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April 16, 2021

The Honorable Tom Lackey
California State Assembly Member
California State Capitol, Room 5097
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 106 (Umberg): Mental Health Services Act: innovative programs – OPPOSE

Dear Assembly Member Lackey:

On behalf of the National Alliance on Mental Illness - California (NAMI-CA), we respectfully write in opposition to your SB 106, which makes changes to county requirements for Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Innovation component spending.

NAMI-CA is the statewide affiliate of the country's largest mental health advocacy organization, the National Alliance on Mental Illness. Our over 110,000 active advocates and 62 affiliates include many people living with serious mental illnesses, their families, and supporters. NAMI-CA advocates on their behalf, providing education and support to its members and the broader community.

While we acknowledge that FSPs are proven to be effective in reducing hospitalization, incarceration, and homelessness, we oppose the approach SB 106 takes to encourage their expansion. In particular, SB 106 does not specify that counties electing to expend MHSA Innovation funds on FSPs must engage stakeholders in their decision to do so.

NAMI-CA believes all statewide and local MHSA funded programs must be client and family driven. State agencies and counties must seek and use clients' and family members' perspectives and experiences with service delivery and program priorities in a meaningful and sincere fashion, with final financial and program design decisions reflecting that input. In fact, the MHSA requires the state and counties to utilize MHSA funds to carry out their responsibilities to build and sustain client and family voice in the decision-making process.

For these reasons, NAMI-CA regretfully opposes SB 106. I may be reached at jessica@namica.org or (916) 567-0163 with any questions you may have. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Jessica Cruz, MPA/HS
Chief Executive Officer