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Katherine Douglas *Public Comment - Hospital Association of SoCal*

From: Audra Strickland <astrickland@hasc.org>
Sent: Friday, December 8, 2023 10:32 AM
To: Das Williams
Cc: Joan Hartmann; Laura Capps; Steve Lavagnino; Supervisor Nelson; Mona Miyasato; Tanja Heitman; Navarro, Toni; sbcob
Subject: Regarding Senate Bill 43: Item 23-01217
Attachments: SB BOS regarding SB 43.pdf

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Good morning, Chairman Williams.

Attached, please find a letter signed by the CEOs at Santa Barbara Cottage Health, Lompoc Valley Medical Center, and Marian Regional Medical Center regarding support for the county executive officer's recommendation to delay implementation of Senate Bill 43, related to the expansion of the definition of gravely disabled for the purposes of involuntarily detention.

The hospital CEOs and I are available to answer any questions about our support of the County's position on this item, which will come before the Board of Supervisors next Tuesday, December 12th.

Sincerely,
Audra Strickland

Audra Strickland
Hospital Association of Southern California
Regional Vice President,
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December 8, 2023

Das Williams
Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors, Chairman
105 E. Anapamu St.
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

RE: Item #23-01217

Dear Chairman Williams,

We write to you today in support of Santa Barbara County Behavioral Wellness' recommendation to delay implementation of Senate Bill 43, as permitted by the legislation.

Senate Bill 43 expands the definition of "gravely disabled" for purposes of involuntarily detaining, treating, or conserving an individual to include individuals that may have a severe substance use disorder (SUD), or a co-occurring mental health (MH) disorder and a severe SUD.

Hospitals support the goals outlined in SB 43 and are committed to working in partnership and collaboration with the county, health providers, law enforcement, EMS, the court system and all the parties necessary to make the implementation of this law successful. As a result of this new law, individuals struggling with mental health and substance use disorders may be able to access treatment more readily and get the help they need.

However, hospitals are concerned that the current behavioral health system is not well-equipped to address the influx of new patients meant to be served by this law. We would support a delay in the implementation of this law until 2026, as permitted by SB 43.

There will be additional involuntary detentions due to the expanded definition of "gravely disabled". However, the legislation provided no mechanism to assure adequate beds or treatment providers, nor additional funding to meet the demand for additional services.

Further, counties lack the ability to provide involuntary substance use disorder treatment; such a model of care does not even exist in the state. New programs, training, education, and processes must be created to serve this population newly eligible for involuntary detention.

Hospitals strongly encourage the Board of Supervisors to allow time for our care delivery infrastructure to be strengthened so that we can offer appropriate alternatives to individuals placed on involuntary holds in the community.

Sincerely,

Ron Werft
President & CEO
Cottage Health

Sue Andersen
President & CEO
Marian Regional Medical Center

Steve Popkin
Chief Executive Officer
Lompoc Valley Medical Center

cc: Supervisor Laura Capps
Supervisor Joan Hartmann
Supervisor Bob Nelson
Supervisor Steve Lavagnino
County Executive Officer Mona Miyasato
Assistant County Executive Officer Tanja Heitman
Behavioral Wellness Department Director Toni Navarro
Clerk of the Board