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**Board Supports H.R. 1201 to Expand County's
Mental Health Treatment Capacity**

Stockton, CA – At its meeting on Tuesday, November 28, the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors urged the adoption of H.R. 1201 and asked that local Congressman Josh Harder sign on as a co-sponsor of the bill, which he did this week. H.R. 1201 would remove a cap of 16 beds for Medicaid reimbursement of facilities which treat adults with severe mental illness.

“The Board of Supervisors wants to explore every possible avenue to ensure that the severely mentally ill of our County have all available resources,” commented Board Chairman Robert Rickman. “The Board is dedicated to improving mental health outcomes, as seen in our investment in mental health infrastructure here in our County. This bill will allow us to consolidate services in ways that expand capacity and save money.”

San Joaquin County Behavioral Health Services operated a 40-bed Psychiatric Health Facility (PHF) for several years that did not qualify for Medicaid payments because it exceeded the Federal 16-bed limit, known as the Institute for Mental Disease (IMD) Exclusion. The PHF reconfigured its bed capacity to meet the 16-bed limit, however, this size is not adequate for current needs, nor will it be for future projected needs and demand. This position is consistent with the Board of Supervisors’ priorities to promote expansion of Behavioral Health clinicians and services.

“While it may have been well-intentioned to combat large mental health institutions, this law harms the most vulnerable in our community and costs taxpayers millions of dollars to build multiple sites to handle the severely mentally ill residents in our County,” commented Supervisor Steven J. Ding, who brought this item to the Board. “This Board is committed to the mental health care of our residents, and we appreciate Congressman Josh Harder joining us in removing unnecessary red tape to accomplish that goal.”

H.R. 1201 was introduced in February 2023 by Representative Grace Napolitano (D-CA 31) and is supported by a number of California representatives, including John Duarte (R-CA13). The bill has currently been referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.

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The Board of Supervisors is the governing body of San Joaquin County and serves more than 779,000 residents. The Board establishes County policies, passes local ordinances, approves the budget, sets local tax rates, supports community programs, and provides many other essential services.