

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Governor Newsom's New CARE Court System Expands Criminalization of Unhoused Californians**

### *CARE Act's Expedient Passage Ignored Black and Brown Demands*

SACRAMENTO – Yesterday, Governor Gavin Newsom signed SB 1338, or the CARE Act, into law that will set into motion the creation of a new, expansive court infrastructure and would enforce court-ordered treatment and services on unhoused Californians.

Please attribute the following statement to **Andrey Garcia-Ponce De Leon, steering committee member of the No CARE Court Coalition:**

“We are deeply disappointed in both the governor and the state legislature for enacting an expansive court system that will only harm unhoused and disabled Californians. Throughout the process, politicians have steamrolled this ill-advised approach out of desperation and with token debate, shutting out the voices of directly impacted communities and civil and human rights groups.

Court control over mental health treatment does not improve health outcomes. Instead, it will give police and government officials the authority to force people into abusive court proceedings that violate their rights and potentially fast-track them into extreme court control through conservatorships.

This so-called ‘CARE Court’ is especially threatening to Black and Brown people who are often misdiagnosed and over diagnosed with qualifying mental health conditions. These same groups are most denied access to voluntary health care, and due to discrimination in housing, employment, policing and other factors, make up an over-represented number of unhoused people. This court system is poised to become a new form of discriminatory social control.

The state instead should prioritize investing in accessible, community-based voluntary mental health care and in providing sufficient housing, including permanent supportive housing, to end houselessness in California.”

*The No CARE Court Coalition is a national consortium of civil and disability rights advocacy groups who have long-opposed the governor's proposal including ACLU, ACLU California Action, Human Rights Watch, San Bernardino Free Them All, Project Amiga, Ezekiel's Project, Cal Voices, Anti Police-Terror Project, Mental Health First, Justice Teams Network, Unapologetically Black Unicorns, WRAP, Venice Justice Committee, National Homelessness Law Center, Housing Not Handcuffs, Mental Health Advocacy Services, Transforming Justice Orange County, People's Budget Orange County, Housing Is a Human Right Orange County, White People 4 Black Lives, #Caravan4Justice, Starting Over Inc. and others.*

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