



SB 11 & Contracted Telehealth Mental Health Services

President Tolteca

What is Senate Bill 11? (prior to being amended)

Senate Bill 11: (prior to being amended)

Summary (directly from Senate Committee of education and language of the bill):

SB 11 California State University: Mental Health services contracting out:

This bill requires the California State University (CSU) Trustees to comply with various requirements on mental health counseling at CSU, including having one full-time equivalent mental health counselor per 1,500 students enrolled at each CSU campus and developing a telehealth mental health counseling service that provides mental health counseling to students on each CSU campus 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The bill requires CSU discontinue all contracts with telehealth mental health counseling organizations on January 1, 2026. It also establishes the CSU Mental Health Professionals Act, subject to an appropriation by the Legislature, to provide incentives for CSU students to become mental health counselors in the state.

CSSA Concerns + President's Perspectives

Why does CSSA position/concerns matter?

CSSA (Cal State Student Association) is the official voice of the students of all 23 campuses, is funded by student fees and all members of CSSA are Students of the 23 campuses. Their direct dialogue with legislators, the board of trustees and the office of the chancellor creates change at the state level that impacts our 23 campuses. Service and advocacy for students by students!

CSSA Concerns

Concerns brought during discussions (these came from comments made during special BOD meeting before we voted in opposition and from dialouge with other campuses):

- **There is a lack of funding systemwide and a misconception that if current Telehealth is taken out, funding towards Telehealth would cover funding for CSU Telehealth mental health counseling service.**
- **There is a hiring chill on 7 of the CSU campuses currently and hiring of tenured counselors isn't something that would happen quickly, getting rid of current Telehealth services would prevent student needs being met now CSU wide.**
- **Implementation of this program would only be for tenured faculty**
- **Accountability towards these third party programs can come through the termination of contracts with them, this is not possible with tenured faculty.**

CSSA Concerns

Concerns brought during discussions (these came from comments made during special BOD meeting before we voted in opposition and from dialouge with other campuses):

- **The hiring of tenure track counselors does not ensure that students are being served. Because they are tenure track there is a lot of time they have to spend doing other things other than seeing students and interacting with them in other capacities.**
- **Our campuses should be able to use all the resources available to them to meet students where they are at and prohibiting them from using telehealth providers disregards the kinds of care that it can provide to students (after hours care, diverse counselors, students can meet in their beds with a counselor/at home, disability/immune compromised accessibility etc.)**

CSSA Concerns

Concerns brought during discussions (these came from comments made during special BOD meeting before we voted in opposition and from dialouge with other campuses):

- **Some campuses struggle with hiring counselors because of location, this would prevent students from getting the critical life saving care they need**
- **From President of CSSA's visit and talk to CAPS: On our campus,we use Protocall, which isn't a fully developed service as Timely MD, which has been in service on our campus for seven years, feedback from CAPS has described it as helpful and useful to their services.The difference is ProtoCall is JUST a call line that can get you out of a distress situation from my understanding. They take the information you give them and let the CAPS office know so they can follow up with the student the next business day.**

CSSA Concerns

Concerns brought during discussions (these came from comments made during special BOD meeting before we voted in opposition and from dialouge with other campuses):

- **Sacramento State has been against the removal of third party telehealth since the start of their term, expressed how upsetting it was to hear negative narratives about telehealth and push to get these services out. Mentioned how other campuses such as San Diego State has met the 1: 1.500 ratio and still needed additional support from 24/7 telehealth.**

Meeting with Cal Poly Humboldt

AS SG President Guerrero

According to President Guerrero, the Initial resolution was meant to reflect situations in relation specifically to Humboldt State, not in support of SB 11 (prior to being amended) or in banning third party contractors (Timely MD) from their campus.

The resolution they were trying to implement was due to a coordinator within the Counseling office leaving out of the blue and this concerned a lot of students. SG President met with the coordinator who left to understand why she left, which occurred due to her not being paid enough and seeing how other new hires were being offered more despite the fact she was told her current salary was capped (at maximum rate) for her position. The coordinator negotiated for an increment in her salary but this did not suffice and she left.

Meeting with Cal Poly Humboldt

AS SG President Guerrero

Direct quote: “ Our first draft resolution was in support of Telehealth and one resolve was to add students onto a committee to design the Request For Proposals (RFP) for Telehealth providers, so the RFP is built alongside student values (TimelyMD’s contract will end in 2 years so another RFP may possibly be sent out.) However, after the accumulation of the events that led to the counselor leaving and energy around housing protests at the time, the Board of Directors modified the resolution and passed a resolution against Telehealth, in support of SQE’s position. Now we kind of realized we jumped the gun and our considerations lacked.

We don’t need to advocate to lower services for our students for higher counselor pay. We can have robust services and support prioritization of counselor pay and hiring.”

Meeting with Sacramento State

ASI SG President Pacheco

SB 11 concern arose from fear of tuition increases due to counselor ratio and the CSU Telehealth services program (which has been amended in bill). When this was originally on bill there wasn't any text regarding where funding to implement this was mentioned.

Opposition and removal of Telehealth is not something Sacramento state is looking for, they need Telehealth to meet student needs.

Direct Quote: "A lot of student lives have been lost and we need to meet student needs, we must prioritize our students".

Meeting with Sacramento State

ASI SG President Pacheco

In February of last year before current Student Government administration was in, a contract with timely MD was made and by April CFA filed a cease and desist hold on it, then proceeded to file an unlawful practice charge. After the filing Timely MD couldn't be implemented and has been in deliberation since the summer and their ASI SG wrote a resolution in favor of Telehealth for their campus over summer. University and CFA have been in active conversations regarding a settlement for Telehealth since then.

When the resolution was written this was at \$400,000 range of contract, they are currently \$700,000 on top of \$400,000 loss due to this, if the public relations board says it is unlawful it will require all this money to be lost as well as the contract with Timely MD. If the settlement is won money won't be lost and contract would be renewed for two more years.

Meeting with Sacramento State

ASI SG President Pacheco

The money used to pay Timely MD was from a \$1 million dollar state grant the former Associated Vice President from student health counseling services was awarded, she wanted to use this money to support student health services, it wasn't coming from student dollars. Due to this entire situation she retired as she felt discouraged over having to fight for student needs.

CSSA Opposition

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CSSA has been in discussion of our position regarding this bill since the February Plenary and our official position was taken after the Sacramento plenary in a special Board of Directors meeting, where we voted in opposition of bill due to lack of amendments to bill CSSA asked for.

CSSA had asked the office and other stakeholders who would provide those services if telehealth contracts were prohibited and they never heard an answer.

CSSA Opposition

Statement from letter in Opposition:

"In requiring the CSU to implement this legislation, it is unclear if the same level of support could be provided to students. Additionally, there must be counselors in the surrounding campus communities that could fill these new roles and be willing to work throughout the night and on weekends. Even with the much smaller number of available positions now, campuses have struggled to fill the roles that students desperately rely on.

This proposal is not truly student centered, and our mental health should not be used as a bargaining chip. As students, we will always be against any proposal that puts limitations on resources that might be available to us, particularly on an issue as critical as access to mental health care".

Official copy of letter will be shared with Senate and available in the minutes.

Opposition was just removed this weekend at the April Plenary as requested amendments to bill have been made.

Amendments to Senate Bill 11

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- **Removal of mention of provisions that require trustees develop a telehealth mental health counseling service. (Education Section 89362 (a) (1)(2) and (3))**
- **Removal of mention of provisions that require all CSU contracts with telehealth mental health counseling organizations be phased out and be discontinued.(Education Section 89362 (b)(1))**