

Al Rowlett  
Chair – Commission for Behavioral Health  
1812 9th Street  
Sacramento, CA 95811

**Re: Commission Meeting (Day 2) - March 27, 2026: Item # 5 Future Committee Structure**

Dear Chair Rowlett and Commissioners,

We write to offer a recommendation for the continued combination of the Cultural and Linguistic Competence Committee (CLCC) and the Client and Family Leadership Committee (CFLC) into a single committee. We recognize the impact that the single committee structure has had on reaching quorum and offering space for discussions that take an intersectional approach. At the same time, we share concerns that this structure may limit the depth of issue-specific conversations and opportunities for meaningful stakeholder engagement.

As advocates for children's mental health, we recognize that voices and experiences can be lost when there is no dedicated time and space for focused attention. Both committees are designed to center voices that are too often underrepresented in decision-making spaces. When time is constrained within a combined structure, there is an increased risk that these perspectives, particularly those of youth, families, and culturally diverse communities, may be compressed or deprioritized, undermining the committees' core purpose.

To address both the need for quorum and the importance of maintaining robust, issue-specific dialogue, we recommend a hybrid approach to the committee structure. This could include maintaining joint meetings to support shared learning, while also incorporating dedicated time, such as alternating meetings, for each committee to engage in more focused discussions aligned with their respective mandates. Additionally, more intentional planning, including scheduling meetings in advance, could further support consistent participation and effectiveness. We support the recommendations provided by the coalition led by REMHDCO and Safe Passage to reach quorum more effectively.

We also note that, during recent discussions, there was clear support from both public commenters and committee members for exploring a hybrid approach. While there was appreciation for the joint committee structure, there was also a consistent desire to preserve opportunities for the committees to meet separately. This reflects a recognition that both structures offer value: joint meetings can support coordination and shared learning, while separate meetings allow for more focused, in-depth discussion aligned with each committee's unique role.

We offer this recommendation in the spirit of strengthening community engagement and ensuring that committee structures continue to reflect the intent of the Behavioral Health Services Act by centering community voice, equity, and accountability. We appreciate the Commission's commitment to these goals and welcome continued collaboration on approaches that best serve California's diverse communities, including children and youth.

Sincerely,

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