



National Alliance on Mental Illness

NAMI California

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April 18, 2022

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

Re: SB 882 (Eggman) Advisory Council on Improving Interactions between People with Intellectual and Development Disabilities and Law Enforcement – **SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Portantino:

NAMI-CA supports SB 882 (Eggman), which will convene a council within the Attorney General's (AG) office to evaluate the training for interactions involving people with IDD and/or mental illness, identify gaps in training, and make recommendations for improvement. This bill would also improve use-of-force reporting by requiring the inclusion of behavioral health and IDD information.

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.

In recent years, there have been a number of high profile, tragic killings of people with IDD and/or behavioral health disorders during interactions with law enforcement. The Legislature has changed rules around police use-of-force, which can be a powerful tool for accountability. However, California must do more to prevent these tragedies. In addition to ongoing efforts around emergency behavioral health hotlines and community mental health response, law enforcement must be trained to recognize and deescalate these situations without force.

NAMI California believes that education about serious mental illnesses at all levels of judicial and legal systems is crucial to the appropriate disposition of cases involving offenders with serious mental illnesses. Judges, lawyers, police officers, correctional officers, parole and probation officers, law enforcement personnel, court officers, and emergency medical transport and service personnel should be required to complete at least 20 hours of training about these disorders. Consumers and family members should be a part of this educational process.

For these reasons, NAMI-CA supports SB 882. I may be reached at jessica@namica.org or (916) 567-0163. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jessica Cruz,
MPA/HS
Chief Executive Officer