



March 19, 2014

The Honorable Darrell Steinberg
Member, California State Senate, District 6
State Capitol, Room 205
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: SB 1054 (Steinberg) Mentally ill offender crime reduction grants-- Support with Suggestions

Dear Senator Steinberg:

On behalf of the California Mental Health Directors Association (CMHDA), which represents the public mental health authorities in counties throughout California, I am writing in support of your bill, SB 1054 (Mentally ill offender crime reduction grants).

The original Mentally Ill Offender Crime Reduction Program (MIOCR) proved successful -- demonstrating that collaboration to deliver mental health services reduces incarceration and recidivism rates of persons with mental illness. Though dismantled due to recent budget constraints, the legislature has the opportunity to fund the rebuilding and expansion of these successful, cost-effective programs across California. CMHDA strongly supports this proposal.

MIOCR is now more important than when originally created. Public Safety Realignment demands delivery of evidenced-based mental health services in collaboration with sheriffs, probation, and community based organizations -- a cornerstone of MIOCR. The original MIOCR succeeded in addressing important public policy issues, including access to treatment for persons with mental illness and public safety. The proposed \$50 million (\$25 million for adults and \$25 million for juvenile justice) is the minimum investment that should be made. CMHDA would support an investment of \$100 million for adults and \$25 million for juvenile justice.

CMHDA is pleased to support SB 1054 with suggestions mentioned above. Please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 556-3477x108, or roakes@cmhda.org if CMHDA or I can be of any assistance.

Introduced by Senator SteinbergFebruary 18, 2014

An act to add Article 4 (commencing with Section 6045) to Chapter 5 of Title 7 of Part 3 of the Penal Code, relating to mentally ill criminal offenders, and making an appropriation therefor.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1054, as introduced, Steinberg. Mentally ill offender crime reduction grants.

Existing law establishes the Board of State and Community Corrections to collect and maintain available information and data about state and community correctional policies, practices, capacities, and needs, as specified.

This bill would require the board to administer and award mentally ill offender crime reduction grants on a competitive basis to counties that expand or establish a continuum of swift, certain, and graduated responses to reduce crime and criminal justice costs related to mentally ill offenders. The bill would require the board, in consultation with the State Department of Health Care Services, to award grants that provide funding for 4 years. This bill would appropriate \$50,000,000 from the General Fund in the 2014–15 fiscal year for the mentally ill offender crime reduction grant program, and require that half of that amount be used for adult offenders and half for juvenile offenders.

Vote: $\frac{2}{3}$. Appropriation: yes. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

1 family and community-based treatment models, specialized mental
2 health courts, and other collaborative models of intervention that
3 have proven to be successful. The goal, overall, is to break the link
4 between mental illness and crime as soon as possible, using
5 state-of-the art assessment and intervention strategies. Early
6 recognition and treatment in these cases is also critical to our goal
7 of preventing the escalation of youth mental health disorders into
8 tragedies like the Sandy Hook school shooting that occurred in
9 2012.

10 (f) Modern science tells us that children are developmentally
11 different from adults. This finding has been embedded in decisions
12 of the United States Supreme Court in recent years, placing limits
13 on the death penalty and other punishments imposed on children.
14 In the foster care sector, important cases like the Katie A. litigation
15 recognize the need for more effective strategies and collaborative
16 efforts to address the mental health needs of children without
17 homes of their own.

18 (g) The good news is that science and evidence-based studies
19 point the way to interventions that can stop the cycle of mental
20 illness and crime early in these young lives. The new mentally ill
21 offender crime reduction grants will prioritize funding for local
22 assessments and interventions that promise to produce better youth
23 outcomes, to lower youth recidivism rates, and to reduce system
24 workloads and costs that result from failing to address the problem.

25 (h) Research indicates that a continuum of responses for
26 mentally ill offenders that includes prevention, intervention, and
27 incarceration can reduce crime, jail overcrowding, and criminal
28 justice costs.

29 (i) Therefore, it is the intent of the Legislature that grants be
30 provided to counties that develop and implement a comprehensive,
31 cost-effective plan to reduce the rate of crime and offenses
32 committed by persons with serious mental illness and reduce jail
33 overcrowding and local criminal justice costs related to mentally
34 ill offenders.

35 SEC. 2. Article 4 (commencing with Section 6045) is added
36 to Chapter 5 of Title 7 of Part 3 of the Penal Code, to read:

1 shall be used to supplement, rather than supplant, funding for
2 existing programs and shall not be used to facilitate the early
3 release of prisoners or alternatives to incarceration. A grant shall
4 not be awarded unless the applicant makes available resources in
5 an amount equal to at least 25 percent of the amount of the grant.
6 Resources may include in-kind contributions from participating
7 agencies. In awarding grants, priority shall be given to those
8 proposals that include additional funding that exceeds 25 percent
9 of the amount of the grant.

10 6045.6. The Board of State and Community Corrections, in
11 consultation with the State Department of Health Care Services,
12 shall establish minimum standards, funding schedules, and
13 procedures for awarding grants, which shall take into consideration,
14 but not be limited to, all of the following:

15 (a) Percentage of the jail population with severe mental illness.

16 (b) Demonstrated ability to administer the program.

17 (c) Demonstrated ability to develop effective responses to
18 provide treatment and stability for persons with severe mental
19 illness.

20 (d) Demonstrated history of maximizing federal, state, local,
21 and private funding sources.

22 (e) Likelihood that the program will continue to operate after
23 state grant funding ends.

24 6045.8. (a) The Board of State and Community Corrections,
25 in consultation with the State Department of Health Care Services,
26 shall create an evaluation design for mentally ill offender crime
27 reduction grants that will assess the effectiveness of the program
28 in reducing crime, the number of early releases due to jail
29 overcrowding, and local criminal justice costs.

30 (b) Commencing on June 30, 2015, and annually thereafter, the
31 board shall submit a report to the Legislature based on the
32 evaluation design, with a final report due on December 31, 2019.

33 (c) The reports submitted pursuant to this section shall be
34 submitted in compliance with Section 9795 of the Government
35 Code.

36 (d) Pursuant to Section 10231.5 of the Government Code, this
37 section is repealed as of January 1, 2024.

38 6045.9. (a) Funding for mentally ill offender crime reduction
39 grants shall be provided, upon appropriation by the Legislature,
40 in the annual Budget Act.