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Subject: FW: Steinberg Institute News Alert for June 4, 2015]

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Senate, Assembly Pass Key Mental Health Bills

Steinberg Institute's inaugural year of leadership efforts
yielding results for veterans, foster kids, families & public safety

This week the Senate and Assembly passed legislation off their floors that represent significant advances in mental health policy for veterans, foster kids and families. The bills are part of the Steinberg Institute's 2015 legislative agenda.

The Steinberg Institute was founded last year to advance behavioral health policy and leadership. As part of that mission the Institute has both sponsored and supported bills this year to dramatically increase the prioritization of mental health policy in the California legislature.

Measures passed this week include:

SB 11 - Sen. Jim Beall - Passed Senate 38-0

SB 11 will provide additional training for law enforcement officers to help them recognize, deescalate, and refer persons with mental illness or intellectual disability who are in crisis. The bill helps protect law enforcement officers as well as the rights and safety of those they encounter.

SB 614 - Sen. Mark Leno - Passed Senate 40-0

In an effort to qualify for federal matching funds for peer and family support services, SB 614 creates a peer and family support specialist certification program. The bill also designates peer support specialists as providers under the Medicaid program within Medi-Cal.

AB 253 - Asm. Roger Hernandez - Passed Assembly 74-0

AB 253 makes a critical link between the Veterans Housing Bond (Prop. 41) and the Mental Health Services Act (Prop. 63) by prioritizing new housing applications under Prop. 41 that include long term commitments to mental health services funded by Prop. 63. AB 253 also strengthens veterans representation on the Mental Health Services Act Oversight Commission.

AB 1299 - Asm. Sebastian Ridley-Thomas - Passed Assembly 79-0

A simple but incredibly vital bill for foster children and their families, AB 1299 ensures that the mental health services foster children are entitled to remain in place if they are placed outside their home county and transfers accountability to provide those services to the new county.

For the complete Steinberg Institute legislative agenda, visit www.steinberginstitute.org