

December 3, 2023

Tina Rivera  
Sonoma County Director of Health Services  
1450 Neotomas Avenue, Ste 200  
Santa Rosa, CA 95405

RE: Support for delay in SB 43 implementation

Dear Ms. Rivera,

I am writing on behalf of the Hospital Association — Northern & Central California (HCNCC), a trade association representing 197 hospitals across 50 counties dedicated to enhancing health and health care in our communities. We are reaching out to express our support for delayed implementation of [Senate Bill \(SB\) 43 \(Eggman-D, Statutes of 2023\)](#) until 2026, as allowed in the law.

SB 43 broadens the definition of "gravely disabled" for the involuntary detention, treatment, or conservatorship of individuals with behavioral health conditions to include those living with severe substance use disorders (SUDs) or co-occurring mental health (MH) disorders and severe SUDs. Hospitals are supportive of SB 43's objectives and are strongly committed to collaborative efforts, but we are concerned that our current behavioral health system will be unequipped for the anticipated patient surge.

Temporarily postponing SB 43's implementation would give the many local agencies affected by this law necessary time to thoughtfully answer questions and develop protocols for detaining, evaluating, and providing involuntary treatment to this new population. We appreciate recent legislative and funding strides in behavioral health infrastructure and believe delaying SB 43 implementation would also provide more time for those infrastructure investments to become reality. Failure to adequately plan for SB 43 impacts in our communities may inadvertently result in extended emergency room wait times, delays for psychiatric patients, and increased demands on first responders.

We appreciate your consideration of delaying the implementation of SB 43 to 2026.

Sincerely,



Bryan J. Bucklew, FACHE  
President & CEO



Meghan Hardin, FACHE  
Regional Vice President