



**COUNTY OF  
SAN BERNARDINO**  
**COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE  
OFFICE**

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GREGORY C. DEVEREAUX  
Chief Executive Officer

April 15, 2011

The Honorable Paul Cook  
California State Assembly  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: **AB 881 (Cook)** As introduced February 17, 2011 – **SPONSOR**

Dear Assemblyman Cook:

The County of San Bernardino is pleased to sponsor your bill, AB 881. As you know, Welfare and Institutions Code 5150 states that when any person, as a result of a mental disorder, is a danger to others, or to himself or herself, or gravely disabled, a peace officer, member of the attending staff of an evaluation facility designated by the county, designated members of a mobile crisis team or other professional person designated by the county may, upon probable cause, take, or cause to be taken, the person into custody and placed in a facility designated by the county and approved by the State Department of Mental Health as a facility for 72-hour treatment and evaluation.

When these persons are detained in our desert areas, they are typically transported by ambulance to Arrowhead Regional Medical Center or other 5150 treatment hospitals in valley locations for the 72-hour hold. Since ambulance personnel are not included in code as those who have the authority or immunity to hold or transport 5150 patients, the San Bernardino County Sheriff is forced to divert deputies to accompany the ambulance. A 5150 transport from the Barstow area to the valley is a 75 mile one way trip of over one hour's time, not accounting for traffic flows or time spent in the arriving facility. Committing a Sheriff's Deputy or Police Officer to more than a 2 hour detail outside of his/her regular patrol region only stretches law enforcement resources.

The Inland Counties Emergency Medical Agency, which provides emergency medical services to San Bernardino, Inyo and Mono counties, reports that there were 1,354 emergency medical services transports of 5150 patients in 2009. While the majority of these transports did not require law enforcement escort, many did, placing a large burden on our County Sheriff's Department. AB 881 will resolve this problem by giving ambulance personnel the authority to hold 5150 patients for transfer to a 72-hour hold facility.

For these reasons, the County of San Bernardino is pleased to sponsor AB 881. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Josh Candelaria, Deputy Legislative Director, at (909) 387-4280. The County thanks you for your attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

**JOSIE GONZALES**  
Chair  
San Bernardino County 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.*