



## CITY OF MURRIETA

April 11, 2023

The Honorable Susan Eggman  
California State Senate  
1021 O Street, Room 8530  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 43 (Eggman) Behavioral Health.**  
**Notice of SUPPORT (As amended 02/28/23)**

Dear Senator Eggman,

The City of Murrieta is pleased to **support SB 43 (Eggman)**, which would modernize portions of California's behavioral health treatment system and social safety net system to ensure that vulnerable individuals with the most acute needs receive access to the care they need.

SB 43 modernizes the definition of "gravely disabled" within the Lanterman-Petris-Short Act to include conditions that result in a substantial risk of serious harm to an individual's physical or mental health. This includes the inability to seek medical care, adequate shelter, or self-protection and safety. Updating this definition better reflects the contemporary realities present in communities, ensuring that individuals at risk of significant harm receive the help they need.

Additionally, this measure allows relevant medical history to be considered by the court in a uniform manner across the state by creating a hearsay exemption for information contained in a medical record so all relevant information can be presented and considered by the court. This would ensure that a complete and accurate picture is presented in court when considering the very serious step of conservatorship.

Almost daily, City of Murrieta staff work with individuals who are living on the streets and experiencing significant struggles with their mental health needs that are not meeting the current criteria for grave disability. By not fitting these criteria, they are essentially falling through the services gap and must get worse before they meet the current definition of grave disability to get access to care. This delay in care caused by the current grave disability definition is causing a decline in the mental and physical health of these vulnerable individuals and is leading to a reduction in quality of life and life expectancy. Often, the City's homeless services team sees homelessness occur when a family is unable to access the support needed for their family

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member, and eventually, this inability to get their loved ones into appropriate care leads to homelessness. By expanding the definition of gravely disabled, those with the highest barriers may be able to get appropriate mental health care, and/or families may have access to support for loved ones needing more care than is currently being provided.

Cities are on the front lines of addressing homelessness and need additional tools and resources to end the current homelessness crisis. The City of Murrieta recognizes that for unsheltered individuals with severe behavioral health needs, access to a comprehensive care system can be essential to address their homelessness. In Murrieta's experience, tending to the needs of those with the most severe behavioral needs has consumed hundreds of hours of staff time from the homeless outreach team, which includes a social worker and Murrieta police officers, as well as staff at City Hall, the Murrieta Public Library, and more. It's often a circular, recurring, very well-intended effort, but never truly getting to the root cause of the issue to help the individual in a meaningful way to improve their quality of life. That is why the City of Murrieta is eager to support legislation such as SB 43, which takes a comprehensive look at the existing system and makes targeted improvements.

For these reasons, the City of Murrieta **supports SB 43 (Eggman)**.

Sincerely,



Lisa DeForest

Mayor

cc: Members of the Murrieta City Council  
Senator Kelly Seyarto  
Assembly Member Kate Sanchez  
Erin Sasse, League of California Cities  
League of California Cities