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California State Legislature

SENATOR
HANNAH-BETH JACKSON
NINETEENTH SENATE DISTRICT



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SENATE JUDICIARY
JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE
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VICE CHAIR
CALIFORNIA LEGISLATIVE
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NATURAL RESOURCES & WATER
JOINT COMMITTEES
FAIRS, ALLOCATION
& CLASSIFICATION
LEGISLATIVE AUDIT

April 15, 2015

Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
C/O Board Clerk
105 E. Anapamu St., Room 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

RE: Supporting Laura's Law

Chairwoman Wolf and Supervisors:

As the state Senator representing the 19th Senate District I am writing in support of the county adopting Laura's law, a piece of legislation that I co-authored when I was serving as an Assemblymember. More recently, as your state Senator I voted in support of using funding from the voter approved Proposition 63 – the Mental Health Services Act – to help implement Laura's Law.

I have long recognized the need to improve the way we deal with individuals in our community that suffers from mental illness. As we have seen all too often, family members are often the first to notice signs of mental illness and its escalation. Laura's Law, initiated Jan. 1, 2003, aims to give family members of adults with severely untreated mental illness another strategy to help their loved one.

This law, once adopted at the county level, will allow a family member, a roommate or a police officer to petition the court to seek treatment for the individual. Laura's Law is an important tool that can be used to stop the revolving door where individuals who suffer from mental illness cycle from being on the street, to the jail, to the hospital. On that cyclical journey they do not frequently get better along the way and become dangerous to themselves or others.

Currently, the community cost of caring for those in our community with severe mental illness are paid through ER visits, law enforcement, court and jail time. We need to stop incurring those expensive and untargeted costs and make better use of the limited resources available to us by adopting Laura's Law.

I appreciate your thoughtful consideration of this important issue and look forward to working with you in the future to continue to improve our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Hannah-Beth Jackson".

HANNAH-BETH JACKSON
State Senator, 19th District
HBJ: jj

COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA
CLERK OF THE COUNTY
2015 APR 24 01:11:01