

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING
AB 2093 (Bauer-Kahan)
As Amended March 26, 2026
Majority vote

SUMMARY

Extends the date at which the California Health and Human Services Agency (CalHHS) is authorized to disband the 988 advisory group from January 1, 2025 to January 1, 2030. Requires the advisory group to meet once per quarter until December 31, 2029.

COMMENTS

Policy advisory group. AB 988 (Bauer Kahan), Chapter 747, Statutes of 2022, requires CalHHS to establish and convene a "state 988 advisory group," which has been named the 988-Crisis Policy Advisory Group, to advise on the development of recommendations for a five-year implementation plan for a comprehensive 988 system. Despite statutory authority to disband the group as of January 1, 2025, CalHHS resumed meetings in January 2026 and established new 988-Crisis Workgroups focusing on 988 integration and sustainable funding. This bill would allow the group to be disbanded no sooner than January 1, 2030.

988 Oversight. The Assembly Select Committee on California's Mental Health Crisis met on December 2, 2025, to explore state level implementation of 988, county and local call center coordination, and perspectives from practitioners are the ground. Speakers identified the need for sustainable funding, strengthening the coordination between 911 and 988, and developing a resource directory, among other things. AB 988 has also been selected as part of this year's new Outcomes Review oversight tool. The purpose of the Outcomes Review process is to assess, review, and improve implementation of key enacted legislation to ensure that the laws passed by the Legislature continue to improve the lives of Californians.

Trailer Bill Language (TBL). The Administration has posted proposed TBL that, according to the State Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), would establish a process and standard criteria for entities to apply for approval as "designated 988 centers." Additionally, DHCS proposes language to provide authority for DHCS to establish standards to oversee and govern the performance of designated 988 centers, including staffing requirements, training requirements, clinical and triage protocols for behavioral health services, measures to assess the quality of 988 services, and performance requirements. According to DHCS, without explicit statutory authority, it cannot adequately designate, fund, or oversee designated 988 centers, align with national standards and best practices for ensuring trauma-informed, person-centered, and culturally responsive care, and achieve the goals set forth by the 988 policy advisory group.

The TBL also provides DHCS with the authority to oversee the funding of 988 centers, designated 988 centers, and mobile crisis teams for staffing necessary to provide 988 and mobile crisis services. It would also require the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES), in consultation with DHCS, to allocate and distribute funds to 988 centers and designated 988 centers for the acquisition of technology and equipment as appropriated by the Legislature.

According to the Author

AB 988 passed with broad bipartisan support because all communities struggle to assist people in mental health crisis. It is imperative that the 988 system achieves its original goals of

interoperability and teamwork across the departments tasked with 988 implementation. Continued assistance and oversight from the advisory group are key to making success a reality. The author concludes that failure of this program is not an option: the lives of Californians depend on it.

Arguments in Support

The Steinberg Institute (SI) is the sponsor of this bill and states in support that, as with any large-scale systems transformation, implementation remains ongoing and complex. California continues to face significant challenges related to sustainable funding, 911 interoperability, governance and coordination, and the integration of mobile crisis teams and other in-person response options. These issues require continued collaboration across state departments, counties, providers, and more. SI argues that by making the 988 Policy Advisory Group permanent, this bill ensures California maintains a structured, transparent forum to address implementation challenges, strengthen coordination across agencies, and support continuous improvement of the crisis response system.

The Miles Hall Foundation also supports this bill stating that the 988 Policy Advisory Group has served as a critical forum for collaboration. The Advisory Group has helped identify implementation barriers, elevate stakeholder perspectives, and provide practical guidance to state leaders as California continues to build out a comprehensive crisis response system. This collaborative structure has been particularly valuable given the multi-agency nature of 988 implementation and the need for ongoing course correction as the system evolves. The Miles Hall Foundation concludes that this bill recognizes that 988 is not a one-time implementation, but a long-term systems transformation that requires ongoing guidance and coordination.

Arguments in Opposition

None on file.

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee, minor and absorbable costs to CalHHS to continue convening the 988 advisory group.

VOTES

ASM HEALTH: 16-0-0

YES: Bonta, Chen, Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Caloza, Carrillo, Mark González, Johnson, Patel, Patterson, Rogers, Sanchez, Schiavo, Sharp-Collins, Stefani

ASM COMMUNICATIONS AND CONVEYANCE: 9-0-0

YES: Boerner, Hoover, Bonta, Caloza, Castillo, Krell, Lowenthal, Rogers, Blanca Rubio

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 15-0-0

YES: Wicks, Hoover, Aguiar-Curry, Calderon, Caloza, Dixon, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Ta, Tangipa

UPDATED

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CONSULTANT: Logan Hess / HEALTH / (916) 319-2097

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