



*Office of the Mayor*

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September 9, 2019

The Honorable Gavin C. Newsom  
California State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Newsom:

The City of Fremont is in strong support of SB 10 (Beall), and we are pleased to join the powerful coalition of California cities, counties, health organizations and advocates who are calling upon the state to standardize high-quality peer and family support services.

SB 10 would establish a Peer Support Specialist Certification Program to be administered by the Department of Health Care Services. Peer providers who use their life experience with mental illness and recovery, coupled with skills learned through formal training, have proven a valuable addition to service delivery in mental health settings. Research demonstrates that use of qualified peer support specialists has measurable benefits to clients, including reduced hospitalizations, improved functioning, alleviation of depression and other symptoms, and enhanced self-advocacy. A peer support program also creates a career ladder so that consumers and family members working in mental health care have the opportunity to fully contribute, translating their experience into meaningful employment.

Across California and in the City of Fremont, peer providers are already utilized in many settings. However, there is no statewide standard of practice, consistent curriculum, training standards, supervision standards, or certification protocol. Currently 48 states plus the District of Columbia and the U.S. Department of Veteran's Affairs have implemented protocols to certify peer specialists, and four additional states are in the process of creating certification programs, enabling the majority of states to leverage Medicaid funds.

The time has come for California to embrace peer support as an evidence-based model and put in place a certification program that will standardize best practices. SB 10 makes sense from both a policy and fiscal perspective, and will result in a more comprehensive and effective approach to mental health care. It is for these reasons that we urge you to sign SB 10.

Sincerely,

  
Lily Mei  
Mayor

