

Susan Silva
Public Comment
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Dear Governor Brown and Hoover Commission Members,

I live in Alameda County and I'm the mother of a 38-year old schizophrenic son, for whom I've been trying to get mental health treatment for nine years. Because he can't see he's ill and won't volunteer to see a doctor, he's had no treatment, only jail time. He continues to become more ill and more dangerous because of delusions.

For Alameda County's 1.5 million citizens, our only psych facility John George Psychiatric Pavilion has **69 in-house treatment beds and more than 1,000 involuntary admissions every month. This should be considered a public crisis and receive emergency measures, if not from indifferent Alameda County, then from the State.**

Alameda County families of loved ones with serious mental illness (SMI) keep hearing from the County that improvements are "in the works", but we never hear what those plans are or see them happen. We're supposed to accept whatever is decided behind closed doors by County Behavioral Health Care Services and their subcontractor Telecare.

Prop 63 (the MHSA) has raised approximately 17 billion dollars in California since it passed in 2004--specifically to provide more treatment for citizens with serious mental illness (SMI).

Why aren't more in-house treatment beds available more than ten years later? I see no reason to celebrate "Mental Health Matters" until we see real progress. I believe it's criminal negligence to not delivery treatment and recovery for those with SMI through the MHSA—as promised. That money is being spent on other things, not that for which is was intended. And mothers and family members like myself are furious and want this to stop. We need help.

Our streets in California urban areas are full of homeless encampments and probably 1/3 of these poor souls suffer from mental illness. A bond for housing the homeless ("No Place Like Home") will not be a solution to this problem unless housing facilities have Mental Health treatment options and services for our loved ones suffering from SMI. If not, the bill is just for show and won't work without addressing the SMI crisis first and foremost.

Talk is cheap. **I am fighting for my son's life.** I demand more and better treatment facilities for our most vulnerable citizens with serious mental illness—as promised over ten years ago.

For more information on Serious Mental Illness, please see this website that debunks the "8 Myths about Mental Illness" compiled by D.J. Jaffe and written about by Peter Earley. We family members know these things from painful experience.

<http://www.petearley.com/2014/05/16/against-the-grain-d-j-jaffes-8-myths-about-mental-illness/>

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