

BILL WOULD DISCLOSE HOSPITAL COSTS IN ADVANCE by Victoria Chao

Sarah Varney, KQED's health reporter, was already working on an investigative piece related to hospital costs when I arrived, and halfway through the summer, she suggested that I do a quick piece on AB 2389 as a pre-cursor to her piece. Most of my prior radio reporting experience was for my college station, where I could do sound-rich pieces with many voices under a generous time limit, so explaining a complicated piece of legislation in 2 minutes was a new challenge for me.

Simply understanding the legislation and its impact was the most difficult part of creating this piece. I wasn't familiar with the California legislature process and I hadn't seen any coverage on hospital cost transparency. I also wasn't accustomed to thinking about insurance companies as major drivers of cost transparency. Each stakeholder had a different idea of what the effects of this legislation might be, and I had to call several different researchers to make sense of the conflicting information. In the end, I created something that captured the uncertainties and complications that may arise with this legislation, all in less than 2 minutes!

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