



September 28, 2023

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: AB 531 (Irwin) – Request for Signature

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of more than 400 hospitals and health systems and the millions of patients they serve, I am writing to ask you to sign Assembly Bill (AB) 531 by Assembly Member Irwin, which places a \$6.38 billion general obligation bond on the March 2024 primary ballot to fund an array of treatment, residential care settings, and supportive housing for individuals with behavioral health needs.

Given the vast and growing unmet need for behavioral health and housing support in California, the California Hospital Association (CHA) supports all efforts to build a robust continuum of community-based care for Californians living with a serious mental illness or emotional disturbance. Recently, the RAND Corp. published a rigorous and objective study of the demand versus supply of psychiatric inpatient, subacute, and community residential beds for California's adult population. It found that statewide, California has a shortfall of approximately 1,971 psychiatric beds at the acute level, 2,796 beds at the subacute level, and 2,963 community residential beds.

On behalf of more than 400 hospitals and health systems, CHA supports AB 531 because of the important investment it would make to address the gaps in California's behavioral health continuum. AB 531 would provide over \$6 billion to continue California's Behavioral Health Continuum Infrastructure Program and build as many as 10,000 new housing units and treatment beds so desperately needed in our state.

For these reasons, CHA strongly urges your signature on AB 531.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leah Barros", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Leah Barros
Consulting Lobbyist, California Hospital Association

cc: Angela Pontes, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of the Governor
The Honorable Jacqui Irwin
Speaker of the Assembly Robert Rivas
Senate President pro Tempore Toni Atkins