



May 9, 2017

1100 K Street
Suite 101
Sacramento
California
95814

Telephone
916.327.7500

Facsimile
916.441.5507

The Honorable Ricardo Lara
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 5050
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: SB 142 (Beall) – Criminal offenders: mental health
As Amended April 24, 2017 – SUPPORT
Set to be heard May 15, 2017 – Senate Appropriations Committee**

Dear Senator Lara,

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC) writes in support of Senate Bill 142 by Senator Jim Beall. This measure would incentivize counties to invest more in effective local mental health services by sharing state savings when a county reduces the number of people with mental illness sent to state prison.

Specifically, SB 142 would establish the State Community Mental Health Performance Incentives Fund that, upon an appropriation by the Legislature, would be available for transfer to counties to be deposited in a county-based fund account. Incentive payments would be made available to the County Board of Supervisors for utilization by county and other local community mental health programs to provide adult offenders with treatment services that have been demonstrated to reduce recidivism.

Additionally, this measure would require the Judicial Council, with the chief probation officer and behavioral health department of each county, to provide a quarterly report to the Department of Finance so they are able to determine what funds are available for transfer from the State Incentive Fund to counties. The amount transferred to each county will be based on the number of felony filings, convictions, and sentencing in each county as well as the population receiving specified mental health services through Medi-Cal.

Earlier this year, the National Stepping Up Initiative hosted a California Summit co-sponsored by CSAC in Sacramento. Fifty-three county teams comprised of Supervisors, Administrative/Executive Officers, Sheriffs, District Attorneys and Behavioral Health Directors and their various staff attended this event. The event offered participants the opportunity to engage with national experts, peers from across the state, and people living with mental illnesses to advance county plans to improve the way counties respond to people with mental illnesses who are in contact with local criminal justice systems.

SB 142 is in line with counties' commitment to reducing the number of mentally individuals in the criminal justice system. In addition, this measure will reduce crime, save money for local communities and assist in alleviating the growing population of mentally ill individuals in state and county detention facilities.

It is for these reasons that CSAC supports SB 142 and request your AYE vote. Should you have any questions regarding our position please do not hesitate to contact me at dkernan@counties.org or 916.650.8131.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads 'Darby Kernan'.

Darby Kernan
Legislative Representative

cc: The Honorable Jim Beall, California State Senate
Members and Consultant, Senate Appropriations Committee