Sacramento, CA, May 28, 2014 / Jessica Cruz, Executive Director of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, California (NAMI CA) has issued the following statement:

NAMI California shares in the sadness over Friday's tragedy in Isla Vista, California. NAMI California is an organization of individuals and families, whose lives are deeply affected by mental illness. We extend our sympathies to the families of those who lost their lives or were wounded. We are also sorry for the pain experienced by the family of the person responsible.

When tragedies occur, clear facts emerge slowly. However, the immediate focus on mental illness often adds to the stigma that surrounds them. NAMI California has repeatedly called for action to erase the stigma of seeking help for mental illness.

Acts of violence are exceptional. The likelihood of violence by people with mental illness is low. In fact, the U.S. Surgeon General has reported that "the overall contribution of mental disorders to the total level of violence in society is exceptionally small."

Families and communities must work together to ensure adequate and culturally competent services are available to everyone, free of stigma and discrimination. NAMI California praises Senate President pro Tem Darrel
Steinberg for addressing key issues today in his press conference. His suggestions to improve the mental health system by reforming sentencing, providing meaningful mental health treatment through the training of prison personnel and law enforcement; and promoting humane releases through Parole Out-Patient Clinics are taking the important next steps in ensuring an adequate response to the mental health crisis in our state.

NAMI California is also taking steps to combat these challenges, our innovative programs such as Provider Education work to reduce stigma and discrimination and better train frontline responders by helping them understand the perspectives of families and individuals living with a mental illness.

NAMI California, its 67 local affiliates and over 19,000 members look forward to being an active part of these solutions. In nearly every community in our state, NAMI members work every day to ensure Californians have access to mental health services and support. We will not rest until that work is complete.

**NAMI CA Programs News**

**Family Programs Trainings:**

Watch for information on trainings for the next fiscal year to be posted on this Weekly Report.

NAMI Family Program news is also posted on Facebook. Check out the *NAMI Family Programs Blog* for up-to-date announcements. [http://namifamily.blogspot.com](http://namifamily.blogspot.com)

**Peer and Stigma Reduction Programs Trainings**

Peer-to-Peer  
June 20 - 22, 2014 - Ventura (Full)

**Parents and Teachers /Provider Education Trainings**

None scheduled

Send inquiries to:

- **Family Programs** -  
  [Lynn.Cathy@namicalifornia.org](mailto:Lynn.Cathy@namicalifornia.org)
- **IOOV, Peer to Peer and Connection** -
NAMI California Action Alert Successful! Senate and Assembly Approve Funding for Mental Health Parity Enforcement

On behalf of NAMI California, we want to thank everyone who responded to our recent efforts in support of mental health parity enforcement budget requests in the Assembly Budget Subcommittee on Health and Human Services and the Senate Budget Committee. Your response was terrific, and we wanted to let you know that the Senate Budget Committee has approved both of the items for the Department of Insurance and Department of Managed Health Care!

Under the Senate’s plan, spearheaded by Senator Beall, both the California Department of Insurance (CDI) and the Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC) would receive 10 new positions specifically for parity enforcement, in addition to a $369,000 budget augmentation for DMHC for clinical consultants to set up an enforcement infrastructure. Under the plan, both departments would have to report annually for 5 years on the compliance of insurers and plans.

The Assembly Budget Subcommittee passed a one-time budget augmentation for DMHC for clinical consultants, but did not adopt the additional positions at CDI or DMHC.

But our job’s not done! These items will now be sent to the Budget Conference Committee to work out the differences between the different proposals. We expect the conference committee to begin hearings sometime next week. Once the hearing for this item is noticed we would like everyone to submit support letters. We will send out a sample support letter in our alert, and you can email or fax them to NAMI California or directly to the legislators themselves. We’ll keep you updated!

Watch "A Choice to Heal: Mental Health in California" on Saturday, May 31st
This documentary, hosted by actress Mariel Hemingway and sponsored by the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission, will air on CBS stations in California on May 31st 2014. The documentary details California's groundbreaking approach to the prevention and early intervention of mental illness - an approach that is at the forefront of changing and improving the nation's mental health care system.

Sacramento-KOVR: 6-6:30 pm  
Los Angeles KCBS: 6:30-7 pm  
San Francisco-KPIX: 7:30-8 pm  
Fresno: 6:30-7 pm

A promotional video for the documentary has been posted to the MHSOAC homepage at http://www.mhsoac.ca.gov/default.aspx.

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