

September 3, 2020

Governor Gavin Newsom  
1303 10<sup>th</sup> St., Suite 1173  
Sacramento, CA 95814



**SUBJECT: Requesting signature on AB 2112 (Ramos)**

Via email to: [leg.unit@gov.ca.gov](mailto:leg.unit@gov.ca.gov)

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of Mental Health America of California, I respectfully request your signature on AB 2112, a bill that creates a statewide Office of Suicide Prevention within the Department of Public Health to study and address the crisis of suicide.

Mental Health America of California is the state's leading community based nonprofit organization dedicated to addressing the needs of those living with mental health challenges and promoting the overall health of all Americans. Mental Health America of California was founded in 1957, has six affiliate organizations and one associate organization in the State. Mental Health America of California has long sought to promote behavioral health as a critical part of overall wellness and to advocate on behalf of those experiencing mental health conditions.

Even before the current COVID-19 pandemic, suicide rates among all groups had been increasing drastically. Now, this mental health crisis has grown significantly under the weight of isolation and uncertainty. The state has a responsibility to focus resources on this crisis to ensure that these conditions do not worsen in the coming months and years.

Currently, there exists a patchwork of state and local suicide prevention resources and programs. Between schools, cities, county Departments of Behavioral Health and the state, a variety of practices and programs are utilized to support suicide prevention efforts. This presents an important problem: no one institution can identify best practices and dispense recommendations both to local agencies and statewide.

AB 2112 takes a vital step in addressing the crisis of suicide by coordinating state resources into a statewide Office of Suicide Prevention. This Office will devote resources to studying this crisis, make recommendations to the legislature, and advise on best practices to ensure that statewide resources are used to properly affect the crisis. By creating a statewide Office of Suicide Prevention, the state can target specific populations with greatest suicide risk to begin to address the root causes of the crisis.

For the reasons outlined, I urge you to support AB 2112 and sign the bill into law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Heidi L. Strunk', is written over a blue horizontal line.

Heidi L. Strunk  
President & CEO

[www.mhac.org](http://www.mhac.org)