



MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES  
OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY COMMISSION

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **State Mental Health Commission Chooses Andrew Poat of San Diego as New Chair**

After brief discussion today, the California commission responsible for mental health services oversight chose a new Chair, Andrew Poat of San Diego, and a Vice-Chair, Larry Poaster, Ph.D of Modesto. At its meeting in Sacramento, the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC) picked its new leadership team by unanimous votes.

The 16-member MHSOAC was formed by the passage of Proposition 63, the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), in November 2004. The MHSOAC is responsible for overarching oversight and accountability for implementation of the MHSA.

Andrew Poat is currently Vice-President of the San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation. Poat previously served in senior management positions with the City of San Diego and the State of California. His positions included Director of the City of San Diego's Government Relations Department, Chief Deputy Director of the California Department of Transportation, deputy cabinet secretary to Governor Pete Wilson, undersecretary of the State and Consumer Services Agency and deputy director of the United States Office of Consumer Affairs.

"I am honored to have been chosen to lead this state mental health commission," said Poat. "We have great oversight responsibilities, including making sure that \$1.5 billion in annual taxpayer dollars for the Mental Health Services Act is well spent," said Poat. "I believe that my organizational and management experience can lead consumers, family members, and providers to a transformed mental health system," said Poat.

Among other community roles, Poat is a member of the board of directors for LEAD San Diego and the past chair of the San Diego Chamber of Commerce Transportation Committee. He is also a mentor at Big Brothers/Big Sisters in San Diego, a member of the Downtown Rotary and a member of the public policy committee for the San Diego Gay and Lesbian Center.

Dr. Poaster said, "I look forward to the challenge of the work ahead."

Poat fills the seat on the MHSOAC of a representative of an employer with more than 500 employees. Poat is a Republican.

Poaster is Democrat . He fills the seat on the MHSOAC as a Mental Health Professional. Members of the MHSOAC serve without compensation.

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