April 7, 2023

The Honorable Susan Talamantes Eggman
Chairwoman, Senate Health Committee
1021 O St., Suite 3310
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: **SB 598 (Skinner) Health care coverage: prior authorization — Support as amended March 22, 2023**

Dear Chairwoman Eggman,

The California State Association of Psychiatrists (CSAP) is proud to continue to support SB 598 (Skinner), which would ensure timely access to treatments, improve patient health outcomes and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of provider offices to increase patient access to care. SB 598 takes a comprehensive approach to reform the prior authorization process.

Recently, patient stories have shed light on how insurers are using the prior authorization process to protect profit margins and leave patients without the care they need. This practice leaves California patients to navigate a complex system while their symptoms and condition worsen, making it more expensive to treat and extending their recovery time.

California's health care system should revolve around a patient's needs and their ability to receive their treatments promptly; patient-centered care is what should drive medical decision making, not profit. The status quo is proving ineffective at delivering timely treatments to patients who need them most. SB 598 would help deliver patient-centered care and would reform the prior authorization system to allow for treatment decisions to be made where they should be, between a patient and their doctor. SB 598 is necessary to streamline a process that has led to significant patient care delays, worsened patient outcomes, increased health care costs and bogged providers down with administrative red tape. In total, these reforms will allow providers to practice medicine in the best interest of their patients without costly delays and undue interference from health plans.

For these reasons, CSAP is pleased to continue to support SB 598 (Skinner).

Sincerely,

Paul Yoder
Legislative Advocate

CC: Members, Senate Health Committee
        Senator Nancy Skinner