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# Mayors of California

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October 27, 2020

Honorable Governor Gavin Newsom  
1303 10th Street, Suite 1173  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Newsom:

**Re: Homelessness and Mental Illness**

Holding public office comes with a great deal of responsibility. Those who serve in public office serve for a variety of reasons and bring with them their own brand and variation of ideology to the job. Whether identifying as blue, red, or purple in political persuasion, we have a responsibility to our collective constituents.

We swear to uphold the oath of office, but most importantly, we represent our constituents, to ensure their safety, legislate, and provide oversight. We do all of this under the confines of revenue, as we balance the residential, commercial and industrial make-up that drive that revenue. Each County, City, or Special District attracts residents for their charm, character, and culture where various solutions are required.

An overwhelming majority of municipalities, professionals, and legislators all agree, that California has a severe homelessness problem with underlying mental and substance abuse issues. Differences arise in finding solutions. Invariably, it comes down to political will and, of course, funding.

Since the late 1960's when the Lanterman-Petris-Short Act was first enacted, there have been many amendments to the original legislation, some of which amendments have made it more difficult to provide humane services to the mentally ill subset of persons experiencing homelessness. Meanwhile, there has been a steady defunding of State mental institutions, leaving few to operate. The statewide system of "community care" that was intended to replace the mental hospitals never happened, leaving thousands of mentally ill people homeless and without treatment. Our jails and prisons have become the de-facto mental institution and are ill-equipped to bring proper care.

We find ourselves in a grave situation where municipalities simply do not have the resources to assist this population.

Our constituents are looking for long-term solutions to care for and house the homeless and mentally ill amongst us. Without a permanent solution that includes State funded and operated mental hospitals, we cannot see a viable path to effective and compassionate assistance.

We, the undersigned Mayors, are requesting and urging the State to reopen, grow, enhance, and provide desperately needed humane services to the below list of shuttered or underutilized mental institutions in the State of California:

- **Frank D. Lanterman State Hospital and Developmental Center**

- 3530 Pomona Boulevard, Pomona
- Capacity 2,000 individuals with room to grow
- **Metropolitan State Hospital**
  - 11401 Bloomfield Avenue, Norwalk
  - Current operation. Can this facility expand and address additional needs?
- **Los Angeles County Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center**
  - 7601 Imperial Highway, Downey
  - Underutilized facility, LACTY BOS approved demolition of many buildings in June 2020. Can this be repurposed for Housing and mental health rehab, retraining?
- **California Youth Authority**
  - 13200 Bloomfield Avenue, Norwalk
  - Closed 2011 era. Slated by State for renovation/repurpose in 2020. Underutilized facility currently.
- **Los Angeles Metropolitan Medical Center**
  - 2231 S. Western Avenue, Los Angeles
  - Hospital ceased operations due to poor business practices & legal issues. Private facility now vacant, but available.
- **Sybil Brand Institute for Women**
  - 4500 City Terrace, Los Angeles
  - Jail, holding center. Can this facility offer MH programming and housing?
- **Patton State Hospital Development Center**
  - 3102 E. Highland Avenue, San Bernardino
  - Currently operational housing for convicted patients: Criminal Insane, Not-Guilty by Insanity, Mental Health offenders. Is there capacity and service available?
- **Closed State Facilities resulting in lost capacity**
  - Porterville Developmental Center
  - Sierra Vista Developmental Center Yuba City
  - Sonoma Developmental Center

We feel strongly that the State should evaluate and revisit the option of utilizing these locations for capacity to help ease the burden that otherwise simply cannot be met by local municipalities and counties without adequate resources and funding. We look forward to your positive and supportive response.

Sincerely we the undersigned,

Michael Allawos  
Mayor, City of Glendora

Linda Evans  
Mayor, City of La Quinta

Kevin McKeown  
Mayor, City of Santa Monica

David Fredendall  
Councilmember, Glendora

Margaret Clark  
Mayor, City of Rosemead

Rey Santos  
Mayor, City of Beaumont

Berwin Hanna  
Mayor, City of Norco

Dale Reynolds  
Mayor, City of Blythe

Bill Zimmerman  
Mayor, City of Menifee

Michael Vargas  
Mayor, City of Parris

Acquanetta Warren  
Mayor, City of Fontana

Emmett Badar  
Mayor, City of San Dimas

Tony Wu  
Mayor, City of West Covina

Samuel Kang  
Mayor, City of Duarte

Tim Hepburn  
Mayor, City of La Verne

Brandon Plott  
Mayor, City of Eastvale

Russ Brown  
Mayor, City of Hemet

Rusty Bailey  
Mayor, City of Riverside

Beth Haney  
Mayor, City of Yorba Linda

Jennifer Fitzgerald  
Mayor, City of Fullerton

Juan Garza  
Mayor, City of Bellflower

Larry Schroeder  
Mayor, City of Claremont

Amanda Young Rigby  
Deputy Mayor, City of Vista

Dr. Bill Wells  
Mayor, City of El Cajon