



National Alliance on Mental Illness

NAMI California

April 1, 2022

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The Honorable Jim Wood, Chair
Assembly Committee on Health
1020 N Street, Room 390
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 2317 (Ramos) Children's psychiatric residential treatment facilities – SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Wood:

NAMI-CA is in support of **AB 2317 (Ramos)**, which is aimed at addressing a critical component missing in the continuum of specialty mental health services for children and youth in California - children's crisis residential services. This legislation seeks to add a new licensing category in state statute, the Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility.

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 2317 would ensure that counties and their community-based providers can develop crisis residential programs with an appropriate licensing category and ensure children and youth can access mental health services that are responsive to their individual needs and strengths in a timely manner. The creation of the licensing category is consistent with Medi-Cal Early Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) Specialty Mental Health Services (SMHS) program standards.

There is no question that a full continuum of care for children and youth is needed, and the lack of a licensing component for children's crisis residential programming is preventing the development of this much needed program. While crisis residential services are still acute in nature, they are provided in a less restrictive environment, and would be a more appropriate alternative for children who don't necessarily require the level of care that an acute inpatient hospitalization provides.

For these reasons, NAMI-CA supports AB 2317. 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 Health
The Honorable James Ramos, California State Assembly