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# California State Senate

SENATOR  
**DARRELL STEINBERG**  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE



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January 10, 2011

Cliff Allenby, Interim Director  
Department of Mental Health  
1600 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Room 151  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Director Allenby:

Today, Governor Jerry Brown proposed diverting voter-approved Mental Health Services Act (Proposition 63) funds to the General Fund. While I abhor this proposal, we cannot in good conscience reject it out of hand, given the commensurate cuts to other health and human services investments. As we discuss mental health and the Mental Health Services Act, it is time for the Department to take leadership in evaluating the outcomes of resources already invested to improve mental health services.

It is well known that local communities have already greatly benefited from these effective Mental Health Services Act programs. According to a study released in the peer-reviewed *Archives of General Psychiatry* last June, after just one year in an adult Full Service Partnership program in San Diego County funded by the Act, clients experienced: 67% fewer days of homelessness, 32% fewer emergency room visits, 17% fewer jail days, and 14% fewer hospitalizations. Similar results have been reported by local programs throughout California.

What has been the statewide impact? Is it similar to the San Diego outcomes? What is the Department doing, in conjunction with the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission, to educate Californians about the progress of the Act?

While all of California's programs have to be part of this difficult budget solution, any further attempts to impact the Mental Health Services Act should be made with a full and better understanding of the positive outcomes that this transformative Act is producing for people.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Darrell Steinberg".

**DARRELL STEINBERG**  
Senate President pro Tempore