

Wood: I have good news from legislative session

October 10, 2022



Last Friday was the last day for Governor Gavin Newsom to sign or veto legislation considered during the 2022 legislative session.

Assemblymember Jim Wood (D-Healdsburg) is pleased to announce that a majority of the bills he authored this year will become law.

“As a health care provider of 30 years and chair of the Assembly Health Committee for the past seven years, many of my bills have a shared goal of making health care more affordable and accessible,” said Wood.

Top on Wood’s list of health care accomplishments was the creation of the Office of Health Care Affordability, a new office that will allow the state to analyze the health care market for cost drivers and trends in order to develop data-informed policies and enforceable cost targets. OHCA language began as AB 1130 and later became budget language, passed and signed June 30.

“People suffering with mental health issues need access to care and it should be a top priority in any caring society,” said Wood. “I authored AB 2275 with Assemblymember Mark Stone, chair of the Assembly

Judiciary Committee, to be a first step toward improving our system by clarifying the due process rights of individuals detained under it with the long-term goal of better and quicker services and care.”

AB 2322 will ensure that the building materials used to construct nonresidential critical infrastructure will provide reasonable protection against the threat of wildfire.

“My rural community has suffered wildfires, the effects of drought and other natural disasters,” said Wood. “Although some progress has been made on improving residential building standards to protect against wildfire, we needed to update those for nonresidential, critical infrastructure in certain fire severity zones.

AB 2752 requires broadband companies to provide the California Public Utilities Commission with household-level mapping data regarding broadband access, becoming more transparent about where they provide service, geographically and specifically, so that data can be used to promote increased availability.

“Unfortunately, some corporate broadband providers have chosen not to build their networks in certain communities even when it’s profitable – but apparently not profitable enough for them,” said Wood.

“Well enough of that. We need to know which communities are being snubbed, and this mapping requirement will help us understand that.”

AB 2176 was introduced to address a challenge that Native American families experience when they follow a cultural tradition of not naming their newborn for 10 days, dedicating the 10th day to a sacred naming ceremony. This new law benefits both hospitals and families by allowing additional time to complete the birth registration process.

“My district includes many Native American Tribes and it’s important that California respect this cultural tradition and expanding the timeframe for families to register the birth of a child from 10 days to 21 days was a way to do that,” said Wood.

AB 2530 protects striking workers by allowing continued access to affordable health care coverage, not only for themselves, but also for their family members.

“In a perfect world, workers should never have to use this new law and my hope is that employers will choose to continue health coverage voluntarily during labor disputes and not use it as a weapon during negotiations,” said Wood.

Protecting local craft breweries is the goal of AB 2301 by making an important and common sense change authorizing breweries to self-distribute their beer to restaurants they own within a five-mile radius of their manufacturing site.

“Sometimes regulations and laws have unintended consequences and when this one was brought to my attention, I was happy to make it work,” said Wood.