



**COUNTY OF
SAN BERNARDINO**

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April 23, 2007

The Honorable Mark Leno
Chairman, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 308 (Galgiani)– As amended April 10, 2007 - SUPPORT

Dear Chairman Leno:

The Board of Supervisors of San Bernardino County supports AB 308, which would require would require the State Department of Mental Health, in consultation with the State Department of Health Services, to adopt regulations to provide for the prompt reimbursement of counties for Medi-Cal claims for services they have already provided and paid for under the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) Program. The bill would also appropriate \$243,000,000 from the General Fund to the State Department of Mental Health to reimburse counties for unpaid Medi-Cal claims for the provision of those services for the 2003-04, 2004-05, and 2005-06 fiscal years. To date, San Bernardino County alone has over \$11 million in unpaid EPSDT reimbursements is owed by the State.

As you know, California Counties serve as the managed care plans for the Medi-Cal Specialty Mental Health program, including EPSDT services for children and youth. EPSDT is a federally mandated program that requires states to provide Medicaid (Medi-Cal) recipients under age 21 any health or mental health service that is medically necessary to correct or ameliorate a defect, physical or mental illness, or a condition identified by an assessment, including services not otherwise included in a state’s Medicaid (Medi-Cal) Plan. Examples of mental health services include family therapy, crisis intervention, medication monitoring, and behavioral management modeling.

It is our understanding that the current unanticipated funding deficiency is the result of changes in state accounting practices that date back to 2004-05 related to cash and accrual. As a result, the State did not have adequate funds on hand to reimburse the claims submitted on Counties' behalf. This change created a significant funding gap that has resulted in a General Fund shortfall, and a lack of funding with which to properly reimburse Counties.

Prompt payment is necessary to ensure timely services continue for the vulnerable populations served by county mental health departments throughout California. We request your support to correct this accounting error and to reimburse counties for the unpaid Medi-Cal claims for services provided. For these reasons, I respectfully ask for your “YES” vote when AB 308 is heard in committee.

Sincerely,

PAUL BIANE
Chairman, Board of Supervisors

The mission of the government of the County of San Bernardino is to satisfy its customers by providing service that promotes the health, safety, well being, and quality of life of its residents according to the County Charter, general laws, and the will of the people it serves.