



September 12, 2025

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Request for Signature of AB 348 (Krell)

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the above organizations, I am writing in strong support of AB 348 (Krell). This bill represents a pivotal step toward ensuring Californians with serious mental illness can access the lifesaving behavioral health care they need. For too long, people experiencing homelessness, repeated hospitalizations, and incarceration have faced steep barriers to enrolling in Full Service Partnerships (FSPs) – the most intensive, community-based programs available – because of inconsistent eligibility criteria and unnecessary administrative hurdles.

Although California has invested in FSPs for over two decades, individuals at the very highest risk are often excluded from care simply because of county-by-county variations in eligibility processes. The Commission on Behavioral Health's 2024 report on FSPs found that the "complexity of eligibility requirements and vast recent changes to billing systems are creating significant administrative burdens" that delay care and reduce the effectiveness of these programs. As California prepares to expand FSPs under the Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA), it is critical to ensure these resources finally reach those who need them most.

AB 348 addresses this gap by establishing presumptive eligibility for FSPs. The bill provides a statewide standard to ensure that individuals at highest risk are prioritized for enrollment. Specifically, individuals qualify if they meet one of the following criteria:

- Experiencing unsheltered homelessness, as defined by federal standards;
- Transitioning back to the community after six or more months in a secured treatment or residential setting;
- Having had five or more 5150s over the last five years; or
- Exiting state prison or county jail after six or more months of incarceration.

These clear criteria align with the priority populations of the BHSA and create a transparent, uniform process across counties. Importantly, AB 348 does not require

counties to serve more people than current funding allows – it simply ensures that existing resources are targeted to those with the most acute needs.

Why this matters: Research consistently demonstrates that FSPs are one of the most effective interventions for stabilizing individuals with serious mental illness and complex social needs. The CBH's 2024 report found a 41% reduction in psychiatric hospitalizations for FSP participants, while other studies show participants spend more than 100 fewer days homeless per year. FSPs also reduce incarceration and improve engagement with care. Without a statewide standard for eligibility, however, too many individuals continue to cycle between homelessness, emergency departments, and jail.

Governor, you have advanced the most significant behavioral health reforms in California's modern history. By updating and modernizing the Mental Health Services Act through the BHSA, you set the foundation for a behavioral health system that truly serves those with the most serious needs. AB 348 ensures that vision becomes reality. It translates the BHSA's priorities into practice by guaranteeing that the people most at risk – those living on our streets, in and out of emergency rooms, or caught in the justice system – can access the care intended for them.

In this way, AB 348 is not only a policy improvement; it is essential to ensuring that the historic reforms you led reach the Californians they were designed to help, and that the BHSA fulfills its promise as a transformative tool for the state's behavioral health system.

For these reasons, we strongly supports AB 348 and respectfully urges your signature. This bill is fiscally responsible, evidence-based, and vital to ensuring that California's behavioral health investments change lives and communities for the better.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at tara@steinberginstitute.org with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tara', with a stylized, flowing script.

Tara Gamboa-Eastman
Director of Government Affairs