

Argument Against Proposition 1E

Five years ago, California voters made the decision to invest in our public mental health system. Through the Mental Health Services Act, Proposition 63, Californians were clear in their commitment to expand community mental health services. Following forty years of neglecting the mentally ill, in 2004 voters turned a new page and passed Proposition 63 and thereby began to rebuild California's public mental health system. Even in this difficult time, we ought to respect the will of the people.

The Mental Health Services Act is changing lives. More than 200,000 people have received mental health services. Among those, nearly 20,000 children, youth, adults, and older adults are getting the proper help—medication, therapy, housing and transportation—for them to recover from severe mental illness. Nearly 40 percent of these individuals had at least one emergency room visit before they enrolled in the Mental Health Services Act program. After they participated in Mental Health Services Act programs, fewer than 10 percent visited the emergency room.

These Mental Health Services Act programs are saving the state valuable resources by reducing pressure on our overburdened jails and prisons. People who have received Mental Health Services Act services are much more likely to receive treatment and not be incarcerated. Additionally, these programs have been shown to reduce homelessness, hospitalization, out-of-home placements, and school failures, further providing relief to strapped counties, school districts and hospitals.

**SUBJECT TO COURT
ORDERED CHANGES**

Additionally, the Mental Health Services Act will reduce the need for future mental health services through early intervention and treatment. In California, 50,000 are children experiencing early symptoms of mental illness. The Mental Health Services Act emphasis on early intervention and treatment will help these children before their symptoms become debilitating.

Shifting Mental Health Services Act funds away from these programs will impede us from serving even more people. I recognize how difficult the current fiscal climate is. However, Mental Health Services Act programs are working and save the state money. We need to preserve programs that are effective and cost savings and respect the will of the people. Please vote no on Proposition 1E.

Senator Lou Correa