

Ramirez, Angelica

Behavioral Wellness - Public Comment

From: Lynne Gibbs <gibbslyn2@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 9, 2020 1:48 PM
To: sbcob
Cc: Hart, Gregg; Hartmann, Joan; Lavagnino, Steve; Williams, Das; Adam, Peter; Bertrand, Ethan; Litten, Jefferson; Bantilan, Cory; Elliott, Darcel; Nelson, Bob; George Kaufmann
Subject: NAMI Letter
Attachments: NAMI AOT Letter.pdf

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Please see attached NAMI's letter for posting in association with the Dept. of Behavioral Wellness's budget presentation next week.

Thank you,
Lynne Gibbs, NAMI SSBCO



National Alliance on Mental Illness

Santa Barbara County

April 8, 2020

via email: sbcob@co.santa-barbara.ca.us

The Honorable Greg Hart, Chair
and Member of the Board of Supervisors County of Santa Barbara
105 E. Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

RE: Assisted Outpatient Treatment (“AOT”) aka Laura’s Law

Dear Chair Hart and Supervisors:

I write to express NAMI Santa Barbara’s strong support for full implementation of Assisted Outpatient Treatment, known as Laura’s Law in California, following the county’s successful 3-year pilot program.

AOT fills a gap in the mental health continuum of care by bringing persons into treatment who are otherwise among the most ill – those who experience homelessness and incarceration as a consequence of their inability to recognize their need for care. AOT is the only outpatient program that mandates treatment by means of a civil court order for those who can’t be convinced by means of assertive outreach. It gives treatment professionals the right to persistently pursue those who initially refuse engagement.

As participants in the county’s Stepping Up initiative, we recognize that AOT is an essential programmatic component of successful efforts to divert persons with serious illness from criminalization, incarceration, psychiatric hospitalization, ER utilization, and homelessness. Each time AOT diversion prevents a crisis event, the county saves money.

We appreciate the Supervisors’ support of this critically important program, and we look forward to full implementation.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "George Kaufmann". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

George Kaufmann, President
NAMI Santa Barbara County