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April 14, 2021

The Honorable Susan Talamantes Eggman
California State Senator
California State Capitol, Room 4052
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 516 (Eggman) Certification for intensive treatment: review hearing – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Eggman:

On behalf of the National Alliance on Mental Illness - California (NAMI-CA), I am writing to express support of your SB 516, which provides that a person's medical condition may be considered in determining their mental condition for purposes of certifying them for a 14- or 30-day involuntary detention for treatment and evaluation under the Lanterman-Petris Short (LPS) Act.

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.

NAMI-CA believes involuntary inpatient and outpatient commitment and court-ordered treatment authorized by the LPS Act should be used as a last resort and only when cost-benefit analysis shows it to be in the best interests of the individual. All people should have the right to make their own decisions about medical treatment. However, NAMI-CA is aware that there are individuals with serious mental illnesses such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder who, at times, due to their illness, lack insight or good judgment about their need for medical treatment.

NAMI-CA also believes California should adopt broader, more flexible standards that would provide for involuntary commitment and/or court-ordered treatment when an individual, due to mental illness is gravely disabled, which means that the person is substantially unable, to provide for any of his or her basic needs, such as food, clothing, shelter, health or safety. SB 516 would support individuals with a serious mental illness that face serious health risks to the extent that they risk grave bodily harm or death.

For these reasons, NAMI-CA is pleased to support SB 516. 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