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## **Merced County District Attorney Kimberly Lewis Joins California District Attorneys Association in Supporting the Governor's Concept of Care Court to Provide Mandatory Treatment for Mentally Ill Homeless People**

While we are still awaiting details, the California District Attorneys Association (CDAА) supports the concept of Governor Gavin Newsom's Care Court; a proposal that would provide mandatory treatment for mentally ill homeless people.

"This innovative and humane approach would help the thousands of Californians on the street suffering from mental illness who don't have the wherewithal to volunteer for medical and psychiatric care," said Greg Totten, CDAА's Chief Executive Officer.

In his State of the State Address, Governor Newsom proposed Care Court, which he said would create civil court divisions in every county that could have the power to mandate mental health treatment for people with debilitating psychosis.

"By providing new treatment options to those who are most vulnerable and most in need, California can humanely address the human suffering connected to homelessness while also improving public safety for all of our communities," said Jeff Reisig, Yolo County District Attorney and President of CDAА.

The Governor has not yet provided details of the plan but suggested it could become state law this year. We look forward to being a part of a robust conversation about a policy that is desperately needed.

The California District Attorneys Association is a statewide training and advocacy organization representing elected district attorneys, city attorneys with criminal divisions, and more than 3,500 prosecutors.

"Since the revisions to mental health treatment and care made during the Regan administration in the 1980s, there has been a gap in services for those suffering from psychotic conditions who are not immediately endangering their own lives or the lives of others. Stated plainly, the current state of the law is that services are voluntary unless an individual is actively suicidal or is threatening physical harm to others. I join with the California District Attorneys' Association in support of Governor Newsom's intent to develop compassionate services for those who do not

presently qualify for treatment, but whose well-being is at risk because of their lack of adequate mental health treatment. Expanded services of this nature should immediately improve the lives of those who are suffering and promote public safety in Merced County.” ~ Merced County District Attorney Kimberly Lewis

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