



State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
Department of Health Care Services



GAVIN NEWSOM
GOVERNOR

June 28, 2021

The Honorable Thomas Umberg, Chair
Senate Judiciary Committee
State Capitol, Room 2187
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator Umberg:

ASSEMBLY BILL AB 1331 (AS AMENDED MAY 24, 2021) - OPPOSE

The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) must inform you of its opposition to Assembly Bill (AB) 1331. AB 1331 would require the Director of DHCS to appoint a full-time executive Statewide Director of Crisis Services to convene state and local leaders to develop and implement a cohesive statewide behavioral health crisis care delivery system. The bill would require the executive to coordinate various tasks statewide related to behavioral health crisis care, in order to ensure coordination and continuity among programs, and to enhance cross-agency information and resource sharing.

DHCS is supportive of increased coordination of behavioral health crisis care statewide. However, legislation is not needed to establish the position required by AB 1331. In addition, given the fiscal implications of adding an executive position, and the additional staffing needed to support the required activities of the position, this proposal would be more appropriately addressed through the budgetary process.

Furthermore, the work proposed for the Statewide Director of Crisis Services would be duplicative of existing efforts by the California Health and Human Services Agency (CHHS). CHHS currently has a Deputy Secretary of Behavioral Health who acts as a senior advisor to the Undersecretary and Secretary on behavioral health policy. The deputy secretary supports coordination and collaboration on behavioral health policy across departments within the agency, as well as with other state agencies and departments. The deputy secretary may act as a liaison for the agency engaging with a wide variety of behavioral health partners and stakeholders on relevant policy issues. CHHS has also convened the Behavioral Health Task Force, which advises the Administration's work to advance statewide behavioral health services, prevention, and early intervention.

If you have any questions regarding our position, please feel free to contact me at (916) 440-7500.

Honorable Thomas Umberg
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Sincerely,

O/S by Carol Gallegos

Carol Gallegos, Deputy Director
Legislative & Governmental Affairs
Department of Health Care Services

cc: Assembly Member Jacqui Irwin, Author
Senator Thomas J. Umberg (Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee)
Senator Andreas Borgeas (Vice Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee)
Senator Anna M. Caballero
Senator María Elena Durazo
Senator Lena A. Gonzalez
Senator Robert M. Hertzberg
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Senator John Laird
Senator Henry I. Stern
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Senator Scott D. Wiener