



National Alliance on Mental Illness

# NAMI California

April 1, 2022

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The Honorable Lisa Calderon, Chair  
Assembly Committee on Human Services  
1021 O Street, Suite 4120  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 2786 (Stone) Children's Crisis Continuum Pilot Program – SUPPORT**

Dear Assembly Member Calderon:

NAMI-CA is in support of AB 2786 (Stone), which will expand the existing Children's Crisis Continuum Pilot Program to serve Medi-Cal eligible youth with complex care needs.

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.

The Children's Crisis Continuum Pilot Program was intended to follow through on California's commitment to stop placing foster youth with complex needs in out-of-state facilities, and to address the urgent need for high-end treatment settings for dependent youth with high-acuity behavioral health needs.

As counties and stakeholders are working to create urgently needed crisis stabilization capacity statewide for dependent youth, there is growing recognition that these treatment settings are urgently needed for *non-dependent youth*. For non-dependent youth with acute behavioral health needs, there are few options available for treatment and they often end up in emergency rooms and hospitals, which are ill-equipped to meet their unique developmental needs.

NAMI-CA believes that inpatient services ranging from short-term acute care or respite care to long-term care must be available and accessible. Linkages between inpatient and outpatient treatment and community support systems must be in place to ensure continuity of care.

This expansion will make integrated continuums of intensive and individualized treatment settings available to youth experiencing the most acute mental health challenges. This will also prevent unnecessary hospitalization or law enforcement involvement for children in the midst of a behavioral health crisis. For these reasons, NAMI-CA supports AB 2786. I may be reached at [jessica@namica.org](mailto: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 Mark Stone, California State Assembly