

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 2354

Introduced by Assembly Member V. Manuel Perez

February 19, 2010

An act relating to public health.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2354, as introduced, V. Manuel Perez. Community Health Workers: Promotores.

Existing law establishes training and certification programs for various healing arts professionals including, among others, nurses, midwives, occupational therapists, dietitians, and social workers.

This bill would state the intent of the Legislature to enact legislation that would prepare California to receive and use various federal health care funding to prepare, train, promote, and expand the work of community health workers, as specified.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no. State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the
- 2 following:
- 3 (a) Community Health Workers (CHWs), also known as
- 4 promotores, peer leaders, or health advocates, serve as a bridge
- 5 between the community and the public health care system,
- 6 providing health education and prevention information and
- 7 resources in a manner that is culturally and linguistically
- 8 appropriate. CHWs function as cultural brokers who possess a

1 unique understanding of those, often difficult-to-reach,
2 communities they serve.

3 (b) According to the federal Centers for Disease Control and
4 Prevention, integrating promotores and community health workers
5 into health programs has been associated with improvements in
6 access to health care, prenatal care, pregnancy and birth outcomes,
7 client health status, health- and screening-related behaviors, and
8 reduced health care costs.

9 (c) Federal efforts to address healthcare affordability and
10 accessibility have identified the community health worker and
11 promotores model as an effective practice and have committed
12 financial support to help implement the model. In fact, current
13 federal legislative efforts include funding for CHWs and
14 promotores.

15 (d) The Legislature recognizes and applauds the contributions
16 of CHWs with regard to community health and well-being, and
17 cost-effective prevention. Currently, however, California does not
18 have a statewide certification or any training specific to becoming
19 or working as a promotora or community health worker.

20 (e) It is the intent of the Legislature to enact legislation that
21 would prepare California to receive and use federal health care
22 funding, including, but not limited to, health prevention, outreach,
23 and education funding, to prepare, train, promote, and expand the
24 work of promotores, including in community health clinics and
25 county public health departments, throughout the state.