



National Alliance on Mental Illness

NAMI California

April 1, 2022

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The Honorable Chris Holden, Chair
Assembly Committee on Appropriations
1021 O Street, Suite 5650
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 2144 (Ramos) Mental health: information sharing – SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Holden:

NAMI-CA is in support of AB 2144 (Ramos), which will improve statewide data collection and reporting for individuals held on short-term involuntary 72-hour psychiatric holds, commonly known as a 5150.

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.

AB 2144 would implement and expand upon the recommendation of the California State Auditor in the July 2020 audit of the Lanterman-Petris-Short (LPS) Act. The bill would require the Department of Justice (DOJ) to transmit the data they receive from LPS designated facilities for those held on a 5150 for being a danger to self or danger to others to the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS). The bill would then require facilities to report to DHCS on the gaps in reporting that DOJ does not currently collect quarterly—for individuals held for being “gravely disabled” and youth under 12 for all reasons. The proposed bill would require DHCS to report annually aggregated, deidentified 5150 information stratified by county, ethnicity, gender, and Medi-Cal enrollment status. DHCS is then required to make recommendations to reduce disparities in mental health treatment across the state.

Currently, the lack of state-level aggregated data hinders administration of the LPS Act. Limited existing data from individual counties suggests that individuals of color, and in particular Black Californians, are disproportionately represented among those populations placed on psychiatric holds, likely due to systemic racism which limits access to upstream outpatient treatment, or increased interactions with law enforcement. Requiring data to be reported with sociodemographic factors would begin to shine a light on these disparities and allow the state and counties to identify how best to eliminate those disparities and improve the quality of treatment and services available to all Californians.

For these reasons, NAMI-CA supports AB 2144. I may be reached at jessica@namica.org or (916) 567-0163. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jessica Cruz,
MPA/HS
Chief Executive Officer

Cc: Members and Consultant to Assembly Committee on Appropriations
The Honorable James Ramos, California State Assembly