



National Alliance on Mental Illness  
Los Angeles County Council  
*Los Angeles County's Voice on Mental Illness*

May 20, 2013

Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky  
856 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, California, 90012

Re: Motion - May 21, 2013

Dear Supervisor Yaroslavsky,

National Alliance on Mental Illness Los Angeles County Council (NAMI LACC) is a grassroots, volunteer-driven organization dedicated to improving lives of those whose lives are impacted by mental illness. We were founded in Los Angeles, CA in 1986 by family members of the severely mentally ill and our membership includes family members, friends, caregivers and persons who themselves live with mental illness. We join other organizations who serve the mentally ill in welcoming your motion as an opportunity to bring about much needed reform.

We share a desire to see the motion expanded to ensure examination of alternatives, including diverting persons with mental illness who have traditionally been housed in the jails into community treatment beds where costs are lower and where our loved ones can receive much-needed treatment to alleviate their suffering. Sadly, our loved ones with mental illness are extraordinarily vulnerable to violent crime and victimization when on the streets and when incarcerated and are disproportionately targeted for sexual assault by other inmates when incarcerated. They will be safer in community treatment beds.

Although limited, licensed board and care facilities are available in Los Angeles County for people with mental illness as are Sober Living and Transitional Living Facilities for people with substance addictions and co-occurring disorders (mental illness co-occurring with substance abuse).

We understand the value of building an Integrated Inmate Treatment Center, yet urge the Board to explore alternatives. One option is Laura's Law, AB 1421, which has the potential to reduce the incarceration of persons with serious mental illness. NAMI LACC strongly encourages our Board of Supervisors to

3250 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 1501, Los Angeles, CA 90010  
(213) 386-3615 phone (213) 386-1109 fax



National Alliance on Mental Illness  
Los Angeles County Council  
*Los Angeles County's Voice on Mental Illness*

fully implement Laura's Law in the form of our county's Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) Program as a tool that can save lives and money and achieve positive outcomes.

We hope that future public comment hearings will include community groups as stakeholders, such as NAMI LACC, so we may participate more fully in the decision making process and make the contribution of our own lived experience to better inform our county.

Sincerely,

Brittney Weissman  
Executive Director

Joe Conrad  
President