

April 11, 2013

The Honorable Curren Price
Chair
Senate Committee on Business, Professions & Economic Development
State Capitol, Room 2059
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 809 (DeSaulnier) — OPPOSE

Dear Senator Price,

On behalf of the California Healthcare Institute (CHI), the statewide public policy association representing the innovative life sciences sector – biotechnology, pharmaceutical, medical device and diagnostics companies, venture capital firms, research universities and institutes and its 275,000 workers – I am writing in opposition to SB 809.

SB 809 would impose an annual tax on manufacturers of controlled substances to fund the California Controlled Substance Utilization Review and Evaluation System (CURES) program in the Department of Justice. The CURES system allows prescribers, pharmacists, and law enforcement officials to track and access prescription records through an online database for Schedule II, III, and IV substances in the state — the purpose of which is to prevent the abuse of prescription drugs.

While CHI supports efforts to curb the abuse of prescription drugs, we regretfully must oppose SB 809. When used appropriately, prescription drugs are of enormous value for patients, but the unlawful distribution and misuse of the drugs step beyond the control of manufacturers. It is not appropriate to tax manufacturers to fund a program designed to prevent abuses that are triggered by forces outside of their control. Additionally, federal law already provides grants to fund prescription drug monitoring programs.

For these reasons, we oppose SB 809.

Sincerely,



Eve Bukowski
Vice President, State Government Affairs

cc: Senate Health Committee