

# INDIVISIBLE SF

Date: May 7, 2019

To: San Francisco Board of Supervisors Rules Committee

cc: Jessica Lehman, Executive Director, Senior and Disability Action

re: SB 1045 and SB 40 - **OPPOSE**

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**Indivisible SF, a member of Voluntary Services First, is opposed to the implementation of SB 1045 and SB 40** that expand the use of conservatorship to people with mental illness and substance use disorder. We respectfully ask that you vote **NO** on File # 181042 when it is heard by the Rules Committee on May 13, 2019.

San Francisco suffers from a substantial lack of much-needed voluntary services. Given this lack, the City's resources should be directed towards providing adequate supportive housing, mental health care and substance abuse treatment for the thousands of San Francisco residents who are on waiting lists for these voluntary services. Until the City has adequate funds and resources for voluntary services, we oppose expansion of involuntary conservatorship.

SB 1045 and SB 40 shifts the long supported standard for conservatorship from "Harm to self and others, or gravely disabled" to "Number of police detentions under 5150". Decisions about mental health care and substance use disorder treatment should be made by patients, their families and their physicians, not by the police and the courts. Conservatorship is an extreme deprivation of civil rights. That is why the long accepted standard is "harm to self or others, or gravely disabled", only to be used in extreme cases.

While there may be a very small number of patients who meet the standards set out in SB 1045 and SB 40, there are many more homeless people who are detained under a 5150 hold who do not meet the criteria. They are arrested, transported to emergency psychiatric care facilities and then released. However the trauma inflicted by this process can be permanent and devastating.

Furthermore, there is mounting evidence that compulsory treatment, especially without adequate follow-on care, is ineffective and can actually exacerbate the patient's condition. The UN has issued joint statement calling for the closing of compulsory treatment centers for drug "rehabilitation" and expansion of voluntary services.

The authors of SB 1045 and SB 40 have repeatedly failed to reach out and consult with our community partners who are on the frontlines of providing care and support for homeless people with mental illness and substance abuse disorders. In fact, it is unclear who the authors have consulted, and, as a result, the City has no clear plan to implement this new scheme and does not have adequate facilities or services for expanding conservatorship.

We agree with, and strongly support, the Voluntary Services First coalition in opposing the implementation of SB 1045 and SB 40.

**We respectfully urge you to vote No** when File 181042 comes before the Rules Committee on May 13, 2019.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Spencer Hudson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Spencer Hudson  
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