



April 21, 2022

The Honorable Richard Pan
Chair, Senate Health Committee
1021 O St., Room 3310
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: SB 1338 (Eggman) – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Pan:

Every day, hospitals across California care for an increasing number of individuals living with a serious mental illness, and they embrace the essential role they play in helping to address crises. However, we are very concerned that an insufficient provision of community-based outreach, case management, and treatment services is leading to avoidable involuntary detentions and hospitalizations for too many Californians.

For that reason, the California Hospital Association — on behalf of its more than 400 hospital and health system members, including 162 hospitals that provide acute psychiatric inpatient treatment — strongly supports Senate Bill (SB) 1338. This bill holds great promise of creating new pathways to treatment and housing for the many individuals hospitals see each day who, under the status quo, may otherwise continue to cycle needlessly through periods of crisis, homelessness, failing health, and hospitalization.

In establishing the Community Assistance, Recovery, and Empowerment (CARE) Court Program, SB 1338 creates a new mechanism for loved ones and treatment professionals to bring unserved or underserved individuals to the attention of our county partners in an effort to avoid more restrictive approaches such as conservatorship. They will then conduct a clinical evaluation and direct the individual to the appropriate level of care and support, be it CARE Court or other available services.

We strongly support the bill's inclusion of medications, treatment and graduation plans, CARE Court supporters, and \$1.5 billion in bridge housing funds for which participants would be prioritized. Hospitals are hopeful that impending behavioral health capital infrastructure and workforce investments will expeditiously create the missing levels of care our communities so desperately need for individuals living with a serious mental illness.

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We look forward to participating in productive conversations about the bill, sharing hospitals' perspectives on CARE Court's practical implementation, and the broader policy issues it raises for Californians living with untreated or undertreated severe mental illness.

We urge you to support SB 1338 when it comes before your committee. If you have any questions, please contact me at Leah@LeahBarros.com or (916) 521-6878.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Leah Barros', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Leah Barros
Consulting Lobbyist, California Hospital Association

cc: The Honorable Susan Talamantes Eggman
The Honorable Members of the Senate Health Committee
Reyes Diaz, Consultant, Senate Health Committee
Joe Parra, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus