



## California State Association of Counties

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Counties recognize the significant changes and initial funding for CARE Court, stand ready to assist in implementation, and call on all levels of government to begin developing a comprehensive system to address homelessness with clear responsibilities, funding, and accountability for the state, counties, cities, and community partners.**

**Sacramento, CA** – *The California State Association of Counties (CSAC) Executive Director Graham Knaus today issued the following comments regarding Senate Bill 1338 (Umberg), as amended on August 25 and the \$57 million in one-time funding included in AB 179 (Ting)/SB 179 (Skinner) as amended on August 28 for initial implementation of the CARE Court Program.*

- “CSAC recognizes significant improvements to SB 1338 and an initial commitment of \$57 million for planning and preparation to implement the CARE Court Program.”
- “Amendments to CARE Court, including a staggered implementation and initial upfront funding, help address the most immediate fiscal and policy concerns.”
- “CSAC appreciates the new requirement in SB 1338 to consult with counties in developing a CARE Court Program allocation that includes ongoing funding before the program goes into effect, which is required for success.”
- “Ongoing funding linked to the true costs and caseload for CARE Court will provide communities and respondents the best chance at succeeding.”
- “While CARE Court may provide an innovative solution for a modest percentage of the people we see suffering in our communities, we cannot lose sight of the larger homelessness crisis in California.”

*(continued)*

- “Homelessness and related issues such as the cost of housing and underfunding of behavioral health services will not improve until all levels of government step up and create a holistic system with clear responsibilities, flexible tools, and sustainable funding. CARE Court is one step toward that goal.”

### Background Information

Counties have engaged in a robust discussion with the Administration and Legislature regarding Governor Newsom’s Community Assistance, Recovery and Empowerment (CARE) Court Program since it was announced March 3.

One-time fiscal commitments to counties within AB 179/SB 179 include \$26 million for the initial cohort of counties and \$31 million for all counties to plan and prepare for implementation. The first cohort must implement the CARE Court Program by October 1, 2023 and all counties must implement by December 1, 2024.

Policy changes sought by counties within SB 1338 as amended include the designation of the first cohort of counties to implement: Glenn, Orange, Riverside, San Diego, Stanislaus, Tuolumne and the City and County of San Francisco. SB 1338 also includes general immunity for counties from the actions of a CARE Court respondent and extends some timeframes within which county behavioral health agencies must file court-ordered investigation reports.

The Legislature must vote upon SB 1338 and AB 179/SB 179 by Wednesday, August 31, which is also the end of the two-year 2021-22 legislative session.

*California State Association of Counties (CSAC) is the voice of California’s 58 counties at the state and federal level.*

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