



June 9, 2023

The Honorable Jim Wood
Chair, Assembly Health Committee
1020 N Street, Room 390
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: SB 45 (Roth) — SUPPORT

Dear Assemblyman Wood:

As hospitals continue to care for all — including those with serious behavioral health needs — they understand firsthand that demand for behavioral health care has grown exponentially and far outpaces available community options. A 2022 report from the Department of Health Care Services found that 24 of the state's counties have no inpatient psychiatric beds, and 70% of counties surveyed identified this as an urgent need for children and youth. The report also found that bed capacity and long waits in both emergency departments and inpatient psychiatric hospitals are the greatest challenge in California's behavioral health care system.

Hospitals are committed to enhancing access to behavioral health care and the California Hospital Association is pleased to support Senate Bill (SB) 45, which would establish the California Acute Care Psychiatric Hospital Loan Fund. This bill would provide zero-interest loans to construct, renovate, or expand access to inpatient psychiatric care in hospitals.

The financial devastation caused by the unprecedented COVID-19 public health emergency has placed great strain on hospitals' ability to care for all. SB 45 would provide hospitals with a new resource with which to expand mental health capacity and ensure Californians receive the care they deserve. We urge you to support SB 45 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 read "Leah Barros", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Leah Barros
Consulting Lobbyist, California Hospital Association

cc: The Honorable Richard Roth
The Honorable Members of the Assembly Health Committee
Judy Babcock, Consultant, Assembly Health Committee
Gino Folchi, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus