



May 27, 2016

Honorable Lorena Gonzalez  
Assembly Appropriations Committee, Chair  
State Capitol, Room 2114  
Sacramento, California 9581

**AB 1884 (Harper) Mental Health License Plates- Request to Remove from Suspense**

Dear Assembly Member Gonzalez:

The California Coalition for Mental Health respectfully requests your support in removing AB 1884 from suspense.

The members of our coalition, which include professional mental health guilds, mental health provider associations, etc. strongly believe that this measure will go a long way towards creating positive awareness for mental health by promoting hope and recovery.

This bill would allow the Department of Health Care Services to apply to the California Department of Motor Vehicles for the creation of a license plate to raise awareness for mental health. The plate will bear the lime-green associated with mental health advocacy and a phrase such as "Mental Health Matters." There will be no cost to the State related to the license plate as the presale of 7,500 specialty mental health license plates will cover all expenses. There is growing community support for this license plate and commitments from thousands of people already to pre-purchase them. Since 2011, California has been implementing a comprehensive statewide mental health promotion and mental illness prevention initiative that uses institutional, community, and individual strategies to eradicate the negative consequences associated with stigma such as reduced and delayed help-seeking, loss of opportunities (educational and vocational), and increased chronic physical health conditions.

As an advocacy alliance our common goal is to "restore California to a position of leadership as an initiator of state of the art treatment and rehabilitation of people who have mental illness." In order to accomplish this we need to address stigma and discrimination related to mental health and build on awareness raising efforts. It is for these reasons that we respectfully ask that AB 1884 be removed from suspense.

Should you or your staff have additional questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact us. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Joseph Robinson, LCSW  
President, California Coalition for Mental Health