

March 23, 2021

Honorable Board of Supervisors,

We write to you to express our support for Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) and to urge you to not opt-out of AB 1976.

AOT was passed by the California State Legislature in 2002, requiring counties to opt-in to the program. 19 counties have done so to date, including the neighboring Bay Area counties of San Francisco, San Mateo, Alameda, and Marin. These California counties join a nationwide coalition of 47 states and D.C. that have implemented AOT legislation.

In August 2020, the California State Legislature unanimously passed AB 1976—with broad support from the most progressive to the most conservative members—which amends the original 2002 law to now require every county to implement AOT, unless they opt-out by July 31 of this year. We oppose an opt-out by Santa Clara County.

AOT would serve to benefit the most vulnerable members of our society: severely mentally ill individuals who refuse to receive the care that they need. It is not compassionate, equitable, nor fiscally responsible to allow the revolving door between emergency rooms, jails, and streets to continue.

Only individuals who are truly in need of Assisted Outpatient Treatment would be enrolled in the program. The scope is narrow, ensuring that involuntary treatment is reserved as a last resort for individuals deemed unable to function in society, and who have had frequent run-ins with law enforcement and hospitals. Santa Clara County has no existing tool to serve this unprotected population. Adoption of AOT by Santa Clara County will in no way interfere with the voluntary tools that the County already has in place to deal with severe mental illness.

Other counties have seen great success with AOT. In San Francisco, for example, a three-year evaluation report from the San Francisco Health Network found that 91% of AOT patients experienced reduced psychiatric hospitalization, and 88% saw reduced incarceration. Because use of these critical facilities dropped, San Francisco saved over \$400,000 a month on their 129 AOT patients.

Furthermore, AOT patients were found to be happy with their treatment and believed it improved their condition; 86% of AOT patients in San Francisco reported feeling hopeful about their future.

We understand that AOT is not a silver bullet and cannot uniquely solve our County's mental health problems. Nevertheless, AOT is a valuable tool which has the potential to benefit many. We ask you to vote against an opt-out.

Signed,

Matt Mahan, Councilmember, San José District 10

Scott Knies, Executive Director, San José Downtown Association

Madison Nguyen, Executive Vice President, Silicon Valley Organization

Deb Kramer, Executive Director, Keep Coyote Creek Beautiful

Steve Holmes, Executive Director, South Bay Clean Creeks Coalition

Lisa Dailey, Acting Executive Director, Treatment Advocacy Center

Michael Van Every, President/CEO, Republic Urban Properties LLC

Jeffrey Cristina, Vice President, Business San José Chamber PAC

Randall Hagar, Legislative Advocate, Psychiatric Physicians Alliance of California

Kathy Burden, Family Support Group Facilitator, NAMI Santa Clara County

Lisa Baumann, Warm Line Responder & Family Support Group Facilitator, NAMI Santa Clara County

Carl Salas, Founding Principal, Salas O'Brien Engineers

John Salas, Managing Principal, Salas O'Brien Engineers

Carl Crizer, Senior Vice President, Salas O'Brien Engineers

Chris Markley, Assistant Vice President, Salas O'Brien Engineers

Tony Arreola, Managing Principal, Terrascope Ventures LLC

Mark Lazzarini, Managing Principal, DAL Properties LLC

Marty Fox, Judge Advocate, San Mateo County Veterans Coalition

David Heindel, Chair, District 10 Leadership Coalition

Jeff Arrillaga, Co-Founder, Urban Community

Gary Dillabough, Co-Founder, Urban Community

Karina Martinez, Executive Assistant, Urban Community

Erik Schoennauer, San José Downtown Resident & 5<sup>th</sup> Generation San Josean

Steve Borkenhagen, San José Downtown Resident

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Bill Souders, Santa Clara County Resident

Brady Coggins, Santa Clara County Resident

Marianne Salas, Santa Clara County Resident

Jamie Bonner, Santa Clara County Resident

Ed Baumann, Santa Clara County Resident

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Joe Neto, Santa Clara County Resident

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Robert Glicksman, Santa Clara County Resident

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