



# CALIFORNIA COUNCIL OF COMMUNITY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AGENCIES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 2/4/2023

FOR PRESS INQUIRIES CONTACT: Sage Miller at [smiller@cccbha.org](mailto:smiller@cccbha.org)

## **Press Release: Gun Violence, Safety, & Trauma Townhall Hosted by Senator Anthony J. Portantino (SD 25)**

**Sacramento, CA** – California and the nation are facing a gun violence epidemic. The number of firearm deaths in the United States grew by nearly 43% between 2010 and 2020 - reaching 45,222 deaths by the end of the decade. But what is the solution? And how does the violence impact community health?

Elected leaders across the United States are once again asking these questions after the tragic mass shootings in Monterey Park, CA, and Half Moon Bay, CA, only one day apart.

Earlier this week, Governor Gavin Newsom and Attorney General Rob Bonta joined Senator Anthony J. Portantino (SD 25) during a press conference to discuss gun safety efforts and legislation that strengthens California's conceal-carry laws. SB 2, authored by Senator Portantino, will implement significant improvements to California's existing conceal-carry weapon (CCW) laws to address the recent United States Supreme Court decision in *New York Rifle and Pistol Association v. Bruen*. The Governor and Attorney General are sponsors of SB 2.

On Monday, February 6th at 6pm pst, Senator Portantino is convening advocates, behavioral health providers, educators, law enforcement professionals, and the public for a Townhall titled "Gun Violence, Safety, & Trauma." The focus of the meeting will be to address the gun violence we face, and its impact on community wellness.

Speakers will include Senator Anthony Portantino, Le Ondra Clark Harvey, Ph. D., Chief Executive Officer of the California Council of Community Behavioral Health Agencies (CBHA), Sheriff Robert Luna of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, Debbie Manners, LCSW, President & Chief Executive Officer of Sycamores, Wendy Wang, Chief Public Policy & Advocacy Officer of Sycamores, and Garen Wintemute, M.D., M.P.H., Director of the Violence Prevention Research Program at the University of California, Davis.

"As California continues to lead the nation in adopting common sense gun safety measures, I look forward to having these critical conversations with law enforcement professionals, educators, and health care providers. We must be diligent with our efforts to keep communities safe. We cannot afford to wait another day to act boldly and quickly," said Senator Anthony J. Portantino (SD 25).

"Every day, Californians experience trauma from gun violence and the recent mass shootings in Monterey Park and Half Moon Bay have shaken communities across our state. A comprehensive, equitable and culturally competent behavioral health system of care is essential to community health and healing," said Le Ondra Clark Harvey, Ph. D., Chief Executive Officer of CBHA. "CBHA applauds Senator Portantino for bringing policy makers, educators, advocates, law enforcement professionals, behavioral health providers and the public together for what will be a powerful discussion during the Gun Violence, Safety, and Trauma Townhall."



## CALIFORNIA COUNCIL OF COMMUNITY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AGENCIES

“Gun violence prevention and response are of the highest priorities for the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department. Working in collaboration with elected officials, community-based organizations, and the public are critical steps to making our communities safer. We thank Senator Portantino and our partners for the opportunity to engage and look forward to having a robust and substantive conversation at the Gun Violence, Safety, and Trauma Townhall,” said Sheriff Robert Luna, Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department.

“Gun violence has devastating and long-term consequences on the individuals involved and to community health. Sycamores is dedicated to combatting the trauma of gun violence by providing important mental health therapy, medication support, co-occurring substance use services, crisis stabilization, and mobile crisis response services. We are proud to participate in the Gun Violence, Safety, and Trauma Townhall and thank Senator Portantino for his leadership in creating space for this critical dialogue,” said Debbie Manners, LCSW, President & Chief Executive Officer of Sycamores.

“There is a science to preventing gun violence. The Townhall will provide an opportunity to discuss that science and what it means for California,” said Garen Wintemute, M.D., M.P.H., Director of the Violence Prevention Research Program at University of California, Davis.

To watch the Townhall, “Gun Violence, Safety, & Trauma” on Monday, February 6<sup>th</sup> at 6pm pst, visit: [casen.zoom.us/j/85009884314](https://casen.zoom.us/j/85009884314)

###

*California Council of Community Behavioral Health Agencies (CBHA) is a statewide association of nonprofit community-based organizations who provide mental health, substance use, housing, education, and vocational rehabilitation services to over 1,000,000 children, youth, adults, and older adults in California.*