



CITY OF MANTECA

BENJAMIN CANTU, MAYOR
GARY SINGH, VICE MAYOR
DAVID BREITENBUCHER, COUNCILMEMBER
CHARLIE HALFORD, COUNCILMEMBER
JOSE NUÑO, COUNCILMEMBER

April 20, 2021

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Jerome C. Wilverding
County Administrator
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Re: Assembly Bill 1976 (Laura's Law/Assisted Outpatient Treatment)

To the Honorable Members of the Board of Supervisors and Mr. Wilverding,

We, the City Council for the City of Manteca, are writing to respectfully respect that the County of San Joaquin **not** opt out of Assembly Bill 1976 (otherwise referred to as "Laura's Law") before the July 1, 2021 deadline. After studying this matter in some detail, the City of Manteca believes that Laura's Law and its related principle of Assisted Outpatient Treatment (or "AOT") would be a great benefit for the citizens of San Joaquin County.

For some background, AOT was initiated in California following the 2001 killing of Laura Wilcox in Nevada County by an individual suffering from severe mental illness. This individual was engaged in treatment services and regularly visited a mental health clinic; the individual was not, however, engaged to the degree necessary to prevent decompensation or the stabilization of symptoms. As it now stands, AOT is a system of laws found in California's Welfare and Institutions Code to provide compelled mental health treatment without having to place individuals in conservatorship. In practice, AOT is a collaboration between several county agencies, the courts, members of the public, and/or non-profits who take an interest in the assistance of individuals most at risk for the negative consequences of not receiving treatment.

California's "Laura's Law" (fashioned after New York's "Kendra's Law") was enacted in 2002. To date, several counties have implemented Laura's Law in California, including (but not limited to): Kern County, Los Angeles County, Nevada County, Orange County, Placer County, San Diego County, San Mateo County, Yolo County, Contra Costa County, the City and County of San Francisco, Ventura County, San Luis Obispo County, Alameda County, Marin County, El Dorado County, Tulare County, and Mendocino County.



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On September 25, 2020, Governor Gavin Newsom signed Assembly Bill 1976. This bill not only removes the sunset provisions for AOT/Laura's Law, but also requires counties to "opt out" rather than "opt in" to AOT/Laura's Law as of July 1, 2021.

At the April 6, 2021 City Council Meeting for the City of Manteca, the City received a presentation from the County of Kern regarding the success of its AOT program. The power-point presentation and recording of the session is available here under Item D.1: https://manteca-ca.granicus.com/player/clip/785?view_id=2&redirect=true.

For these reasons we strongly support this legislation and the implementation of AOT/Laura's Law in San Joaquin County. If you have any questions, please contact the City Attorney's Office at (209) 456-8551.

Very truly yours,

Benjamin J. Cantu
Mayor

cc: L. David Nefouse, City Attorney