



MAYOR DARCY PAUL
dpaul@cupertino.org

CITY HALL
10300 TORRE AVENUE • CUPERTINO, CA 95014-3255
TELEPHONE: (408) 777-3195 • FAX: (408) 777-3366
CUPERTINO.ORG

June 3, 2021

The Honorable Rebecca Bauer-Kahan
California State Assemblymember, 16th District
State Capitol, Room 2130
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 988 (Bauer-Kahan) – SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Bauer-Kahan,

On behalf of the City of Cupertino, I am writing to express support for Assembly Bill 988, to implement the national 988 mental health emergency response system in California so that everyone experiencing a mental health crisis can access life-saving care.

In 2020, the National Suicide and Mental Health Crisis Hotline Designation Act was unanimously passed by both chambers of Congress and signed by the President, establishing a new phone line (988) for suicide prevention and immediate mental health crisis response nationwide.

This new emergency response system, which would be implemented in California through AB 988, will connect callers with around-the-clock intervention, including mobile crisis support teams staffed by mental health professionals and trained peers instead of police officers.

California's disjointed mental health crisis response system relies on law enforcement and confinement and puts people suffering from mental illness through an expensive and traumatizing revolving-door as they shuttle between jails, emergency rooms, and the streets. AB 988 creates a comprehensive crisis response system that can help break this cycle, save money, and increase access to the right kind of care.

AB 988 provides California with an unprecedented opportunity to leverage funds to transform our mental health crisis response system, save lives, and create significant cost savings to the state and local governments; AB 988:

1. Includes a user fee on access lines to fund the critical infrastructure of the 988 system;

2. Draws down on federal reimbursement rates and grants to offset costs to the state and local governments;
3. Builds upon existing investments and makes use of recently enacted parity legislation (SB 855, 2020) to link and expand our existing crisis response system while keeping the user fee low for Californians; and
4. Offers a significant return on investments as high as \$7 to \$1 in law enforcement, EMS, and hospital savings.

California has an extraordinary opportunity to transform our mental health crisis response system, without typical cost pressures -- in fact, AB 988 will create profound cost savings for the state and local governments. With that in mind, we would encourage you, as the bill moves forward, to work to limit the cost that will be borne by those who will be responsible for paying the user fee on access lines and ensure that the funding generated is used in a fiscally responsible manner that maximizes the positive impact from this legislation.

AB 988 will save countless lives by expanding access to vital mental health resources all through one easy-to-remember three-digit number. It is for these reasons that the City of Cupertino supports AB 988.

Sincerely,



Darcy Paul
Mayor
City of Cupertino

cc: Senator Dave Cortese
Assemblymember Evan Low
Assemblymember Marc Berman