



National Kidney Foundation™

of NORTHERN CALIFORNIA & NORTHERN NEVADA

May 27, 2009

The Honorable Noreen Evans
Chair, Conference Committee on the Budget
State Capitol, Room 6026
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: The Elimination of Dialysis Services

Dear Assemblymember Evans,

On behalf of the National Kidney Foundation, I am writing to urge your opposition to the proposed elimination of dialysis services referenced in the Governor's recently released General Fund Reduction Proposals.

Dialysis is a lifesaving therapy which cleanses the blood of deadly toxins and regulates critical fluid levels for individuals whose kidneys have either permanently or temporarily ceased functioning. It is never – under any circumstances – a non-essential or non-emergency service. Elimination of dialysis is literally a death sentence: without ongoing treatment dialysis patients will die, generally within eight to twelve days.

Beyond these life and death circumstances for patients, it is our belief that any anticipated financial savings from these proposed cuts are deceptive. Patients, faced with certain death if dialysis is terminated, will seek immediate care via hospital emergency services, care which is significantly more expensive than ongoing, center-based dialysis provision.

Established in 1966, the National Kidney Foundation serving Northern California is the largest organization advocating for those impacted by kidney disease on the West Coast. Through our programs, we strive to provide services targeting each stage of kidney disease and to raise public awareness about the needs of kidney patients and those at-risk.

We strongly urge the committee to oppose these proposed cuts. Please call if you'd like to discuss our position further. It would be a pleasure to speak with you.

Sincerely,

Christopher S. Kelley
Division President