

HEALTH COMMISSION

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

RESOLUTION NO. 131-88

A RESOLUTION ON STATE MENTAL HEALTH HOSPITAL BED REDUCTIONS

WHEREAS, there were 37,000 state hospital beds for the seriously mentally ill in 1960 to serve the 16 million California residents; and,

WHEREAS, the state hospital beds were reduced to 5,000 beds despite a rapid population increase in California to the current level of 27 million; and,

WHEREAS, there have been no new beds added to the state hospital system; and,

WHEREAS, many of the discharged former state hospital patients were sent to local communities to be cared for without adequate state funding support; and,

WHEREAS, the counties in California are experiencing a significant fiscal crisis, which is exacerbated by continued erosion in state funding base; and,

WHEREAS, a large number of severely mentally ill individuals are creating serious pressures at local acute care facilities, emergency rooms, and crisis shelters; and,

WHEREAS, there are severe persistent problems accessing the existing state hospital beds; and,

WHEREAS, San Francisco is serving a disproportionate share of the displaced state hospital patients and other seriously mentally ill individuals from all parts of the country; and,

WHEREAS, the State Department of Mental Health has further reduced the state hospital bed allocation to San Francisco, along with many other counties, for fiscal year 1988/89; and,

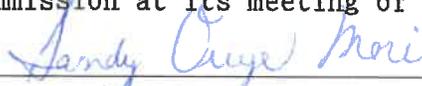
WHEREAS, there have been significant county program reductions in the current fiscal year due to the City's budget crisis and elimination of cost of living adjustments in the Governor's budget; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Health Commission declare that there is a severe crisis in the San Francisco and California public mental health system and urge the State Director of Mental Health to declare a "state of emergency." To address this state of emergency, the State Director of Mental Health should:

1. Immediately open additional wards in the state hospital system to allow access for those patients in local counties occupying expensive acute hospital beds and overcrowding emergency and crisis services;
2. Request the state legislature and the Governor to make an emergency appropriation to create a significant increased capacity in both state hospitals and in all community mental health programs;
3. Recognize and acknowledge that the State Department of Mental Health is the resource of last resort;
4. Negotiate with the State Department of Health Services to suspend enforcement of licensed capacity violations in facilities serving the acutely mentally ill until such time as the overall capacity issues are resolved; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Health Commission transmits this resolution to the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors.

I hereby certify that this resolution was passed unanimously by the Health Commission at its meeting of October 11, 1988.


Sandy Ouye Mori
Secretary to the Health Commission