



**LEGISLATION & PUBLIC
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September 4, 2018

Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr.
Governor of California
Capitol Building, 1st Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 215 (BEALL) as amended August 23, 2018 – REQUEST FOR
SIGNATURE**

Dear Governor Brown:

Disability Rights California (DRC), a non-profit advocacy organization that advances and protects the rights of Californians with disabilities, **supports SB 215 and requests your signature.**

There is an urgent need for specific and targeted efforts to reduce the rates of incarceration of people with mental illness, and to facilitate successful diversion and reentry. The current situation is dire. Jails are not therapeutic environments. They are not designed to be mental health treatment centers. Prisoners with mental illness are significantly more likely than those without mental illness to be abused. They are more likely to commit suicide, the leading cause of death in jails. Further, it costs significantly more to incarcerate prisoners with mental illness than prisoners without this condition. The over-incarceration of people with mental illness is directly at odds with California's stated commitment to providing treatment in the least restrictive manner appropriate, with respect for the right to "dignity, privacy, and humane care."

Your signature on AB 1810 was an important step toward recognizing that the population of inmates suffering from a mental disorder is growing and provides opportunities for the courts and communities to begin providing

effective alternatives for treatment other than the woefully non-therapeutic environment in jails. DRC strongly supports that legislation. The amendments to AB 1810 contained in SB 215 should serve to encourage counties and communities to implement and expand mental health diversion programs.

For these reasons, DRC supports SB 215 and requests your signature. Please contact me if you have any questions about our position or if I can provide any further information.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Curtis Child". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Curtis" and last name "Child" clearly distinguishable.

Curtis Child
Legislative Director
Disability Rights California

cc: Honorable Jim Beall, California State Senate
Gregory Cramer, Policy Consultant, Office of Senator Beall
Scott Ogus, Consultant, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review
Committee
Daniel Seeman, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of Legislative
Affairs
Daniel Gutierrez, Assistant Legislative Secretary, Office of Legislative
Affairs