

I am a person diagnosed with sickle cell disease and support AB 1488, The Sickle Cell Treatment Act.  
IN BRIEF.

AB 1488 provides funding to provide care for persons who have sickle cell disease (SCD). Currently this underserved group have little resources for their care and as a result they are forced to use emergency rooms and hospitalization to provide primary care. This is the most expensive and the least effective way to provide care for a chronic illness. The goal of the funding will be coordination of care, increased utilization of resources and a reduction in overall cost of care.

#### BACKGROUND

SCD affects approximately 7000 people in the State of CA. It is an inherited disease that affects primarily African Americans and Hispanics; it is a lifelong disease that generally becomes medically more complex with age. For those with this disease the quality of life is poor related to the fact that there are few adult physicians specializing in SCD in the state (between 2 and 6 physicians). There is no coordination of care or resources within the state, there are no agreed upon standards of care within the state, the quality of care is substandard in many cases. Morbidity and mortality rise exponentially after the age of eighteen. The cost of emergency room visits and hospitalization alone is approximately 350 million dollars annually. There are treatments for SCD, but due to the lack of expertise and dedicated physicians, few people who have SCD have access to these therapies.

#### SOLUTION

AB1488 provides a multitiered solution for the crisis of care experienced by those living with SCD. Poor care erodes their quality of life and is costs the State millions of dollars a year to provide uncoordinated and substandard care. The bill proposes to create three to four sickle cell treatment centers in the State of CA providing the state with Best Practice Guidelines to be used by all health care providers who care for patients with sickle cell disease.