



Senate Bill 980: No Junk Fees for School Forms Act

Introduced February 4, 2026

SUMMARY

SB 980 would prohibit health care providers from charging separate out-of-pocket fees for routine medical documentation that is medically necessary or required for school attendance, medication administration, or participation in school-related activities.

PROBLEM

Recent reports from Senate District 16 indicate that medical clinics serving Medi-Cal patients and uninsured individuals are charging a flat \$50 out-of-pocket fee for routine medical documentation, including doctors' notes, school and sports physical forms, medication authorization forms, and other paperwork required for school attendance or participation in school-related activities, regardless of medical necessity. These fees are imposed in addition to billing insurance for the medical visit itself. Although some clinics offer a sliding scale to reduce the fee, patients must disclose sensitive personal financial information. This raises privacy and equity concerns as it may deter families from requesting required documentation, resulting in children being unable to safely attend school, receive life-saving medications during the school day, participate in school activities, or access necessary accommodations. In some cases, it has led clinics to encourage patients who cannot afford to pay to share visit summaries or progress notes to schools or third parties, pressuring families to disclose more medical information than is reasonably necessary.

BACKGROUND

Existing law reflects a longstanding policy that patients should not be charged for access to medical records or documentation needed to support eligibility for public benefit programs. In 2020, the Legislature reinforced this principle by expanding access to medical records at no charge for patients and their legal representatives seeking public benefits, immigration relief, housing assistance, or disability-related determinations, recognizing that fees for routine medical documentation can create barriers to care and access to essential services for low-income and vulnerable populations. However, current law does not explicitly prohibit health

care providers from charging fees for other routine medical documentation, including health-related forms required by educational institutions for a student's participation in school, childcare, or school-sponsored activities, leaving families exposed to out-of-pocket charges for paperwork that is often mandatory and medically necessary.

SOLUTION

SB 980 would prohibit health care providers from charging separate out-of-pocket fees for completing routine medical documentation that is medically necessary or required for school attendance, medication administration, or participation in school-related activities. By extending existing consumer protections to school and child-care health forms, the bill closes a gap in current law, prevents administrative junk fees, protects patient privacy, and ensures children are not denied access to education or health accommodations due to inability to pay.

SUPPORT

- Kings County Board of Education
- Farmersville Unified School District
- Lemoore Union Elementary School District
- Lemoore Union High School District
- Reef-Sunset Unified School District

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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