



**LEGISLATION & PUBLIC
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March 24, 2017

Honorable Ed Chau
California State Assembly
Capitol Building, Room 5016
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 850 (CHAU) – SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Chau:

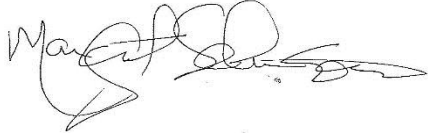
Disability Rights California (DRC), a non-profit advocacy organization that advances and protects the rights of Californians with disabilities, supports AB 850. This bill is scheduled for hearing in the Assembly Health Committee on April 4, 2017.

Existing law, the Mental Health Services Act, an initiative measure enacted by the voters as Proposition 63 at the November 2, 2004, statewide general election, establishes the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission. This bill would require the Governor to appoint an additional member to the commission who has knowledge and experience in reducing mental health disparities, especially for racial and ethnic communities.

This bill would provide a new seat on the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission for someone with knowledge of and commitment to reducing mental health disparities, especially for racial and ethnic communities. The commission has significant influence on the continued implementation of Proposition 63 or the Mental Health Services Act. We believe this new seat is a crucial step to ensuring services are culturally competent, responsive, and representative of the diverse needs of Californians with mental health disabilities.

For these reasons, we support this bill. Please contact me if you have any questions about our position on this bill.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Margaret Johnson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Margaret Johnson, Esq.
Advocacy Director
Disability Rights California

cc: Honorable Chair and Members, Assembly Health Committee
Paula Villescaz, Principal Consultant, Assembly Health Committee
Judy Yee, Legislative Aide, Office of Assembly Member Chau