dollars for various back and neck injuries. In the past few years, 436 claims were paid out at an average of \$12,163 each. If this bill passes, we are concerned that these numbers will surely rise. The fiscal impact on these hospitals is dire, as most are facing a large economic crisis which is further compounded by Medi-Cal reimbursement cuts.

Furthermore, ALPHA Fund is concerned with this additional level of presumption that places the burden of proof on the employer. Similar bills have historically been granted to firefighters, police officers and other public safety employees, because of specific dangers associated with their type of the work. However, this is not the case with hospital employees.

AB 1994 creates an expensive, unreasonable, and unnecessary mandate on hospitals and will inevitably increase workers' compensation claims and skyrocket costs. For these reasons, ALPHA Fund respectfully opposes this bill.

Sincerely,



Amber Wiley
Legislative Advocate

Cc: Assembly Insurance Committee