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April 30, 2021

The Honorable Rebecca Bauer-Kahan
Member, California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 6011
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 988 (Bauer-Kahan) Mental Health: Mobile Crisis Support Teams: 988
Crisis Hotline.
Notice of Support**

Dear Assembly Member Bauer-Kahan:

The League of California Cities (Cal Cities) is pleased to support AB 988 (Bauer-Kahan), which would establish a comprehensive system for the purpose of connecting individuals experiencing a mental health crisis with suicide prevention and mental health crisis counselors, mobile crisis support teams, and crisis receiving and stabilization services.

Across the nation, there is a growing movement to realign crisis services provided to individuals with behavioral health issues away from a law enforcement centric model to a more mental health crisis support model. A July 2020 article published by the National Conference of State Legislatures stated that nationally people experiencing a mental health crisis are more likely to encounter law enforcement than medical assistance.

California is facing a mental health crisis. According to the Steinberg Institute and The Kennedy Forum, cosponsors of this bill, one in six Californians live with a mental illness and suicides have been steadily climbing, increasing by 35 percent nationally over the last two decades. With calls to existing suicide prevention call centers skyrocketing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, this bill will ensure the state is prepared to answer calls of all Californians in need by providing a seamless transition from our current suicide prevention system and handling the expected increase in volume demand of calls to suicide prevention lines.

For these reasons, Cal Cities supports AB 988. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (916) 658-8252.

Sincerely,



Elisa Arcidiacono
Legislative Representative