



California Association of Mental Health Peer-Run Organizations
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April 10, 2016

Honorable Jim Wood
Assembly Committee on Health, Chair
P.O. Box 942849, Room 6005
Sacramento, CA 94249-0002

Via Fax: 916-316-2102

AB 59 (Waldron) STRONGLY OPPOSE as to the March 28, 2016 Amendments – Mental Health Services: Assisted Patient Treatment

The California Association of Mental Health Peer-Run Organizations (CAMHPRO) is a nonprofit statewide organization consisting of consumer-run organizations and programs. CAMHPRO's mission is to transform communities and the mental health system throughout California to empower, support, and ensure the rights of consumers, eliminate stigma, and advance self-determination for all those affected by mental health issues by championing the work of consumer-run organizations.

Currently, the Assisted Outpatient Treatment Demonstration Project Act of 2002 sunsets on January 1, 2017. Assembly Bill 59 has been amended to change the sunset to January 1, 2022.

As we stated in our April 20, 2015 letter, **CAMHPRO STRONGLY OPPOSES AB 59** for numerous reasons. None of the amendments since April 2015 correct any of our concerns. Our April 20, 2015 letter goes into great detail and cites specific journal articles and evidence based studies addressing:

Involuntary Outpatient Treatment has not proven itself as a successful approach to justify denying individual rights;

Coercive treatment is ultimately ineffective;

Stigma drives the perceived need for involuntary treatment;

Major research indicates that enhanced community services produce positive results, while there is no evidence that court ordered care is responsible for improved results;

Involuntary outpatient treatment lowers the bar for abridging civil rights and self determination.

Involuntary treatment is not effective. Voluntary services are the answer to the unmet needs of people with mental and emotional challenges that are suffering, not outpatient commitment.

Please OPPOSE AB 59.



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If you have any questions, please contact me at 415-341-9460, or Heidi Strunk, CAMHPRO Advocacy Coordinator, at 916-212-3685.

Sincerely,

Sally Zinman

Executive Director, California Association of Mental health Peer Run Organizations
(CAMHPRO)

cc: Honorable Members, Assembly Committee on Health
Via Fax 916-319-2197

Honorable Assemblymember Waldron
Via Fax 916-319-2175