



LOS ANGELES COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

SACRAMENTO LEGISLATIVE OFFICE

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June 19, 2023

The Honorable Akilah Weber, M.D.
California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite 4130
Sacramento, CA 95814

ASSEMBLY BILL 268 (WEBER) SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Weber:

The Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office is pleased to support Assembly Bill 268.

AB 268 would add a licensed health care provider and a licensed mental health care provider, both to be appointed by the Governor, and subject to confirmation by the Senate Rules Committee to the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC).

AB 268 would also require the BSCC to develop and adopt regulations setting minimum standards for mental health care at local correctional facilities that either meet or exceed the standards for health care services in jails established by the National Commission on Correctional Health Care.

In 2022, the California State Auditor's office investigated the San Diego County Sheriff's Department and discovered 185 individuals in their custody died from 2006 through 2020—more deaths per average daily population than any other county in the State. The audit revealed multiple instances of individuals who requested or required medical and mental health care and did not receive it at all or in a timely manner. The audit also found that some of the deficiencies of the Sheriff's Department are the result of statewide corrections standards that are insufficient for maintaining the safety of incarcerated individuals. For example, regulations established by the BSCC do not explicitly require that mental health professionals perform a mental health screening during the intake process. They also do not describe the actions that constitute an adequate safety check: rather, the regulations simply state that safety checks must be conducted at least hourly through direct visual observation. The Auditor's report concluded with some key recommendations, including that BSCC should require mental health evaluations to be performed by mental health professionals at intake, and that it should clarify and improve procedures for safety checks.

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AB 268 will help reduce the number of preventable deaths in our local correctional facilities by requiring new intake health evaluations, increased safety checks and training of staff working in our local correctional facilities.

For this reason, our Office is pleased to support AB 268.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact Daniel Felizzatto in my Sacramento Legislative Office at (916) 442-0668.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gascón", written in a cursive style.

GEORGE GASCÓN
District Attorney