



November 21, 2025

Welcome to America's Physician Groups' *California Update*. Each week APG reports the latest on health care happenings in the Golden State.

Here's what you'll find in this week's edition:

- APG Provides [2025 Legislative Implementation Guides](#) For Members
- Berkeley IGS Poll: [Governor's Race](#) Starts Wide Open As Nearly Half Of Voters Remain Undecided
- [Shared Clinical Decision Making](#) Guide from the Common Health Coalition
- 2025 APG California Policy & Advocacy [Meeting Dates](#)
- APG California Advocacy Member [Resources](#)



APG Provides 2025 Legislative Implementation Guides For Members

The 2025 California legislative session included several new laws that will require our members to implement. Our [2025 Implementation Guides](#) provide useful information on the key provisions and suggested steps toward implementation. All guides are current as of November 21, 2025, and will be updated to more current versions as further information becomes available during the course of formal regulations development or introduction of regulators' guidance from OHCA, DMHC, and DHCS.

The current guide list includes the following new laws:

- SB 306 – Prior Authorization
- SB 497 – Gender Affirming Care
- SB 530 – Medi-Cal Time & Distance Standards
- SB 660 – Data Exchange Format (DxF)
- AB 50 – Pharmacists, Contraceptives
- AB 260 – Reproductive Health Care
- AB 849 – Medical Chaperones
- AB 1041 – Provider Credentialing
- AB 1415 – OHCA MSO Oversight



Berkeley IGS Poll: Governor's Race Starts Wide Open As Nearly Half Of Voters Remain Undecided

The latest [Berkeley IGS Poll](#) shows that California's 2026 governor's race is still taking shape, with no clear frontrunner and an unusually high number of undecided voters. Riverside County Sheriff Chad Bianco, a Republican, has edged into a narrow lead with 13% support statewide—a notable shift from August, when Democrat Katie Porter held the top spot. Porter now stands at 11%, a six-point drop that places her just behind Bianco but still ahead of most other major Democrats in the field.

The next tier of candidates includes former U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra and Republican commentator Steve Hilton, each drawing 8% support, followed by former Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa at 5%. Several other Democrats, including Betty Yee and Rick Caruso, register at 3% or below. But the biggest finding in the poll is that 44% of California voters remain undecided, signaling that the race is far from settled.

Adding to the fluidity of the contest, two new high-profile Democrats—Rep. Eric Swalwell and businessman and environmental advocate Tom Steyer—declared their candidacies later in the week. Swalwell, a Bay Area congressman since 2013, is positioning himself as a “fighter and protector” focused on lowering household costs, raising wages, and defending state policies on clean energy and immigration from federal rollbacks. Steyer, a billionaire investor and longtime climate activist, is centering his campaign on affordability, housing production, and corporate accountability, pledging major investments in homebuilding, utility cost reductions, expanded education access, and bans on corporate PAC money. Their late entries add both financial muscle and additional ideological range to an already crowded Democratic field, ensuring further shifts in voter attention and support as the race unfolds.

Partisanship continues to strongly shape early preferences. Bianco commands 37% of Republican voters but just 1% among Democrats, while Porter leads among Democrats at 19% but receives only 1% from Republicans. Republican voters appear far more certain overall—73% offer a candidate preference—compared with only about half of Democrats and non-partisans.

Regional divides are emerging as well. Bianco performs strongest in the Inland Empire, his home base, and shows early strength in the Central Valley and Northern regions. Porter leads in the San Francisco Bay Area,

while Hilton draws solid support from Republican-leaning regions such as the Central Valley.

The poll also measured candidate favorability, finding that most candidates are viewed more negatively than positively. Bianco and Porter both hold net-negative image ratings, while Becerra is the only declared candidate with a modestly positive favorability balance. The highest overall image score belonged to Senator Alex Padilla, who—although he ultimately decided not to run—would have entered the race with 12% support, placing him near the top of the field.

Taken together, the findings reflect a race still very much in flux. With term limits preventing Governor Gavin Newsom from seeking reelection and nearly half of voters still undecided, the 2026 gubernatorial contest is wide open. As IGS Co-Director Eric Schickler notes, the passage of Proposition 50 now gives candidates an opportunity to ramp up their campaigns and capture voters' attention. The coming months are likely to bring significant shifts as Californians begin tuning in to the race.



Shared Clinical Decision Making Guide from the Common Health Coalition

The CDC [released](#) official COVID-19 vaccine guidance on October 6, confirming that individuals who are not at-risk should consult with their health care providers, who can offer “shared decision making,” on **the benefits of receiving COVID-19 or other vaccines and boosters**. Practically speaking, this means that anyone who wants a COVID booster should be able to get one, as health insurers have also agreed to continue covering the cost of vaccines – maintaining access at pharmacies and doctors' offices. **To learn more important considerations and requirements on “shared decision making,”** please see this [helpful guide](#) developed by the [Common Health Coalition](#).



2025 APG California Policy & Advocacy Meeting Dates

Members, please mark your calendars for APG's California Policy Forum and California Medi-Cal Forum meetings. You can download APG's 2025 events calendar [here](#).

California Policy Forum

- **December 5 at 12 - 1pm - rescheduled from November 12 - Register [Here](#)**

California Medi- Cal Forum

- **December 16 at 4 - 5pm, [Register Here](#)**



APG California Advocacy Member Resources

- [2025 Legislative Implementation Guide](#)
- **Tracked Health Care Bills [2025-26](#)**: bills we're following in the California State Legislature
- **Office of Health Care Affordability** [regulations](#) and [explanatory slide deck](#)
- **DMHC Quality and Equity Reporting program** [All Plan Letter](#)

For more news and resources, please visit APG's [website](#) or contact a member of APG's California advocacy team.

William Barcellona, EVP of Government Affairs..... wbarcellona@apg.org

David Gonzalez, Senior Legislative Advocate..... dgonzalez@apg.org

Norma Springsteen, Administrative Coordinator.... nspringsteen@apg.org



This message was sent to nspringsteen@apg.org from:

America's Physician Groups

611 N. Brand Blvd., Ste. 1300, Glendale, CA 91203

Click [here](#) to unsubscribe or to change your subscription preferences.