



YOUTH LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Use Your Voice

March 25th, 2024

The Honorable Jesse Gabriel
California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite 8230
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Assembly Bill 2700 – From Crisis to Care Act - Support

Dear Assemblymember Gabriel,

On behalf of Youth Leadership Institute, we write in support of Assembly Bill 2700, From Crisis to Care Act. This measure would connect people experiencing behavioral health crises to the appropriate care facilities such as crisis stabilization units and sobering centers.

yli partners with thousands of youth across the state, the majority of whom are low-income youth of color. In recent years, mental health and substance use have become the core issues around which most of our programming focuses. Our youth depend on us to pass policies that work effectively to address these health crises.

California is increasingly focusing on delivering compassionate care to individuals in behavioral health crises. In 2022, California passed AB 988 to set up an alternative crisis response system to 911. We have invested billions into behavioral health crisis facilities infrastructure through the Behavioral Health Continuum Infrastructure Program, with billions more potentially on the horizon with Proposition 1. Through CalAIM, we have added sobering centers as an optional new benefit and added Medi-Cal coverage for these vital services.

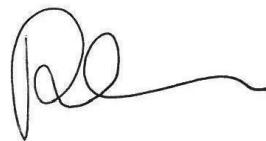
At the same time, over the last 6 years, California has been piloting programs to transport individuals in behavioral health crises to destinations such as crisis stabilization units and sobering centers as appropriate.

An independent UCSF evaluation found these pilots to be safe and effective means to improve the health and safety of the public. The evaluation found that 98% of patients transported to a mental health crisis center were effectively treated for their behavioral health needs.

The evaluation also found that ambulance patient offload times were considerably lower for transports to mental health crisis and sobering centers, meaning ambulance crews can respond more quickly to other 911 calls.

In order to maximize California's substantial investments in addressing the behavioral health crisis care, expanding access to these services is critical. Now is the time to expand access to alternative destinations. A key aspect to the expansion of these services is having an assessment of the available behavioral health facilities, and their needs along with a plan to transport people in need of care to these facilities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. Barahona".

PATRICIA BARAHONA
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Youth Leadership Institute