



May 21, 2022

RE: DPSFV Supports Senate Bill 966 (Limón) [Increasing behavioral health access]

Representatives of the Honorable San Fernando Valley Delegation:

On behalf of the Democratic Party of the San Fernando Valley (DPSFV), we are pleased to report that our Executive Board voted to support SB 966, which will ensure that community health centers (CHCs) can continue utilizing Associate Clinical Social Workers (ASWs), and Associate Marriage and Family Therapists (AMFTs), beyond the public health emergency. SB 966 will allow CHCs to continue to diversify their workforce to better meet the needs of their communities by providing culturally and linguistically competent care.

We urge you to please support this important piece of legislation.

DPSFV was founded in 1978 and is chartered by the Los Angeles County Democratic Central Committee. Our organization is the coordinating body for a coalition of twenty-one Democratic Clubs located wholly or partially in the San Fernando Valley.

The DPSFV Political Action Committee met last month to discuss SB 966 and voted to recommend that the DPSFV Executive Board support this vital piece of legislation. The committee noted that, CHCs have historically faced many challenges in terms of behavioral health workforce; lack of multilingual and diverse candidates, and open vacancies that are unable to be filled for years.

We urge you to support SB 966. This legislation will increase access to behavioral health services and will help meet the patient demand as the COVID-19 pandemic persists. The looming concern for CHCs is the inability to continue utilizing AMFTs and ASWs upon the expiration of the public health emergency, decreasing their ability to offer access to behavioral healthcare. While the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on individuals and communities vary, one of the most pressing issues is its impact on behavioral health. Our state is an extreme healthcare workforce shortage making this legislation incredibly important.

For these reasons, we urge you to support SB 966 to increase behavioral health access in our most vulnerable communities. Please note that DPSFV will be tracking this bill as it travels through the Legislature. Your voting record will be noted and may be considered should you ever seek our endorsement. Your office is always welcome to contact DPSFV if you have any questions.

Sincerely and respectfully,

Chair Sean M. Rivas
Democratic Party of the San Fernando Valley

cc: Assembly Members Rivas, Friedman, Gabriel, Nazarian, and Bloom
Senators Hertzberg, Portantino, Stern, Allen and Limón (Author)

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