

April ___, 2017

Assemblymember Sebastian Ridley-Thomas
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB501 (Ridley-Thomas) – SUPPORT AS AMENDED

Dear Assemblymember Ridley-Thomas:

On behalf of <INSERT YOUR AGENCY’S NAME HERE>, I am pleased to support your recently introduced bill AB501.

<INSERT NO MORE THAN 4 LINES DESCRIBING YOUR AGENCY AND THE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES YOU SERVE, AND/OR YOUR INTEREST IN THIS BILL>

AB501 is aimed at addressing a critical component missing in the continuum of specialty mental health services for children and youth in California - children’s crisis residential services. This legislation would create the needed licensing category to ensure that counties, commercial health plans, and their community-based providers have the ability to develop crisis residential programs with an appropriate licensing category, and to ensure children and youth access mental health services that are responsive to their individual needs and strengths in a timely manner. The creation of the licensing category is consistent with Medi-Cal Early Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) Specialty Mental Health Services (SMHS) program standards and requirements, and this bill will fill a gap in regulations which prevent California from fully complying with the EPSDT SMHS entitlement for children and youth.

<INSERT A PARAGRAPH DESCRIBING HOW THE ABILITY TO CREATE CRISIS RESIDENTIAL SERVICES WOULD BENEFIT CHILDREN YOU SERVE- IN LIEU OF INPATIENT CARE AND/OR AS A STEP DOWN PROGRAM – CONTINUITY OF CARE, ETC.--ONE OR MORE SITUATIONS IN WHICH CHILDREN/YOUTH YOU SERVE WERE UNABLE TO ACCESS APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF CRISIS CARE SERVICES THEY NEEDED, PERHAPS BOARDED AT LOCAL ER FOR LENGTHY TIME, THE NEGATIVE IMPACT ON BOTH CHILD & FAMILY].

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX is pleased to support efforts in California to expand mental health crisis services for children. Providing a comprehensive system of care for those experiencing mental health crises is beneficial for children, their families and the community.

There is no question that a full continuum of care for children and youth with urgent mental health is needed, and the lack of a licensing component for crisis residential is preventing the development of this much needed program. While crisis residential services are still acute in nature, it is provided in a less restrictive environment, and would be a more appropriate alternative for children that don’t necessarily require the level of care that an acute inpatient hospitalization provides.

For that reason, <your agency’s name> is in strong support of AB 501.

Sincerely,

<INSERT YOUR SIGNATURE>
<INSERT YOUR NAME
POSITION TITLE
AGENCY>