



Office of the San Diego City Attorney

Mara W. Elliott  
City Attorney

March 13, 2023

Senator Susan Talamantes Eggman  
Chair, California State Senate Health Committee  
1021 O Street, Room 3310  
Sacramento, CA 95814

*Re: Support – SB 363 (Eggman): Behavioral Health Bed Database*

Dear Senator Eggman:

The San Diego City Attorney's Office urges the members of the Senate Health Committee to support Senate Bill (SB) 363.

SB 363 would provide for the creation of a much needed and long overdue database that would keep track of beds available for those in need of mental health care.

Currently, our emergency rooms are clogged with patients in the throes of psychiatric crises, but hospitals often struggle to find appropriate long or short-term placement for these patients. Often, these patients languish for prolonged periods in the hospital, taking up costly bed space without obtaining the specific care they need.

In the worst-case scenarios, these patients are discharged onto the streets, unable to care for themselves, and they end up in a chronic cycle of homelessness, hospital visits, and sometimes even in jail. None of these locations is an adequate substitute for appropriate long-term care, whether in an inpatient psychiatric facility, a facility that provides substance abuse recovery treatment, or other setting.

This practice of discharging psychiatric patients without a proper place to live is unfortunately so pervasive that our Office has even taken legal action against facilities that are unlicensed or unable to provide patients with the type of care they need, and against a healthcare provider for “patient dumping.”

A searchable database of available beds for behavioral health treatment would be a game-changer for overburdened hospitals and for those who are desperately in need of proper psychiatric care so that they may improve their well-being and flourish.

For these reasons, my Office strongly supports SB 363 and respectfully requests the approval of the Senate Health Committee.

Sincerely,



Mara W. Elliott  
San Diego City Attorney