[Insert Date]

The Honorable Assembly Member Reginald Jones-Sawyer

Chair, Assembly Committee on Public Safety

1020 N St. Room 111

Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 1412 (Hart) Pretrial Diversion for Borderline Personality Disorder**

Dear Chairman Jones-Sawyer,

On behalf of Emotions Matter, a 501c3 non-profit organization to support, educate and advocate for people impacted by borderline personality disorder, I am writing to express my strong support for AB 1412 (Hart), which would include individuals with Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) in California’s mental health pretrial diversion program.

**This legislation is essential because it recognizes people diagnosed with BPD are unfairly excluded from California’s mental health pretrial diversion program, despite evidence showing that BPD treatment reduces criminal behavior, arrests, and recidivism in this population.**

* A study published in the Journal of Forensic Psychiatry and Psychology in 2020 found that individuals with BPD who received Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) had significantly fewer arrests than those who did not receive treatment (Murray et al., 2020).
* A review of 33 treatment trials for BPD analyzed data from 2,256 participants and discovered that treatment positively reduced BPD symptoms, self-harm, suicidality, and general psychopathology (Cristea et al., 2017).
* Additionally, The Holloway Skills Therapy Program (HoST) was created in the UK specifically for incarcerated women with BPD. Those who finished the 8-week treatment saw a remarkable 88.2% decrease in disciplinary actions (Gee & Reed, 2013).

**Excluding individuals with BPD from pretrial diversion eligibility entrenches systemic stigma, which exacerbates both public stigma and self-stigma.** People with BPD make important contributions to society and deserve equitable and just treatment, and compassion.  Treatment is essential for reducing the risk of suicide among people with BPD, as self-harming behaviors are common in BPD, and 10% of people with BPD die by suicide, a higher rate than any other psychiatric disorder.

**The overwhelming consensus among scholars is that BPD is treatable, and psychotherapy is the first-line intervention for BPD.** People with BPD deserve access to treatment, not prison, on par with other mental health diagnoses covered by the bill.

**AB 1412 is an important step in the right direction toward providing equitable and just treatment to people with BPD.** I urge you to support this legislation and help ensure that individuals with BPD have access to the treatment and support they need to thrive and succeed in society.

It is for these reasons that Emotions Matter Inc. supports AB 1412 and we request that you support it as well. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to have your staff reach out to Emotions Matter at [info@emotionsmatterbpd.org](mailto:info@emotionsmatterbpd.org)., or 516-350-8387. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

**[Name**

**Title**

**Name of Organization**

**Town, State, Country**