

TESTIMONY TO ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY



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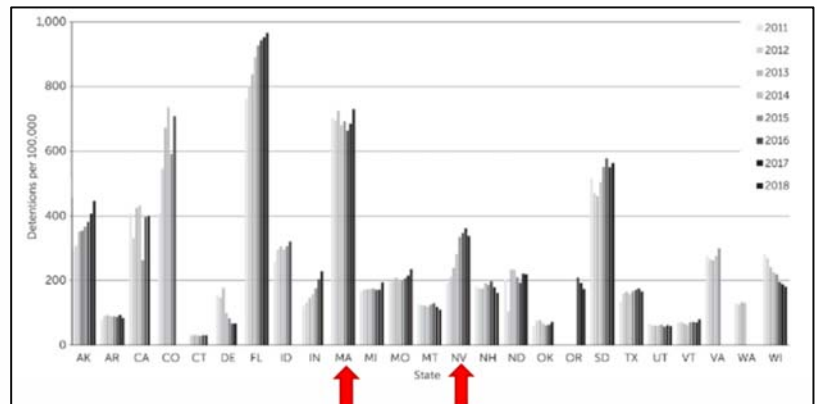
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Chair Miller and Members of the Assembly Committee on Judiciary,

Nevada Policy supports Assembly Bill 467. Under existing law, if a defendant is found incompetent to stand trial, criminal proceedings are suspended, and the individual is placed in a secure mental health facility operated by the state. However, Nevada's current system faces significant setbacks, with limited treatment capacity and prolonged delays in restoring individuals to competency. AB 467 addresses these challenges by expanding court authority to order the involuntary admission of incompetent defendants to both public and private mental health facilities, ensuring that individuals in crisis receive timely treatment.

Nevada Policy's recent research on mental health outcomes in the Silver State conducted comparison case studies for our better-performing counterparts, including Kentucky and Massachusetts. Kentucky has successfully implemented a broader approach to Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT), which has reduced overall system costs by decreasing repeated hospitalizations and criminal justice involvement. Similarly, Massachusetts has used involuntary inpatient civil commitment as a key tool in reducing both suicide and homicide rates—outcomes where Nevada lags significantly behind. As shown in the figure¹, Massachusetts ranks second in the nation for imposing involuntary “emergency psychiatric detentions,” otherwise known as commitments and as a result demonstrates significantly better outcomes.



AB 467 moves Nevada in the right direction by enabling courts to commit individuals to a broader range of facilities, ensuring they receive appropriate care rather than cycling through jails or emergency rooms. We urge you to support this critical piece of legislation that will dramatically improve the mental healthcare scene in the state.

¹ Gi Lee and David Cohen, “Incidences of Involuntary Psychiatric Detentions in 25 U.S. States,” *Psychiatric Services* 72:1, January 2021, <https://psychiatryonline.org/doi/pdf/10.1176%2Fappi.ps.201900477>