



# SUSAN TALAMANTES EGGMAN

## REPRESENTING SENATE DISTRICT 05

### SB 363 – Behavioral Health Bed Database

#### **SUMMARY**

SB 363 would establish a real-time, internet-based dashboard to collect, aggregate, and display information about beds in inpatient psychiatric facilities, crisis stabilization units, residential community mental health facilities, and licensed residential alcoholism or drug abuse recovery or treatment facilities. Access to an up-to-date database of available beds helps providers quickly find and secure treatment for clients in appropriate settings, reducing delays or extended stays in emergency rooms.

#### **BACKGROUND**

In 2019, the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), along with the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD), began work with 23 states “to improve their coordination of crisis services by making web-based bed registries accessible to front line crisis counselors in local behavioral health agencies, mobile crisis teams, crisis call centers, and hospital emergency departments.” Hospital emergency departments continue to be frontline responders to those in behavioral health crisis, and finding the most appropriate treatment, as timely as possible, is critical to improve outcomes.

Mental illness, like many other health conditions, when treated early and with appropriate supports and services, will be less disabling and result in fewer adverse outcomes. Although 16% of California adults live with a mental illness, more than 60% of those individuals do not receive treatment. While we have seen a small increase in psychiatric beds since 2012, we are still falling well below nationally established standards of 40-60 beds per 100,000 population state and have 30% fewer beds than we had in 1995.

Many individuals receive initial assessment and stabilization for a psychiatric crisis in the emergency department, which is a crucial piece of the safety net for individuals with difficulty

accessing mental health services including those who lack awareness of their own mental health condition. However, due to a combination of a difficult to navigate crisis response system which lacks adequate capacity - an environment not conducive to the stabilization of psychiatric crisis - and a lack of mental health programs, facilities and professionals, individuals in crisis often languish untreated in emergency departments for long periods of time as ED staff struggle to find open beds.

In addition to streamlining access to care, these databases can be useful data tools. Nine of the state projects use bed registry data to measure bed capacity and utilization to monitor resources, promote their appropriate use, and inform budget and policy decisions. Five states use bed registry data to measure the effectiveness of diversion policies and strategies to treat crises in the least-restrictive environment

#### **THIS BILL**

This bill requires the State Department of Health Care Services, in consultation with the State Department of Public Health and the State Department of Social Services to establish a database for psychiatric, substance use disorder, and community mental health bed openings, to be updated and maintained as changes in availability occur in order to streamline communication and reduce patient waiting time for placement in appropriate beds.

It would require the database to include a minimum of specific information, including the contact information for a facility’s designated employee, and have the capacity to, among other things, enable searches to identify beds that are appropriate for the treatment of individuals in a mental health or substance use disorder crisis.

#### **SUPPORT**

Big City Mayors Coalition (co-sponsor)  
Psychiatric Physicians Alliance of California (co-sponsor)



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Ca State Association of Psychiatrists (co-sponsor)  
NAMI California (co-sponsor)  
California Downtown Association  
Ca State Sheriff's Association  
Ca State Association of Public Administrators,  
Public Guardians, and Public Conservators  
League of California Cities  
Steinberg Institute  
San Diego City Attorney's Office  
City of Bakersfield  
City of Whittier  
National Association of Social Workers

#### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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