



June 25, 2013

The Honorable Richard Pan, Chair
Assembly Health Committee
State Capitol Room 6005
Sacramento, CA 95814

**SUBJECT: SB 364 (Steinberg) Mental health
As Amended on June 24, 2013 – SUPPORT
Set for Assembly Health Committee on July 2, 2013**

Dear Assembly Member Pan:

On behalf of the California Mental Health Directors Association (CMHDA), which represents the directors of public mental health authorities in counties throughout California, I am writing to communicate our support of SB 364 by Senate Pro Tempore Darrell Steinberg, which makes revisions and clarifications to the Lanterman-Petris-Short (LPS) Act.

The LPS Act provides for the involuntary detention, assessment, evaluation, and crisis intervention of persons who, due to a mental disorder, may pose a danger to themselves or others, or are gravely disabled. We appreciate that Senator Steinberg has endeavored through SB 364 to provide a number of helpful clarifications to the LPS Act, while upholding the original intent of these landmark civil rights statutes. Specifically, we support that SB 364:

- Clarifies that telehealth evaluations are permitted, which are helpful for ensuring the availability of prompt evaluations, particularly in rural counties and in hospital emergency departments that are designated by counties;
- Authorizes each county to develop written procedures for the designation and training of professionals it designates to carry out LPS Act functions;
- Clarifies and provides consistency that four groups of individuals are authorized to take or cause to be taken, a person into custody for assessment, evaluation and crisis intervention or to place them in a designated facility: peace officers, professional persons in charge of a designated facility, members of the attending staff of a designated facility, or professional persons designated by the county;
- Empowers assessment, evaluation, and crisis intervention to occur in the field, rather than require these activities to occur only within the confines of designated facilities;
- Removes the unnecessary and burdensome administrative process of requiring the facilities that counties have designated under the LPS Act to also be "approved" by the state;
- Broadens the types of facilities that may be designated by counties to include, for example, crisis stabilization units; and
- Moves a number of existing provisions of law to earlier locations in order to better reflect the sequence of events that may occur under the LPS Act.

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For these reasons, we are pleased to support SB 364 and request your AYE vote. Please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 556-3477, ext. 112, or kbarlow@cmhda.org with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,



Kirsten Barlow
Associate Director, Legislation and Public Policy

Cc: Honorable Members, Assembly Health Committee
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