



April 6, 2023

The Honorable Anthony Portantino
Chairman, Senate Appropriations Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 7630
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 65 (Ochoa Bogh) Behavioral Health Continuum Infrastructure Program – Support

Dear Chairman Portantino,

On behalf of the California State Association of Psychiatrists (CSAP), I write to you in support of SB 65, which would permit the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), in awarding Behavioral Health Continuum Infrastructure Program (BHCIP) grants, to give a preference to qualified entities that are intending to place their projects in specified facilities or properties. SB 65 would also appropriate \$1 billion, for encumbrance during the 2023-24 to 2025-26 fiscal years, to DHCS for the purpose of implementing the BHCIP.

California faces a behavioral health continuum infrastructure deficit with significant variations between regions and levels of care. For example, while researchers recommend that California have 24.6 inpatient beds per 100,000 adults for subacute (or long-term) psychiatric patients, regional estimates ranged from 7.4 to 31.8 beds per 100,000 adults, with a particular deficit in the Los Angeles, San Francisco Bay, Inland Empire, and North State regions. These four regions require more than 2,000 additional beds—more than a quarter of all additional beds needed throughout the state.

SB 65 would permit DHCS, in awarding BHCIP grants, to give a preference to qualified entities that are intending to place their projects in any of the following facilities or properties: recently closed hospitals; recently closed skilled nursing facilities; unused city, county, or state properties; facilities that are co-located or near state or local housing program sites; and, recently closed or unused city or county jail facilities. In order to help close the mental health bed deficit, this bill will appropriate \$1 billion from the General Fund annually for the next three fiscal years to continue building out essential mental health bed capacity across the entire spectrum of need. In other words, CSAP supports SB 65 because it focuses on making sure that all general acute care hospitals have the necessary building, staffing, and services standards to provide adequate care for patients. We have been failing our mentally ill populations for many years, and it is time that we make significant ongoing investments toward getting these populations the care they need. This bill will make a real tangible investment toward addressing this severe lack of mental health treatment capacity, which has been woefully inadequate for decades.

For these reasons, CSAP is pleased to support SB 65.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Yoder', is placed below the word 'Sincerely,'.

Paul Yoder
Legislative Advocate

CC: Members, Senate Appropriations Committee
Senator Rosilicie Ochoa Bogh