



June 20, 2018

1100 K Street  
Suite 101  
Sacramento  
California  
95814

Telephone  
916.327.7500

Facsimile  
916.441.5507

The Honorable Jim Wood  
Chair, Assembly Health Committee  
State Capitol, Room 6005  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: SB 275 (Portantino) – Alcohol and Drug Treatment: Youth  
As Amended on June 12, 2018 – SUPPORT  
Set for Hearing on June 26, 2018 – Assembly Health Committee**

Dear Assembly Member Wood:

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC) is pleased to support SB 275, by Senator Anthony Portantino. This modest measure represents an important first step toward the creation of a high-quality, safe, and comprehensive substance use disorder (SUD) treatment system for our most precious resource: California's children and youth.

Counties currently administer all Medi-Cal substance use disorder services on behalf of the state and work with a variety of organizations to ensure that people living with a substance use disorder have timely access to quality, evidence-based care. However, California has very little to offer in the way of treatment for children and youth, despite current federal law requiring SUD services for young people. Senator Portantino's SB 275 will help counties and California build this much-needed system of care for children and youth.

Specifically, SB 275 offers a roadmap to build youth SUD services via four critical steps:

Convene an Expert Panel: Section 11759.10 outlines the mission and membership of a new expert panel to guide the creation of youth SUD services in California. Counties appreciate the inclusion of county behavioral health directors, county social services directors, and county probation chiefs on this panel. Each of these county departments plays a role in serving children and youth, especially those with severe mental illness, substance use disorders, and those who may be involved with the foster care or juvenile justice systems. These county representatives will add on-the-ground experience and guidance to help inform the expert panel and to benefit all youth in need of substance use disorder treatment.

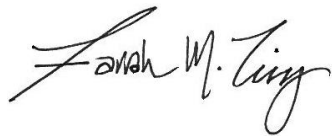
Outcomes and Oversight: Section 11759.20 requires the Department of Health Care Services to create and adopt regulations to establish youth SUD treatment, early intervention, and prevention services, as well as standards for quality based on the recommendations of the expert panel. SB 275 also requires robust outcome reporting and oversight for entities providing substance use disorder services to youth.

Designation of Agency: Section 1159.30 requires each county to designate an agency to administer and/or operate a youth SUD continuum. While our members believe that it is clear that our behavioral health departments, which already operate the adult SUD continuum, are the proper agency at the local level to administer youth substance use disorder services, this section of the bill ensures that each county will designate a county agency that has the most experience with SUD treatment and best meets the unique needs of their residents.

Youth SUD Services Providers: Section 1159.40 indicates that counties and providers of public youth SUD services must at least hold state licensure to ensure quality care and oversight. Counties agree with Senator Portantino that county agencies are the correct entities with the experience and resources to help implement a youth substance use disorder system. Under Sb 275, counties may achieve the implementation of safe, quality, evidence-based youth SUD services in a variety of ways, including operating county facilities and/or contracting with licensed providers for these services. This section of SB 275 allows counties the flexibility to work with existing providers, new providers, and a variety of health care partners such as federally qualified health care clinics and short-term residential therapeutic programs (STRTPs), as long as they are a licensed entity. This provision is crafted to ensure that all youth SUD providers are quality providers and not just fly-by-night entities motivated by profit, such as those that attempt to operate in the adult SUD treatment market. Our members are not willing to entrust our most vulnerable children and youth with unlicensed providers.

California has waited long enough to implement a safe and effective substance use disorder treatment continuum for children and youth. SB 275 represents the first step in creating this critical system. Counties especially wish to thank Senator Portantino and the bill sponsors for consulting with CSAC on this important measure. Should you or your staff have additional questions about our SUPPORT position on SB 275, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 327-7500 ext. 559 or [fmcting@counties.org](mailto:fmcting@counties.org). Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Farrah M. Ting". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Farrah" being the most prominent.

Farrah McDaid Ting  
Legislative Representative

cc: The Honorable Anthony Portantino, Member, California State Senate  
Members, Assembly Health Committee  
Rosielyn Pulmayo, Chief Consultant, Assembly Health Committee  
Agnes Lee, Policy Consultant, Office of Assembly Speaker Rendon  
Archie Anthony, Policy Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus  
Tom Renfree, County Behavioral Health Directors Association  
Cathy Senderling-McDonald, County Welfare Directors Association  
Michelle Gibbons, County Health Executives Association of California  
Robert Harris, California Society of Addiction Medicine