



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

2019 FEB 15 AM 11:52

NATHAN FLETCHER

SUPERVISOR, FOURTH DISTRICT
SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

AGENDA ITEM

DATE: February 26, 2019

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT STRENGTHENING AUTHORITY OF LOCAL HEALTH OFFICERS
RESPONDING TO COMMUNICABLE DISEASE OUTBREAKS
(DISTRICTS: ALL)

OVERVIEW

On September 1, 2017, the County's Public Health Officer issued a Declaration of Local Health Emergency in response to an extraordinary number of hepatitis A cases reported in San Diego, which was first detected in early March 2017 and later traced back to November 2016. Despite the local efforts, cases of hepatitis A continued to increase and spread for multiple months resulting in a devastating 582 confirmed cases with 395 of those hospitalized and 20 lives lost. The local health emergency ended on January 23, 2018.

It is incumbent on us as stewards of public health to do everything in our control to prevent another catastrophic event like this from occurring again in San Diego County. That is why I am proposing that our Board support Assembly Bill (AB) 262, authored by Assemblymembers Todd Gloria and Lorena Gonzalez, which seeks to clarify and strengthen the authorities of local health officers as it relates to communicating relevant information and directing action of governments in its jurisdiction that are affected by the outbreak. This clarity in law is vital in order to improve legal authority for our public health officer and help prevent future outbreaks.

If approved, today's action directs the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to support and sponsor AB 262 to strengthen and clarify the authority of local health officers during a communicable disease outbreak.

I urge your support.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

SUPERVISOR NATHAN FLETCHER

1. Direct the CAO include support in the County's Legislative Program and sign on as a sponsor of Assembly Bill 262, which seeks to clarify and strengthen the authorities of local health officers as it relates to communicating relevant information and directing action of governments in its jurisdiction that are affected by the outbreak.

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FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with this action.

BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT

N/A

ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT

N/A

BACKGROUND

On September 1, 2017, the County's Public Health Officer issued a Declaration of Local Health Emergency in response to an extraordinary number of hepatitis A cases reported in San Diego, which was first detected in early March 2017 and later traced back to November 2016. Hepatitis A is not usually life threatening and the majority of those infected with the virus fully recover. However, those affected in San Diego had high rates of hospitalization and death.

Despite the local efforts, cases of hepatitis A continued to increase and spread for multiple months resulting in a devastating 582 confirmed cases with 395 of those hospitalized and 20 lives lost. The local health emergency ended on January 23, 2018.

After the outbreak was declared at an end, there were several reviews commissioned to evaluate the County's response to the local outbreak, including the California State Auditor's Office, the 2017/18 San Diego Grand Jury and the County of San Diego After Action Report. Each of the reports identified several recommendations that have either been implemented or are in the process of being implemented by County staff. One theme that was consistent throughout all three reports was the ambiguity around the roles, responsibilities and authority of the County Public Health Officer to notify and inform as well as direct other municipalities in its jurisdiction.

On January 24, 2019, Assemblymembers Todd Gloria and Lorena Gonzalez introduced Assembly Bill (AB) 262 to clarify the law as it relates to notifying and directing jurisdictions under the purview of local health officers during a communicable disease outbreak.

It is incumbent on us as stewards of public health to do everything in our control to prevent another catastrophic event like this from occurring again in San Diego County. That is why I am proposing that our Board actively support and sponsor Assembly Bill (AB) 262, which seeks to clarify and strengthen the powers of local health officers as it relates to communicating relevant information and directing action of governments in its jurisdiction affected by the outbreak. This clarity in law is vital in order to improve legal authority for our public health officer and help prevent future outbreaks.

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It is important to recognize for the record the following:

- The response effort to combat the outbreak was unique and challenging due to the unprecedented nature of the outbreak both in scale and transmission characteristics.
- Previously, both locally and nationally, most hepatitis A outbreaks were caused by foodborne sources and affected the general public. In the San Diego case, the spread of the disease was person-to-person mostly among transient homeless and/or drug injection using populations and perpetuated by unsanitary public spaces where they resided.
- The County Public Health Department led the response effort with consultation from the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention and in collaboration with several community, health and municipal partners.
- The County took the lead on reaching out to impacted populations with vaccinations and distributing hygiene kits and working with regional city counterparts to improve the cleanliness of the environment, specifically sanitizing and removing contaminated property in areas where the target population congregated.
- The public campaign focused on a three-pronged approach, including: Education about symptoms and transmission of disease, Vaccination which was proven to be 95 percent effective in protecting against the disease and good Hygiene to stop spread of disease.

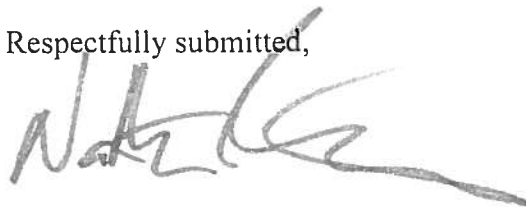
If approved, today's action directs the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to actively support and work with the authors of AB 262 to strengthen and clarify the authorities of the local health officers during a communicable disease outbreak.

I urge your support.

LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN

N/A

Respectfully submitted,



NATHAN FLETCHER
Supervisor, Fourth District

ATTACHMENT(S)

N/A

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AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET

REQUIRES FOUR VOTES: Yes No

WRITTEN DISCLOSURE PER COUNTY CHARTER SECTION 1000.1 REQUIRED
 Yes No

PREVIOUS RELEVANT BOARD ACTIONS:

January 9, 2018 (2) Review and Continue Local Health Emergency: Hepatitis A Outbreak
January 2, 2018 (1) Review and Continue Local Health Emergency: Hepatitis A Outbreak;
December 19, 2017 (1), Review and Continue Local Health Emergency: Hepatitis A Outbreak;
December 5, 2017 (3), Review and Continue Local Health Emergency: Hepatitis A Outbreak;
November 27, 2017 (1), Review and Continue Local Health Emergency: Hepatitis A Outbreak;
November 14, 2017 (8), Review and Continue Local Health Emergency: Hepatitis A Outbreak;
November 6, 2017 (1), Review and Continue Local Health Emergency: Hepatitis A Outbreak;
October 24, 2017 (3), Review and Continue Local Health Emergency: Hepatitis A Outbreak;
October 10, 2017 (2), Review and Continue Local Health Emergency: Hepatitis A Outbreak;
September 26, 2017 (2,) Review and Continue Local Health Emergency: Hepatitis A Outbreak;
Authority to Contract; September 12, 2017 (25), Continue Need for Local Health Emergency;
September 6, 2017 (1), Ratify Declaration of Local Health Emergency for Hepatitis A

BOARD POLICIES APPLICABLE:

N/A

BOARD POLICY STATEMENTS:

N/A

MANDATORY COMPLIANCE:

N/A

**ORACLE AWARD NUMBER(S) AND CONTRACT AND/OR REQUISITION
NUMBER(S):**

N/A

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT: District 4

OTHER CONCURRENCE(S): N/A

CONTACT PERSON(S):

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