



April 9, 2021

RE: DPSFV Supports Assembly Bill 619 (Calderon): Lung Health

Representatives of the Honorable San Fernando Valley Delegation:

On behalf of the Democratic Party of the San Fernando Valley (DPSFV), we are pleased to report that our Executive Board voted to support AB 619 (Calderon), which will require the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) to conduct provider awareness for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and require counties to include provisions in the next iteration of their emergency plan that address the adverse effects of wildfire smoke on lung health.

DPSFV was founded in 1978 and is chartered by the Los Angeles County Democratic Central Committee. Our organization is the coordinating body for a coalition of twenty-one Democratic Clubs located in the six Assembly Districts (38, 39, 43, 45, 46, and 50) which are wholly or partially in the San Fernando Valley.

Conducting provider awareness relating to COPD will promote early diagnosis and prevention of the disease among Californians. COPD does not have a cure, so treating those with COPD early is essential in managing their symptoms and lung health. Along with improving individual health outcomes, COPD provider awareness will help mitigate the pressure on California's hospitals as they work to manage the surge of COVID-19 patients. The under diagnosis of COPD drives unnecessary high rates of ER visits and hospital admissions for uncontrolled flare-ups.

In addition, the bill responds to the increasing threat that wildfire smoke has on public health, and in particular, lung health. Recently we have seen longer wildfire seasons with larger, more intense, and more destructive wildfires. As wildfires become more severe, they present a greater threat to the health of all Californians. However, there is no local authority tasked with taking the lead on informing the public about the health threat posed by wildfire air pollution. This has led to examples of conflicting guidance provided to the public by a city and the county in which it is located. Accurate and clear guidance is especially critical for those whose health is most at risk when exposed to wildfire smoke, namely seniors, children, and those with existing chronic lung conditions like COPD and asthma. Requiring counties to include provisions to plan for the impacts of wildfire smoke in their emergency plans will protect the lung health of vulnerable Californians by ensuring they have the resources and information to protect themselves against the increasing threat posed by wildfires.

Please note that DPSFV will be tracking this bill as it travels through the Legislature. Your voting record will be noted and may be considered should you ever seek our endorsement. Your office is always welcome to contact DPSFV if you have any questions.

Sincerely and respectfully,

Chair Sean M. Rivas  
Democratic Party of the San Fernando Valley

cc: Assembly Member Lisa Calderon (Author)  
Members of the Assembly Health Committee  
Members of the Assembly Emergency Management Committee

**PO Box 57259, Sherman Oaks, CA 91413 818-995-DEMS (3367)**