



May 24, 2023

SENATE FLOOR ALERT
SB 551 (Portantino): Mental Health Boards.
As Amended May 1, 2023 – CONCERNS
Senate Third Reading File

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC), the Urban Counties of California (UCC), and the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) have removed our formal opposition to SB 551 based on the most recent amendments to remove provisions that would have diverted Mental Health Services Act funds for specified purposes, but note outstanding concerns with SB 551. This measure would impose additional requirements on the composition of community mental health boards, which are already subject to various membership requirements.

SB 551 would require 20 percent of a board's membership to be reserved for individuals employed by a local educational agency and 20 percent for individuals 25 years of age or younger in counties with a population of 500,000 or more. While counties agree that local educational agencies and youth are important voices to be represented, counties are concerned about the prescriptive nature of the amendments. We acknowledge the composition requirements adjust for county population size; however, counties are still concerned the additional requirements will present potential challenges for community mental health boards to fill and maintain these memberships.

Counties are committed to the diversity of its mental health boards to ensure representation reflects the population, demographics, and needs specific to each jurisdiction. For the reasons outlined above, CSAC, UCC, and RCRC respectfully hold a position of concerns with SB 551. Should you have questions about our position, please do not hesitate to reach out to Jolie Onodera, CSAC Senior Legislative Advocate at jonordera@counties.org, Kelly Brooks-Lindsey, UCC Legislative Advocate at kbl@hbeadvocacy.com and Sarah Dukett, RCRC Legislative Advocate at sdukett@rcrcnet.org.

cc: Joe Parra, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus
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