



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 2853 (Lackey) Mental health: involuntary holds – SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Wood:

NAMI-CA is in support of AB 2853 (Lackey), which will require the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to establish guidelines for the application of the Lanterman-Petris-Short (LPS) Act to ensure that it is uniformly applied by counties, including, at a minimum, an explanation of how to determine if a person meets the definition of gravely disabled and if a person is a danger to themselves or others.

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 that 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.

Under current law, "gravely disabled" is a condition in which a person, as a result of a mental disorder or impairment by chronic alcoholism, is unable to provide for his or her basic personal needs for food, clothing, or shelter, or a condition in which a person has been found mentally incompetent, as specified, for purposes of detaining the person for assessment, evaluation, and treatment; providing a court-ordered evaluation, as specified; certifying the person for intensive treatment; and, placing the person under conservatorship. [Welfare and Institutions Code [§5008](#)]

Our family members and peers/consumers tell us there is significant variance in how individuals perceive the term "gravely disabled." Involuntary commitment and court-ordered treatment decisions must be made expeditiously and uniformly so that individuals can receive treatment in a timely and effective manner. For these reasons, NAMI-CA supports AB 2853. 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 Tom Lackey, California State Assembly