



NAMI California

National Alliance on Mental Illness

Jessica Cruz, MPA/HS

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April 1, 2022

The Honorable Anthony Portantino, Chair
Senate Committee on Appropriations
1021 O Street, Room 7630
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: SB 1302 (Portantino) Pupil health: pupil wellness centers:
grant program – SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Portantino:

NAMI-CA is in support of SB 1302 (Portantino), which will appropriate \$1,000,000,000 to the Superintendent of Public Instruction to provide annual grants to certain school districts serving high school pupils to establish or improve pupil wellness centers to provide comprehensive medical and behavioral health services.

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.

Undiagnosed, untreated, and inadequately treated mental illnesses significantly interfere with a student's ability to learn, to grow, and to develop. Because children spend much of their productive time in school, and services can be integrated into their regular daily routine, NAMI-CA believes that both public and private elementary, middle, and high schools should provide and/or facilitate and sustain provision of appropriate mental health services, supports, and appropriate accommodations.

Expanding wellness centers in California high schools would meet the growing need for mental health care among students. Mental health needs of California students are crucial to long-term wellbeing and academic success.

For these reasons, NAMI-CA supports SB 1302. 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 Senate Committee on Appropriations