



June 13, 2017

Senator Mike McGuire, Chair
Senate Committee on Governance and Finance
State Capitol Building, Room 5061
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: AB 1250 (Jones-Sawyer). Counties: Contracts for personal services -- OPPOSE

Dear Senator McGuire:

As the mental health director for Kern County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services, I respectfully urge you to oppose AB 1250 (Jones-Sawyer). The restrictions AB 1250 places on contracting for county services will jeopardize health care, social services, mental health and public safety services and will severely impact the most vulnerable residents of our state. This bill will seriously undermine counties' abilities to provide critical public health services, including mental health and substance use disorder services.

AB 1250 throws up major barriers to contracting and interferes with counties' abilities to enter into contracts to meet beneficiary needs. ***This will jeopardize county Mental Health Plan (MHP) federal and state contract compliance. This may lead to sanctions, fines and penalties and ultimately to contract termination, putting billions of dollars of health care funding at risk.***

AB 1250 will hinder contracting for a vast array of personal services. County mental health plans (MHPs) use such contracts for ***dozens of types of services and hundreds of millions of dollars each year.*** For example, the following are some of the areas of contracts held by California MHPs to provide high quality, comprehensive care across the state:

- Psychiatrists
- Locum tenens (physician and other clinical staffing)
- Internships
- Student interns
- Clinical supervision
- Consumer/peer employees
- Traveling nurses
- Translation services
- Monitoring and billing
- Triennial and External Quality Review Organization (EQRO) consultation
- Evaluators of data
- IT data hosting
- Project management for the Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System Waiver (DMC-ODS)
- Electronic Health Record Projects
- Crisis debriefing
- DUI programs
- Criminal Justice Partnerships
- Housing consultation
- Veteran advocates
- Fiscal consultants
- Facilitators for Mental Health Services Act planning
- Contract development



County MHPs and DMC-ODS contracted counties are required by the terms of their contract with the state Department of Health Care Services and the federal government to maintain adequate networks of Medi-Cal certified providers. To accomplish this, counties execute contracts with hospitals and outpatient non- and for-profit providers that are licensed and certified to provide the Medi-Cal services.

AB 1250 will reduce MHPs' abilities to care for the most vulnerable members of our community by harming our innovative and successful system of public/private partnerships that runs throughout California. AB 1250 will also erode critical hospital inpatient and mental health services for these vulnerable residents. Use of contractor and community based providers to augment county staff is critical in this high need, low workforce resources areas.

It is for these reasons that I OPPOSE AB 1250. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (661) 868-6609, or at bwalker@KernBHRS.org.

Sincerely,



Bill Walker, LMFT
Director

BW:cc

